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NOVEMBER 1998

MedCenter News

BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER, BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOLS OF MEDICINE, PUBLIC HEALTH AND DENTAL MEDICINE

BMC receives high marks from JCAHO survey

The unofficial word immediately following the June survey by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) was that BMC would receive a favorable review from the organization. The prognosticators were correct.

Results from the hospital-wide review were received last month, notifying BMC officials of the hospital's full accreditation. The results identified many areas that exhibited exemplary work and others that still needed some improvements.

"The review went extremely well," says Elaine Ullian, BMC president and CEO. "This review is a tribute to the dedication and capabilities of the people who work at Boston Medical Center. Anyone walking through the halls can see an organization that is truly committed to exceptional care. That is why the reviewers' comments and observations about Boston Medical Center were so gratifying."

As part of the JCAHO accreditation process, a team of surveyors conducted a comprehensive evaluation in June. The survey evaluated all inpatient and ambulatory care services and the hospital's licensed health centers.

Immediately following the June review, the surveyors praised BMC, calling it a "top-rated" organization in which they "sensed the spirit and pride of each employee."

Richard Moed, BMC executive vice president and COO, says the positive results were due to the entire institution pulling together and working as a team.

"We can take pride in the fact that we are working together at every level to provide the highest quality care to our patients," says Moed. "Our entire staff deserves credit for its preparation before the survey and for the way we have maintained the level of care we have been providing since day one."

Denise Mehegan, director of Quality Improvement/Risk Management, says BMC also did well during the second part of the survey in August, when the hos-

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Beautiful weather marked the fourth annual Healthy Kids Fair at BMC last month, as children from the Greater Boston area were treated to a day of fun and education. For more on the fair, see page 5.

Michael Holick, MD, MPH, was the first featured guest on WBUR's Monthly CheckUp.

House calls

WBUR program allows BU Medical Center physicians to reach out to listeners around New England.

Discussing everything from practical, general health topics to more specialized, recent research, BU Medical Center physicians will now be heard by nearly half-a-million people throughout New England on a new program on 90.9 WBUR-FM.

Called *Monthly CheckUp*, the program will feature BU Medical Center physicians and researchers discussing medicine with Tim Belay, senior producer of Boston University Programming. One 15-minute segment will air monthly on the radio station's weekly program, *Boston University's World of Ideas*, which can be heard on Sundays at 9 p.m.

BUSM Dean Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of BU Medical Campus, says the new program is a "win-win" situation for the doctors, the radio station and its listeners. "*Monthly CheckUp* provides a direct avenue for our doctors to promote their work and share their expertise with the listening audience, while at the same time to provide the radio station with experts to talk about the latest advances in health care."

Michael Holick, MD, MPH, professor of medicine, dermatology and physiology at BUSM and chief of Endocrinology,

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INSIDE

BU Medical Center named to major breast cancer study

BU Medical Center (BUMC) will be part of the second major breast cancer prevention trial, the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project (NSABP) announced recently.

The STAR trial (Study of Tamoxifen and Raloxifene) follows the NSABP's first breast cancer prevention trial, which found a 49 percent decrease in invasive breast cancer in at-risk women who took tamoxifen during the study period.

The new trial will compare the drug raloxifene to tamoxifen in its effectiveness in preventing invasive breast cancer in post-menopausal women who are at increased risk for developing the disease.

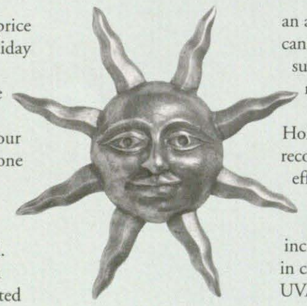
Women enrolled in the trial will be randomly assigned to take either 20mg of tamoxifen or 60mg of raloxifene daily for five years. Neither the women in the study nor their physicians will know which drug they are taking. Study participants will receive at least seven years of follow-up care, which will include mammograms and gynecologic exams.

In order to be chosen as a participating site, BUMC was required to submit a competitive application proving the institution's capacity to accrue and maintain participants in a clinical trial.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the medical center to participate in such a comprehensive and important clinical trial," says Marianne Prout, MD, who will be directing BUMC's participation in the study.

There are 193 prestigious medical centers, hospitals and clinics nationwide participating in the trial, slated to begin in early 1999. For more information about the STAR trial, please contact the NSABP office at 638-8260. ✧

Walking in the sun: A healthy bargain



From a half-price sale to a holiday discount, most people like a good bargain. When it comes to your health, it looks like one simple activity — a walk in the sun — might just be a three-for-one special.

Evidence from a recent study conducted by Michael Holick, MD, PhD, professor of medicine, dermatology and physiology at BUSM and chief of Endocrinology, Nutrition and Diabetes at BMC, showed that regular, brief exposure to ultraviolet B (UVB) light reduces blood pressure while increasing blood levels of vitamin D — a key element in maintaining healthy bones, teeth and skin, as well as an indirect regulator of blood pressure.

The investigation, "Ultraviolet B and Blood Pressure," published in the August issue of the British medical journal *Lancet*, studied eight women and 10 men between the ages of 26 and 66, all of whom were diagnosed with mild essential hypertension — high blood pressure for which there is no apparent cause, such as smoking or coronary artery disease.

One group of study participants was exposed to full-body ultraviolet A (UVA) treatment three times a week, while a second group was exposed to a full-body UVB treatment, also given three times a week. Blood pressure levels of participants in the UVB group returned to normal after approximately four hours of cumulative weekly UVB exposure.

"The study clearly showed that exposure to an artificial UVB source can reduce blood pressure in patients with mild, untreated hypertension," says Holick. The study recorded an additional effect — the UVB group's vitamin D blood levels were increased by 165 percent in comparison with the UVA group.

Although the study groups were treated using an artificial UVB source, sunlight provides the same benefit. Holick's suggestion: Take a 15- or 20-minute walk in the spring, summer, and fall, and you're getting a healthy bargain. The walk could reduce blood pressure due to UVB exposure, increase cardiovascular conditioning (which also helps keep blood pressure down) and increase levels of vitamin D. Holick, however, has just one caution about this otherwise healthy triple threat, "If you walk outside for longer than 15 or 20 minutes, wear a sunscreen."

A first for Roslindale

The new midwifery service at the Greater Roslindale Medical and Dental Center (GRMDC) recently welcomed its first baby — Lauren, daughter of Kelly O'Hare and Richard Swank, of Hyde Park. The service refers all of its expectant mothers to BMC for labor and delivery services. GRMDC recently became a part of the Boston HealthNet, a partnership of BMC, BUSM and 12 community health care providers in Boston's neighborhoods.

Hi-tech forum educates students at a distance

When Lee Strunin, PhD, associate professor of public health at SPH, begins her class lecture on the second floor of the Talbot Building, she stands in front of a single video camera mounted atop a 27-inch television monitor and computer system, rather than in front of a group of students.

The high-tech classroom is part of the Off-Site Education Program at SPH, allowing students in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island to take classes without making the long commute to the school. Through state-of-the-art digital phone lines that carry video and audio information, SPH faculty and students are able to see, hear and communicate with each other for two hours each week. In addition to the high-tech forum, faculty also travel to Bristol Community College in Rhode Island to offer the extension courses.

The program, which began in 1991, is flourishing today under the direction of Jonathan Howland, MPH, PhD, professor of public health at SPH. Nine classes are currently offered through the program, most of which are core curriculum courses. Once students choose areas of concentration, they must complete the required courses on campus. More than 35 students take advantage of the program each semester.

"This nontraditional program gives students who initially may not be able to physically come to SPH the opportunity to still take part in the classroom experience," says Howland. "The popularity of the program is evidence that SPH's reputation as a leader in public health education is carried throughout New England." ✧

Nurses urge the use of seat belts

One fall evening in 1990, John, his wife Katherine, and their 4-month-old daughter Ann were going home in their car. Ann was buckled into a child safety seat in the back. John was wearing his seat belt. Katherine was not. Not far from home, they were hit head-on by a car that had crossed the double yellow line. Ann suffered only minor injuries. Thanks to his safety belt and driver-side air bag, John had only a fractured arm. Katherine, completely unprotected, was killed.

Nationwide, nearly 100 people die each day from injuries related to motor vehicle accidents. At the second annual Saved by the Belt Day, Oct. 14, BMC Emergency Department nurses joined more than 1,600 emergency nurses throughout Massachusetts to educate patients, visitors and employees about the importance of wearing seat belts.

"Every day we see patients with serious injuries from car accidents which could have been prevented if they had been wearing seat belts," says Maureen Cooper, RN, certified emergency nurse and coordinator of the event at BMC. "The goal is to encourage everyone to buckle up and substantially decrease the number of tragic and preventable deaths each year."

According to the Massachusetts Governor's Highway Safety Bureau, the risk of serious injury or death from motor vehicle accidents could be reduced by 75 percent if drivers and passengers wear seat belts.

At the event, nurses answered questions about child passenger safety issues and roused more than 500 people to sign pledge cards agreeing to have themselves and all passengers wear safety belts for two weeks. The nurses hope that by getting people to make the pledge, they will be more likely to continue to wear safety belts. The event was held in the lobbies of the East Newton Street and Harrison Avenue campuses. ✧

JCAHO

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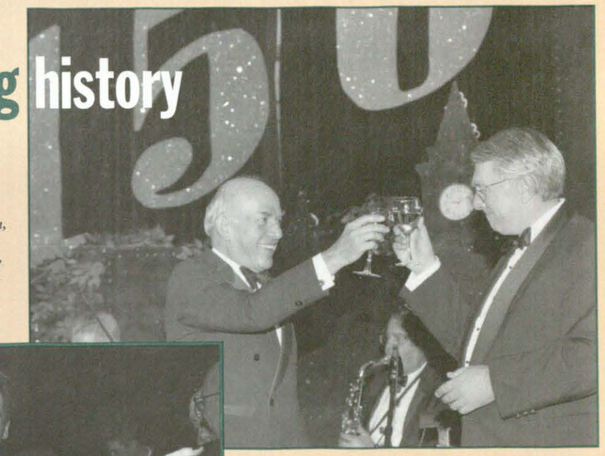
pital's home health care services were evaluated.

"The surveyors gave us outstanding marks with only a few minor recommendations for improvements. It was very gratifying."

BMC received some of its highest praise for the hospital's performance improvements and for the safe environment of care provided to patients. ✧

Toasting history



Below: Kerryane Monahan, a PhD student at BUSM, and Hiraku Shimoda have ear-to-ear grins as they cut the rug together.

Above: BUSM Dean Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of BU Medical Campus (left) shares a toast with BU President Jon Westling at the Sesquicentennial Gala held last month. The black-tie event at the Copley Marriott Hotel brought together nearly 1,000 faculty, staff, students and friends. The evening included a cocktail reception, dinner and dancing, as well as performances by BU students, who depicted events from the school's history.

The following editorial was printed in *The Boston Globe*, Sept. 18, 1998

150 Years of Good Medicine

A small advertisement appeared in the Boston Daily Times in 1848 that announced the establishment of a medical school for women. This 25-student Female Medical College would grow into the Boston University School of Medicine, a continuing force for innovation and one of the great medical institutions in the city. It is celebrating its 150th anniversary with a convocation today.

This year also marks the 125th anniversary of the school's affiliation with Boston University, which saved it from insolvency. By then it had become established in the South End, where it remains to this day.

At first the school specialized in homeopathy, which involves minute doses of substances that might cause harm if taken in large quantities. When it became clear that this was of limited therapeutic value, the school refocused its curriculum on conventional medicine. Its researchers have pioneered important treatments against hypertension, heart failure, and gallstones.

Rebecca Lee, the first black woman physician in the nation, was an 1864 graduate. The school continued this inclusionary tradition by training Solomon Carter Fuller, class of 1897, the first black American psychiatrist. Today it sponsors a program that prepares undergraduate minority students for medical studies.

The school is a leader in research and ranks among the top 20 in grants received from the National Institutes of Health. It also recognizes the importance of the general practitioner: It has the only department of family medicine in Boston.

Over the last 25 years the school's work has increasingly focused on urban clinical care. It was selected in 1972 to provide sole medical staffing for Boston City Hospital. This relationship had deepened with the merger of BCH and the BU Medical Center. Development of the BioSquare complex, devoted to commercial research, will enhance the role of the medical school in this field as well as provide an economic anchor for the South End. As the school celebrates past accomplishments, it can look confidently to the future.

Reprinted courtesy of The Boston Globe.

BMC honors long-time employees

In recognition of the efforts of nearly 1,000 employees in building BMC into one of the nation's premier medical centers, two Employee Service Recognition Programs were held last month.

The programs, held in the Hiebert Lounge on Oct. 8 and 9, honored BMC employees who have been with the institution five, 10, 15 or 20-plus years as of July 1, 1996, and July 1, 1997.

Elaine Ullian, president and CEO of BMC, told employees at the programs that they were "representatives of a long-standing tradition of people who have provided some of the very best health care in the world.

"Thanks to your dedication and hard work, the future looks very bright for Boston Medical Center."

As a show of appreciation, employees received watches and, for long-time employees, personalized engraved clocks, decorated with the BMC logo.

Pat Webb, vice president for Human Resources at BMC, who hosted the ceremonies, says the programs allowed the hospital to show employees how much they mean to the success of the hospital. "Most of the employees honored are our front-line people — the backbone of the hospital. This is our way of saying thank you for making us who we are."

Above, Muriel O'Neil, a nursing assistant in the Surgical Short Stay Unit for 25 years, displays the clock she received in honor of her service at BMC.

WE CARE opens two new programs

With the introduction of two new programs that will help communicate, train and reinforce exceptional service behavior among employees, the WE CARE Program at BMC is in full swing this month.

WE CARE Employee Briefings, which began Nov. 2, are designed to familiarize staff with the features of the patient and customer satisfaction program. One of the highlights of the briefings is the upcoming Building Exceptional Service Strategies initiative — a comprehensive workshop that will enable managers and staff to work together to develop customized service action plans tailored to their departmental needs. All managers and cost center supervisors have received class schedules, guidelines and additional materials to enable their staffs to attend one of the 90 briefing sessions offered this month. Every hospital employee must attend a one-hour briefing, which is offered during all shifts, including weekends.

The second initiative to be introduced this month under the WE CARE Program will make it easier than ever to recognize employees who take that extra step to provide excellent service. "The Caught In the Act of Caring Award" can be spontaneously presented to any staff member by other employees, patients or visitors to immediately laud their efforts. Later this month, the award — a colorful pin with the WE CARE logo — will be available throughout campus at nursing stations, information desks, registration desks and other central areas. Tent cards that explain the program will be placed in strategic locations throughout the hospital.

Beginning early next year, BMC will introduce two additional awards to recognize outstanding employees — the WE CARE Individual Award, to be presented monthly to two clinical and two non-clinical employees, and the WE CARE Team Award, to be given quarterly to a group of employees. ✧

Teamwork pays off for HealthNet patients

Since the initiation of the HealthNet Inpatient Rounders System at BMC a year ago, Boston HealthNet patients have been reaping the benefits of teamwork between the hospital and the community health centers.

BMC and the Boston HealthNet (a partnership of BMC, BUSM and 12 community health centers throughout Boston) introduced this new health care delivery system to increase the comfort and convenience of hospitalized HealthNet patients.

Through coordination with patients' own primary care physicians, the innovative plan helps ensure that patients receive seamless, personalized care — from preadmission through their stay at BMC to post-hospital care.

Under the rounders system, HealthNet patients coming to the hospital are identified upon admission and placed on 6 East on the Harrison Avenue Campus — a designated floor for HealthNet patients. The patients' care is coordinated through the HealthNet Community-Based Physicians Group, composed of Family Medicine physicians from BMC and physicians from the affiliated health centers.

A rounding physician from the group is assigned to the patient and is responsible for coordinating and staying apprised of that patient's care throughout the stay at BMC. The rounding doctor also keeps the patient's primary care physician at the health center up-to-date on the patient's condition and treatments — ensuring the highest quality care.

Frank Doyle, executive director of Boston HealthNet, says the program has continued to grow throughout its first year. "We began with one rounding physician daily and have already had to increase to two daily."

The rounding physicians — usually a doctor from the Family Medicine Department and one from a Boston HealthNet health center — care for an average of 30 patients in the system per day.

"It has not been easy," he says. "Establishing a new service never is. A lot of time had to be put into this to make sure it was done right, and we are providing our patients with the best care possible."

Richard Kalish, MD, MPH, medical director of Boston HealthNet and South Boston Community Health Center, concurs with Doyle, saying the program has had its "share of growing pains," but says the positives far outweigh anything negative. "Our goal is to provide high-quality, seamless care for as many of our patients as possible, and we have been able to do that."

Kalish credits much of the program's success to weekly Monday morning meetings, where everyone from the rounders to the specialists to the nurses share information and ideas. It is also the time when the "baton is passed" to the two new rounding physicians for the week. "The meetings are critical to the system working properly," he says. "They help ensure that we are taking a team approach to taking care of these patients."

Seven of the 12 community health centers are currently involved with the HealthNet Inpatient Rounders System at BMC, and the goal is to eventually expand the service to other health centers.

"Communication is really the key," says Kalish. "We have made a point of priding ourselves on our communications. Now it is up to us to live up to our own expectations — for the good of the system, and more importantly, for the good of the patients." ✧

PCPs urged to reassess answers to alcohol questionnaire

Primary care physicians (PCPs) use everything from complex diagnostic tools, such as magnetic resonance imaging and X-rays, to simple questions when evaluating their patients' health. Interpreting the results of these tests or questions can help PCPs determine whether a patient engaged in an unhealthy behavior, such as drug or alcohol abuse, is ready to take steps toward treating the addiction.

A recent study, "Alcohol Abusers in Primary Care: Readiness to Change Behavior" by Jeffrey Samet, MD, MPH, project director of BUSM's Faculty Development Program for the Prevention of Alcohol and other Drug Abuse, found that reassessing the answers associated with one commonly used diagnostic questionnaire may result in more effective physician training and patient care.

In the study, 1,211 male patients, averaging age 50, were administered the CAGE questionnaire, which can be used by PCPs to screen patients for alcohol abuse. Recommended by the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the questionnaire has been carefully examined with regard to its value and effectiveness. It is considered almost 100 percent accurate as a predictor of alcohol abuse when all four answers are positive, and with each positive answer, the likelihood of alcohol abuse increases.

Instead of accepting a positive response as signal of active alcohol abuse, a positive response may instead be a signal of a patient's involvement in a recovery program.

CAGE consists of these four questions: Have you ever felt the need to **C**ut down on your drinking? Have people ever **A**nnoyed you by criticizing your drinking? Have you ever felt **G**uilty about drinking? Have you ever taken a drink first thing in the morning (an **E**ye-opener drink)?

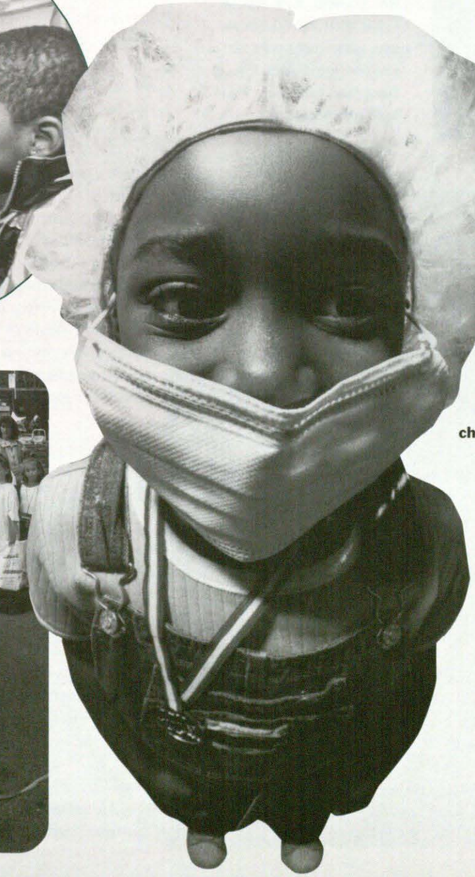
After assessing patient responses, it was found that despite 17 percent of study participants answering positively to one or more CAGE questions, a majority of those patients were actually consuming little or no alcohol. Further, those patients were usually found to be in some kind of recovery for their alcohol problems.

Because CAGE is such an important clinical tool, Samet says PCPs may want to reconsider how they approach patients who answer positively to one or more CAGE questions.

Instead of accepting a positive response as a signal of active alcohol abuse, a positive response may instead be a signal of a patient's involvement in a recovery program. PCPs are encouraged to direct their efforts with these patients toward relapse prevention support. In addition, Samet and his team suggest that this may be a suitable area for further physician training and education.

The study appeared in the October issue of the *American Journal of Medicine* and was conducted in coordination with Department of Medicine at Yale University School of Medicine and Yale-New Haven Hospital, in New Haven, Conn. ✧

Healthy Kids Fair



More than 1,300 children from throughout the Boston area had the opportunity to get an inside look at fire trucks and ambulances, be entertained by clowns and magicians, and don medical gear as part of the fourth annual Healthy Kids Fair, held Sept. 29 on the Harrison Avenue Campus at BMC. In addition, children were read to by local celebrities, including Mayor Thomas Menino, his wife, Angela Menino, and WCVB-TV Channel 5 News anchor and health reporter Heather Kahn.

A collaborative effort between BMC, WCVB-TV Channel 5, BankBoston and Tufts Health Plan, free health screenings, informational exhibits and entertainment were provided to young children, parents and teachers.

Family Medicine establishes residency program in Maine

As part of its ongoing commitment to educate and train community-based family practitioners, BU Medical Center's Department of Family Medicine has established a family practice residency program in affiliation with Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) in Lewiston, Maine.

Larry Culpepper, MD, MPH, chairman of the Department of Family Medicine at BUSM, and chief of the Division of Family Medicine at BMC, is looking forward to an extensive relationship with CMMC. "We're very excited about the association. This program has a number of great opportunities for both organizations, for the physicians in each region, and, of course, for residents."

The Family Practice Residency Program at CMMC will emphasize training in maternity and emergency care, as well as hospital care for people of all ages. The program will develop and enhance family medicine in the central Maine region from the premedical school years to the continuing medical education process. In addition to residency training, "We'll also be establishing a clerkship at CMMC," says Culpepper, "where we can place up to two family medicine students per month."

Primary care research — with the particular aim of supporting the needs of a rural community — will also be a key component of the new collaboration, as will physician recruitment and retention. ✧

Fighting the flu

Reginald Preston, of Environmental Services at BMC, receives his flu shot from Lynn Worley, RN. Preston was one of more than 2,600 people who received a free flu shot during BMC's Flu Shot Day, held Oct. 7 on both campuses.

NEWS MEDIA

Boston University Medical Center staff appear as expert sources for various media stories on a regular basis. Recent highlights include:

- **Alice Jacobs, MD**, professor of medicine at BUSM and director of the Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory and Interventional Cardiology at BMC, discussed the results of her recent study regarding the risks of heart surgery for women with WCVB-TV Channel 5 News, Associated Press Radio, *The Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald.*
- **Jerome Klein, MD**, professor of pediatrics at BUSM and vice chairman for academic affairs in the Division of Pediatrics at BMC, appeared on WCVB-TV Channel 5 News to discuss the use of Xylitol to treat ear infections in children.
- **Judy Linden, MD**, associate professor of emergency medicine at BUSM and associate residency director for Emergency Medicine at BMC, was interviewed by the *Boston Herald* regarding domestic violence.
- **Arthur Theodore, MD**, associate professor of medicine at BUSM and director of Respiratory Therapy at BMC, appeared on *About Health* on WABU-TV Channel 68 to discuss flu prevention.
- **Robin Travers, MD**, instructor in dermatology at BUSM and a dermatologist at BMC, was featured on WBZ-TV Channel 4 News and WCVB-TV Channel 5 News to discuss excessive sweating and remedies to help prevent it.

Two BU Medical Center physicians elected to IOM

Barbara Ann Gilchrest, MD

Larry Culpepper, MD, MPH

Two BU Medical Center physicians, Barbara Ann Gilchrest, MD, professor and chairman of the Department of Dermatology at BUSM and BMC, and Larry Culpepper, MD, MPH, chairman of the Department of Family Medicine at BUSM, and chief of the Division of Family Medicine at BMC, will join 53 other physicians and researchers nationwide recently elected to the world-renowned Institute of Medicine (IOM).

The IOM was established in 1970 as a component of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences. Its mission is to examine policy matters pertaining to the health of U.S. citizens, and to help advise the federal government in identifying issues of medical care, research and education.

"We are very proud of both Dr. Gilchrest's and Dr. Culpepper's election to the Institute of Medicine. This is one of the greatest honors that an academic physician can receive," says John Chessare, MD, MPH, chief medical officer of BMC and associate dean for Clinical Affairs at BUSM.

New members are chosen from a large pool of distinguished candidates and have made major contributions to health, medicine or related fields. Those elected to the IOM must devote a significant amount of volunteer time on committees engaged in a broad range of studies on health policy issues. Current IOM projects include studies on cancer research among minorities and the medically underserved, research and development needed to improve civilian medical response to chemical or biological terrorist incidents, the prevention of perinatal transmission of HIV, the medical use of marijuana, and a series of nutritional reports which will be used to update the 1989 version of the *Recommended Dietary Allowances.* ✧

House calls

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Nutrition and Diabetes at BMC, was the program's first featured guest. Holick, whose recent *Lancet* study indicates that ultraviolet B light reduces blood pressure — while increasing blood levels of vitamin D, discussed the study with WBUR, on a segment which aired Oct. 25.

Along with highlighting the latest research and health care trends, BU Medical Center doctors also will discuss timely topics on the program. Seasonal subject matters, such as reducing holiday stress and protecting against skin cancer, are examples of possible upcoming topics.

WBUR, a leading National Public Radio (NPR) news affiliate, reaches approximately 400,000 listeners every week. *Monthly CheckUp* will also be broadcast on Rhode Island's NPR affiliate, 1290 WRNI-AM. ✧

CALENDAR

November

9 **BMC Chorus Rehearsals** — All BU Medical Center employees, students and friends interested in joining the BMC Chorus are welcome to attend rehearsals, which begin today. Rehearsals will be held every Monday and Tuesday, from 1 to 2 p.m., in the Atrium Chapel on the East Newton Street Campus. The BMC Chorus will sing traditional holiday carols on Monday, Dec. 21, in the Inpatient Facility Lobby on the Harrison Avenue Campus, and on Tuesday, Dec. 22, in the Atrium Lobby on the East Newton Street Campus. The group will also be spreading holiday cheer to all hospital nursing units throughout December.

17 **Cardiovascular Symposium** — The symposium will be held in honor of the school's sesquicentennial celebration and the 25th anniversary of the Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute at BUSM, from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., in Bakst Auditorium. The event will feature world-renowned physicians and scientists from around the globe. For more information, call Nancy Clinton, administrator, Whitaker Cardiovascular Institute, at 638-4887.

18 **Evans/Medical Research Event** — See story below for details.

19 **Auction for SIDS** — The Massachusetts Center for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), a cooperative program of BMC and Children's Hospital, is hosting an auction at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge. Cocktails and auction begin at 6:30 p.m. to be followed by dinner and dancing. SIDS is the leading cause of death among children between the ages of 1 month to 1 year. Tickets for the event are $75, and corporate sponsorship, memorials and business card advertisements for the program book can also be purchased. For more information, call 414-7437.

20 **Communicating With Care Workshop** — An interactive and informal communication workshop entitled Sounds of Success will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon, and 1 to 4:30 p.m., and is recommended for all BMC staff who consistently use the phone for business purposes. During the workshop, employees will review BMC's Universal Telephone Standards and learn to become more effective voices for the hospital by using improved thought organization and proven phone techniques. For more information, please call 414-5488 or 414-5487.

26 **Thanksgiving Lunch** — On Thanksgiving Day, a free traditional holiday lunch will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. for all BU Medical Center employees in the cafeterias on both the East Newton Street and Harrison Avenue campuses. All patients will also receive two lunch passes for the complimentary meal. BU Medical Center employees must show proper ID.

December

10 **Penny Drive** — The seventh annual Penny Drive, sponsored by the Committee to End Elder Homelessness Inc. and BMC, will once again raise funds to buy food for the pantry at the committee's Bishop Street House in Jamaica Plain, a residence for nine formerly homeless older women. Bring your pennies to either the cafeteria on the East Newton Street Campus from 10 a.m. to noon, or to the cafeteria on the Harrison Avenue Campus from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m For more information, call Ruth Ann Espo at 369-1555.

17 **Annual BU Holiday Party** — The annual BU Holiday Party will be held Thursday, Dec. 17, from 3 to 5 p.m., in the George Sherman Union on the Charles River Campus. Shuttle buses will leave 80 East Concord St. at 2:30 and 3:30 p.m., returning at 4:15 and 5:15 p.m. Invitations will be mailed to BU employees and must be presented at the event.

Computer Training — The Office of Information Technology (OIT) at BU Medical Campus, in partnership with ExecuTrain of Boston, is offering computer training for general applications throughout November and December. Classes will be held in the OIT Training Room, LG09, located in the basement level of the BUSM Instructional Building (across from Chequers). All medical campus and hospital employees are invited to attend. For a list of the courses available or for more information concerning registration or payment, call Maria Halvorsen, at 800/464-7878, or via email at bumc@boston.executrain.com.

Huntington's Benefit — Buy a gift boxed amaryllis bulb for the holidays and benefit the Huntington's Disease Society Massachusetts chapter, a BU Medical Center-based, non-profit agency. Bulbs may be purchased Nov. 19, 24 and 25, and Dec. 17, 23 and 24 on the H-2 bridge on the East Newton Street Campus and in the lobby of BUSM. Plants come in a variety of colors and are $10 each. Orders can also be placed by calling 638-8333.

Evans Foundation event begins Nov. 18

The Evans Medical Foundation will be sponsoring the 14th annual Evans/Medicine Research Event from Nov. 18 through Nov. 20. This year's speakers include Wilkins Visiting Professor Mark Ptashne, PhD, from Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and Inglefinger Visiting Professor Andrew Schafer, MD, chair of Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine. The basic and clinical research accomplishments of the Department of Medicine will also be presented. Events will include:

- **Wednesday, Nov. 18**, at 2:30 p.m. — The distinguished basic science lecture by the Wilkins Visiting Professor, followed by a question-and-answer session in the Evans Seminar Room;
- **Thursday, Nov. 19**, from 2 - 3 p.m. — Professors Rounds conducted by the Inglefinger Visiting Professor, followed by the presentation of two clinical cases in the Evans Seminar Room;
- **Friday, Nov. 20**, from 2:30 - 3:45 p.m. — Seminar by the Inglefinger Visiting Professor, followed by a question-and-answer session in the Wilkins Board Room.

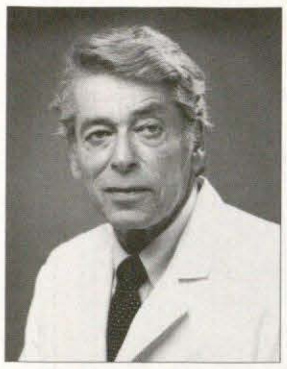
The Evans Medical Foundation is a non-profit corporation with the goal of advancing medical knowledge through support of research and education. Founded in 1912 through a generous donation by Robert Dawson Evans, the foundation is a major research arm of BMC's Department of Medicine.

Through funding of ongoing studies of mechanisms of human disease in areas ranging from molecular genetics to translation medicine, the foundation continues to fulfill its mission in the exciting environment of cutting-edge molecular medicine. For more information, please call 638-7269. ✧

People

George Annas, JD, MPH, Edward R. Utley Professor, chairman of the Health Law Department at SPH and professor in the School of Law at BUSM, recently published a book entitled Some Choice: Law, Medicine, and the Market. Previous books include The Rights of Patients, Judging Medicine, and Standard of Care.

Leonard Gottlieb, MD, MPH, chief of the Division of Pathology at BMC and professor and chairman of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine at BUSM, was recently honored at a meeting of the Greater Boston Israel Bonds Cabinet for serving as chairman of the Physicians Division for the past seven years. Gottlieb was presented with the "Lion of Judah" award "in recognition of [his] exemplary loyalty to the State of Israel and for strengthening the City of Jerusalem as the Spiritual Heart of the Jewish People." Gottlieb's successor as chair of the Physicians Division is Michael Wolfe, MD, chief of the Department of Gastroenterology at BMC and professor of medicine at BUSM.



Leonard Gottlieb, MD, MPH

Richard Tello, MD, MPH, associate professor of radiology at BUSM, presented his most recent research projects (magnetic resonance applications in the body — particularly the kidneys and renal arteries; and using the Internet for rapid communication of video-based images) at various events and hospitals in Australia and Spain, and to the Radiological Society of North America.

Elaine Ullian, president and CEO of BMC, testified recently before the National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare in Washington, D.C. Her testimony was presented on behalf of the National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems, representing 100 safety net hospitals across the country. During her testimony, Ullian discussed aspects of graduate medical education and disproportionate share (DSH) funding of safety net hospitals. She also spoke in favor of preserving Medicare funding for academic medical centers such as BU Medical Center. The commissions findings will influence successor Medicare legislation and are due by March 1999.

Jack Twomey, RN, and Susan Briggs, MD, commander of the Boston Disaster Medical Assistance Team

As Hurricane George recently pounded parts of the southern United States and the Caribbean, the dedication of BMC Emergency Department staff to those in need was evident. **Kathryn Brinsfield, MD; Doris Cappola, RN**; and **Jack Twomey, RN**, braved treacherous rain, flooding and high winds to travel to Montgomery, Ala. as part of the Boston Disaster Medical Assistance Team.

After setting up a convoy of emergency vehicles, a communications center and a makeshift hospital, the team of 35 Boston-area nurses, doctors and paramedics awaited the arrival of the storm. While the eye of the storm narrowly missed Alabama, the team was prepared to provide medical assistance within 400 miles of its station at Maxwell Air Force Base.

The **Transitional Care Unit** (TCU) at BMC has been notified by the Department of Public Health that it is in compliance with all applicable requirements for certification. Each year the TCU undergoes a two- to three-day survey by the department where thousands of regulations governing transitional care and skilled nursing units are reviewed. The unit joins an elite group of providers who have achieved the highest rating possible by the Department of Public Health.

Grants

The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) has approved funding for the continuation of the Boston APDA Advanced Center for Parkinson Disease Research. The center, which was established at the BUSM Department of Neurology in 1993, will receive an additional $500,000 to continue its groundbreaking research on Parkinson's disease over the next five years.

BUSM sponsors successful international symposium

Bringing together health care leaders from around the globe, BUSM recently sponsored The Eighth International Symposium on Subtypes of Muscarinic Receptors as part of the BUSM Sesquicentennial Celebration.

The symposium was held at the Sheraton Ferncroft Resort in Danvers, Mass., with BU hosting a banquet for the event at the George Sherman Union on the Charles River Campus.

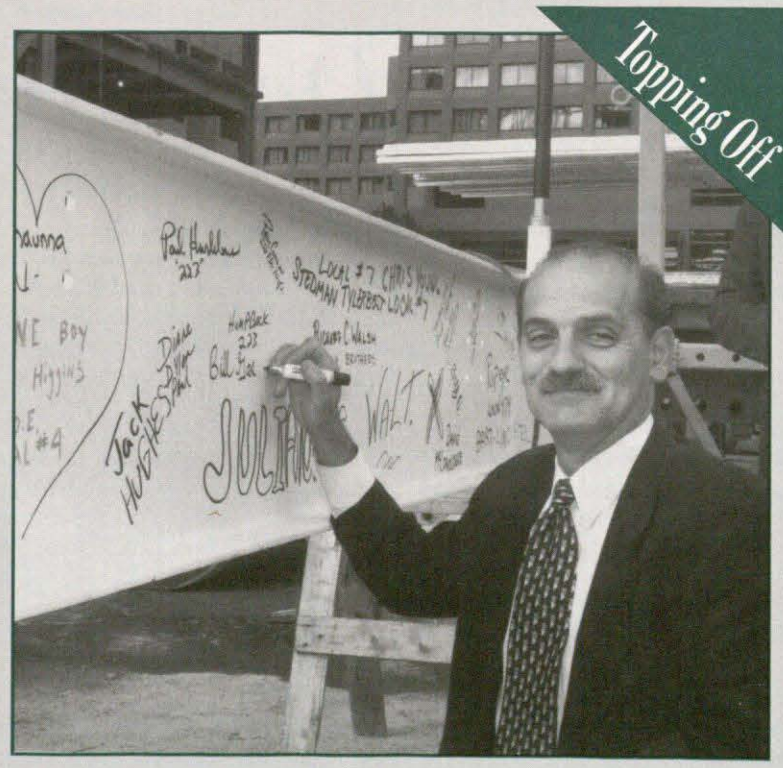
More than 150 physicians and scientists from 17 countries attended the symposium to share and learn about the latest research on receptors (cell components that combine with drugs or hormones to alter the cells' function). Thirty papers were presented at the four-day meeting, along with 78 poster papers and eight oral presentations of selected posters. All of the proceedings of the symposium will be published in an upcoming edition of *LifeSciences*.

Ruth Levine, PhD, former associate dean, chairwoman of the Division of Graduate Medical and Dental Sciences and professor emerita of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics at BUSM, served as symposium coordinator.

The symposium takes place approximately every two years, usually as part of a larger conference. "This is the first time we have held the symposium without it being a satellite of a larger conference," says Levine. "We are very pleased with the attendance."

The symposium received support from three federal agencies and financial contributions from 17 pharmaceutical firms — helping 18 graduate students attend the event. "I'm happy that this symposium gave some young people the opportunity to present their work and meet some of the top scientists in the world," says Levine. ✧

Topping Off



Bill Gasper, associate vice president for Business Affairs at BU Medical Center, participates in the long-standing tradition of signing off on the final beam before it is placed high atop of the new BioSquare building on Albany Street. The 160,000-square-foot, biomedical research facility is expected to be completed in October 1999.

Institutional abbreviations

BMC – Boston Medical Center
BU – Boston University
BU Medical Campus – BU Schools of Medicine, Public Health and Dental Medicine
BUMC – Boston University Medical Center (includes BU Medical Campus and Boston Medical Center)
BUSM – BU School of Medicine
SDM – Goldman School of Dental Medicine
SPH – BU School of Public Health

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