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MedCenter News: October 1997

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MedCenter News

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

Flu shots available to employees, community

Doing its part to stave off winter illness, BMC will offer free flu shots to employees and the community as part of the state's Flu Prevention Day. On Tuesday, Oct. 7, Boston University Medical Center employees can join the hospital's neighbors to receive their vaccinations.

The event will launch the annual flu vaccination campaign, which urges senior citizens and others at risk — including those with chronic lung disease, heart disease, children with asthma and health care workers — to receive vaccinations. The vaccination, effective in preventing and reducing the severity of the flu, is recommended annually because the highly contagious virus strain changes each year. For maximum protection, the ideal months to receive the shot are October and November, according to the American Lung Association.

Boston Marathon legend Johnny Kelley, the celebrity spokesman for the campaign, will be on hand to receive his annual flu shot. Medical and nursing students will administer the shots in the Inpatient Building lobby on the Harrison Avenue Campus and in the East Newton Street Campus lobby from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. ✧

Is there a doctor in the house?

The health care workers of tomorrow — children from the Dorchester YMCA sport surgical masks and caps as they enjoy the third annual Healthy Kids Fair held recently at BMC. For more on the fair, see page 5.

Culbert to head AAMC's national student advisory project

Arthur Culbert, PhD, associate dean for Student Affairs at BUSM, has been named to the prestigious position of scholar-in-residence with the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).

Arthur Culbert, PhD, associate dean for Student Affairs at BUSM (left) and Jordan Cohen, MD, president of the AAMC, explain an electronic career advising program to Kimberly Henderson, an AAMC intern.

In this role, Culbert will help develop a joint project of the AAMC and the American Medical Association during the next 18 to 24 months. Focusing on student career planning and advising, the goal of the project is to create a national electronic career advising plan for medical students by the year 2000.

"Being appointed to this position is really an honor," says Culbert, who has also served as chairman of the AAMC's Northeast Group on Student Affairs for the past two years. "With this project, we will be developing strategies, materials and real-time data to assist medical students who are trying to chart the directions they would like to see their careers take."

Although Culbert will be shuttling between Washington D.C. and Boston for much of the next two years, the benefits students will gain when the project is completed far outweigh the considerable traveling. "I believe this is the biggest initiative the association has taken on at the student level," says Culbert. "Utilizing Internet technology to aid students and their advisors is a novel idea."

Having recently begun the initiative to improve career counseling for medical students, the AAMC approached Culbert and asked him to work on the project. "We recognized that [improvements to student counseling] was an important need that was not being addressed as adequately as necessary," says Jordan Cohen, MD, president of the AAMC. "Dr. Culbert was our primary choice because of his long-standing efforts to provide students with good information and to help them make the proper career decisions.

"We are delighted to have him working on this project. We have gotten a lot out of his expertise so far, and I am sure that will continue."

continued on page 5

INSIDE

State House honors BMC, Dr. Cho

Sang Cho, MD, director of Transplant Services at BMC and professor of surgery at BUSM, and Elaine Ullian, president and CEO at BMC, flank acting Gov. Paul Celluci. Cho and BMC each received a Roche Laboratories Community Service Award at the State House last month for their outstanding dedication to organ transplantation research and education.

Administrative Services Fair to be held Nov. 25

Administrative services offered for the BU Medical Campus community are the focus of the first Administrative Services Fair, to be held on Thursday, Nov. 25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Hiebert Lounge. Campus administrative departments, such as Information Technology, Research Administration, Purchasing and Payroll, and related services, such as Boston University Medical Center Bookstore, Garber Travel and the University Credit Union, will showcase their wares. Internet sites, publications and videos will be featured at many of the booths, and light refreshments will be offered throughout the day.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the medical campus community to learn more about the comprehensive services we offer," says Janis Roberts, executive director for Financial Affairs, and chair of the Steering Committee. ✧

New council aims at improving departmental communication

BMC Executive Vice President and COO Richard Moed recently announced the formation of the BMC Operations Management Council, which held its first meeting in early September. Designed to improve communication among departments, the council is composed of vice presidents and directors who have broad cross-hospital responsibilities, including safety and nursing.

Scheduled to meet on a weekly basis, the council will focus on improving efficiencies and ensuring good communication as BMC moves ahead on projects affecting more than one department. According to Moed, the Operations Management Council is expected to become an integral part of the hospital management structure. ✧

Meg Aranow, vice president of Information Systems
Mike Barricelli, director of Financial Operations
Patricia P. Barry, MD, MPH, acting senior vice president/chief medical officer
Ken Belcher, vice president for Ancillary Services
Elizabeth Cadigan, RN, director of Nursing Operations
Jane Damata, director of Patient Access Services
Brian Dealy, CFO and vice president of Fiscal Services
Rebecca Gadon, RN, director of Nursing Operations
Lori Granger, Premiere Alliance representative
Cecilia Josephs, RN, director of Nursing Operations
Joe Kynoch, director of New Technologies
Diane Lancaster, RN, PhD, director of Nursing Research and Quality
Denise Mehegan, director of Quality Improvement/Risk Management
Gloria Miller-Bogus, vice president of Nursing
Richard Moed, COO and executive vice president
Charles Motley, director of Materials Management
Linnea Olsson, director of Clinical Operations
Catherine Rumble, RN, acting director of Nursing
David Ryan, director of Labor Relations
Kathy Sullivan, director of Applications and Training
Kevin Ward, director of Financial Planning
Patricia Webb, vice president of Human Resources
Rita Whelan, director of General Services

Incoming medical students carry on 2,000-year tradition

As the cooling temperatures and changing leaf colors are symbols of autumn, so the annual White Coat Ceremony is a sure sign that the fall is arriving and the school year has begun.

Held Thursday, Sept. 4, the ceremony has become a rite of passage for first-year medical students at BUSM, as well as at many medical schools throughout the country. At the ceremony, students received words of encouragement from speakers and were assisted in donning their white coats, which all medical students receive when they start their academic careers. To close the ceremony, each student recited the 2,000 year-old Hippocratic Oath.

Suzanne Sarfaty, MD, assistant dean for Student Affairs, assists a student from the class of 2001 into his lab coat at the White Coat Ceremony held last month in the Bakst Auditorium.

Dean Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of BU Medical Campus, greeted the more than 150 members of the Class of 2001 and advised them on what to expect on the road ahead. "It is vital for you to interweave the scientific with the ethical and humanistic aspects involved in the care of your patients. You must learn to deal with not only the clinical problems of your patients, but also with their social, economic, emotional and family difficulties."

Dedicated to fostering humanism in medicine, the practice of the White Coat Ceremony was first held at BUSM in 1994. The long-standing tradition of reciting the Hippocratic Oath at the completion of medical school was also changed with the initiation of the ceremony at BUSM. Incoming medical students now recite the pledge at the start of their medical careers.

Guest speaker Michael Magee, MD, senior medical advisor for Pfizer Inc., and author of *The 50 Most Optimistic Doctors in America*, told the students that they are embarking on a challenging journey and that their success will largely depend on their individual attitudes. "What is right about American medicine is here today in you and your families. It is up to you to enhance what is right about medicine." ✧

Making a good first impression

International Health Clinic provides initial care to refugees

It's a typical Friday morning. In one examination room, seven members of a Somali family wait patiently as a nurse administers a needed vaccination to the youngest of the crew. Down the hall, a recently married couple from Iraq are having their blood drawn, explaining through an interpreter that they have been feeling fine and are in good health. Two rooms over, a woman from Cuba receives a physical examination, while out in the waiting area, a young man from Bosnia leafs through the communicable diseases pamphlets as he waits for his appointment to begin.

What looks like a scene straight from Ellis Island is occurring each week on the first floor of the Dowling Building in the International Health Clinic.

"Busy as usual," says an energetic Elizabeth Barnett, MD, medical director of the International Health Clinic at BMC, before turning and conferring with another physician on the staff.

The clinic is one of the first stops many refugees arriving in Boston must make to receive the health assessment required after coming to the United States. Each person receives a physical examination, routine lab screenings and updated immunizations. At the clinic, the transition to a primary care health system also begins for the refugees.

Serving some 600 patients in the past year, the Refugee Health Program is the primary focus of the clinic, but other services are also offered. Physicians at the clinic treat international travelers and often advise other primary care physicians who may not be familiar with some tropical diseases they encounter.

Pediatricians and internists treat adults and children at the clinic, says Barnett. "Treating both age groups in this clinic is vital because families arrive and travel in groups."

The clinic primarily treats refugees from Bosnia, Cuba, Iraq, Somalia and other African nations. Physicians and nurses must continually learn about the cultures and vital health statistics of those particular nations. "We have to keep constantly up-to-date because our refugee population can always change," says Barnett. She gave as an example the notification last year that 100 people from Kurdistan would be arriving at the clinic. "This was before we had treated many people from that country, so we had to learn about this part of the world quickly.

"With every new population, it is a learning experience. Not only do we study the medical aspects, but we have to learn what occurs in each society. It is very exciting from both the medical and socio-political aspects."

The clinic is informed of incoming refugees by relief agencies throughout Boston. The agencies organize the health assessments for each person and then notify the hospitals. Barnett says refugees are sent to different hospitals in the city depending on the services offered and where the particular refugees will be living. "Because of the variety of services we offer at BMC, we have become the site that serves many populations, especially those not served anywhere else in the community — which is very exciting."

Clinic Coordinator Nicole Bacon, who is responsible for day-to-day operations and scheduling appointments, says the clinic can get a bit "hectic," but adds that the challenges have rewards. "Many of the people we see really do need our help," says Bacon. "It means a lot to them, and that is a nice feeling.

"We have quite a diverse group of people working on quite a diverse group of patients. People really go out of their way and take the extra effort to make the refugees' lives easier during this transitional time."

Barnett also credits Nurse Coordinator Nancy Barnes, RN, who manages the nursing aspects of the clinic, Interpreter Services, and the many other employees and services which have helped to make the program a success. "A program like this doesn't run without a lot of people pitching in," she says. "This is really a team effort among support staff, administrators, physicians and nurses." ✧

At center, Bazi Hamid Amin and his wife Umi Amin had their hands full with six children at the International Health Clinic last month. The family recently arrived from Somalia.

Pictured top left, Fatima Bazi Hamid receives an immunization from Linda Richard, RN.

Cost reduction goal for Fiscal Year 1998 targeted

With the advent of fiscal year 1998 (FY '98) on Oct. 1, BMC needs to respond to reductions in inpatient occupancy, and to legislative and market forces, according to Richard Moed, executive vice president and COO.

"We have experienced a $14 million loss in operations in fiscal year 1997 (FY '97), and we must reverse this trend," says Moed.

As *MedCenter News* went to press, the Budget Committee, in conjunction with department managers, was generating a cost reduction plan to identify a 13 percent reduction in expenditures — an intensive process that has been under way since summer. At the September Managers Meeting, Moed announced that approximately $30 million in savings had been identified through detailed review of departmental budgets. The cost reductions are necessary to respond to changes in Medicare reimbursement and a decrease in patient census.

"While we have to focus on reducing our budget in order to maintain our position as a leading health care provider, we will not lose sight of what is first and foremost to all of us — continuing to fulfill our mission of providing excellent care to all," says Moed. "I am confident that working together as a team, we will meet the challenges posed by the rapidly changing health care environment."

According to Moed, the projected loss reflects continuing changes in the health care market, as well as legislative changes in Medicare compensation.

"We expect to see a decrease in our inpatient volume as patients continue to receive more care on an outpatient basis," says Moed. "While we do expect our ambulatory visits to increase, it is not enough to offset this decrease. The payments the hospital receives from those visits does not offset the loss from inpatient volume."

On the legislative front, changes in Medicare regulations are expected to cost the hospital approximately $6 million. In addition, wage increases and inflation add to the projected deficit.

"The market is increasingly competitive, forcing us to change the way we do business," says Moed. "The challenge for us is to ensure our high quality of care while at the same time becoming more efficient and reducing costs."

According to Moed, cutting costs is only one piece of the puzzle. Increase in volume through programs such as BMC HealthNet Plan is also critical to the success of the medical center. ✧

New drug promising in fight against stroke

Each year in the United States, 500,000 people fall prey to stroke, the third leading cause of death for adults. Thus far, the only drug approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use is Tissue Plasminogen Activator (TPA), an expensive medicine that is not always effective in combating the ravages of stroke. Medical science has yet to find an effective tool to blunt its effects.

> A BUSM research team has discovered that a synthetic compound significantly limits brain damage when administered after a stroke.

That may be changing soon. A BUSM research team has discovered that a synthetic compound significantly limits brain damage when administered after a stroke. Their finding, published September in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, could lead to the development of drugs to treat stroke and traumatic brain or spinal cord injury. These new drugs could also slow the progression of Parkinson's disease and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), more commonly known as "Lou Gehrig's Disease." Nearly one million suffer from Parkinson's disease and ALS.

According to principal investigator David H. Farb, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Pharmacology, the compound, derived from a natural steroid and known as *pregnanolone hemisuccinate*, can be easily and inexpensively produced. "This compound has remarkable neuroprotective properties," says Farb. "It represents the first of a new class of potentially useful therapeutic agents to treat stroke and several other neurodegenerative diseases."

According to Farb, neurons die when exposed to excess amounts of a substance called *glutamate*. One key way in which glutamate is produced occurs when a special molecule known as an NMDA-receptor is activated. "When a person has a stroke, even if it's a small stroke, neurons will die from the lack of oxygen supply. But in dying, it will release excess glutamate, activating the NMDA-receptors of neighboring cells, killing them, and those cells in turn will produce more glutamate and kill more cells. So there's secondary damage. It's a vicious cycle, and the secondary damage can often be worse than the initial event," he says. However, pregnanolone hemisuccinate "deactivates" the NMDA-receptor, halting glutamate release. Thus, the secondary damage is confined, and far fewer neurons die. The study utilized middle-cerebral artery occlusion (blockage) in rats, the common protocol for animal studies on stroke.

Though researchers discovered that pregnanolone sulfate — the active part of the molecule — had beneficial effects in the brain, they were stymied by a defense system known as the *blood-brain barrier*. A system designed to weed out chemicals capable of harming the body's most vital organ, the blood-brain barrier also prevents useful chemicals from crossing as well. The BUSM research team tackled this problem by attaching the pregnanolone to a molecule of succinate, a by-product of cellular metabolism. With the two pieces attached as pregnanolone hemisuccinate, the blood-brain barrier allows it to pass into the brain, preventing tissue damage.

Farb believes that pregnanolone hemisuccinate will fundamentally change the manner of treating stroke. "Right now, we don't have a good treatment for stroke. Because of its expense and limited effectiveness, TPA is far from the ideal solution. It also can't be used in all types of stroke, such as hemorrhagic stroke," he says. "Pregnanolone hemisuccinate or related compounds promise to be far less costly, more effective and may be beneficial for stroke." ✧

BUSM and VA renew affiliation

Aram Chobanian, MD, dean of BUSM, (left), and Elwood Headley, MD, director of the Veterans Administration Medical Center (VA) in Boston, signed a reaffiliation agreement at a ceremony in August. The Signing Ceremony, witnessed by senior leaders from both institutions, renews the long-standing relationship between BUSM and the VA. "The strong and successful relationship we have developed with the VA is very important to BUSM," said Chobanian, "and I look forward to our continued involvement at the Boston VA Medical Center."

Transportation services announce improvements

Fall is here, and Boston University Medical Center (BUMC) employees, staff and students are finding it easier to travel to work and around campus thanks to the efforts of the Interinstitutional Transportation Management Association (ITMA).

The ITMA, representing BUMC and the Public Health Commission, is dedicated to providing cost-effective, dependable and environmentally sound modes of transportation for employees, students, patients and visitors.

The ITMA continues to offer several transportation services, including computerized ride matching for commuters wishing to carpool and vanpool, public transit information (maps and schedules) and personalized assistance with commuting.

This fall, new and enhanced services for commuters include:

•For users of the No. 10 Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) bus — BUMC is now listed on all schedules, providing commuters with the approximate arrival and departure times from the campus;

• For cyclists — bicycle racks have been installed in two on-campus parking lots. On-site attendants provide additional security;

• A new 15-foot MBTA bus shelter has been installed on Albany Street across from the Harrison Avenue Campus Emergency Department. The sheltered waiting area serves riders of the Nos. 8, 10, 47 and CT3 buses, as well as those who use the West Howell Street Parking Lot Shuttle;

• The long-awaited Old Colony Rail Line began service from the South Shore on Sept. 29 (see Ontrack, page 6);

• New MBTA express buses travel from the North Shore through the Ted Williams Tunnel, making stops at South Station and Downtown Crossing.

All BUMC transportation information, including shuttle and MBTA schedules, can be found in a new brochure created by the ITMA. Copies are available at transportation kiosks located throughout the campus, or by calling the Transportation Office at 638-7473 or 638-7477. In addition, commuter information can be accessed on the BMC homepage located at http://www.bmc.org, or by calling the automated 24-hour helpline at 638-7430. ✧

The ITMA continues to coordinate the following services:

All Day Medical Campus Shuttle
West Howell Street Parking Lot Shuttle
Evening Campus Shuttle
Evening Transit MBTA Shuttle
Boston VA Medical Center Shuttle
Commonwealth Medical Group Shuttle
BU Charles River Campus Shuttle

Healthy Kids **Fair**

Barney, Smokey the Bear, and Sergeant McGruff the Crime Dog were only a few of the characters that welcomed the more than 1,600 children attending the third annual Healthy Kids Fair, held Sept. 16 on the Harrison Avenue Campus at BMC.

BMC staff, health organizations, performers and special guests, including Angela Menino, State Rep. Gloria Fox and *NewsCenter 5* anchor and health reporter Heather Kahn, joined together to promote children's awareness of nutrition, health and fitness. 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.

Top right, Peter Schwartz, RN, BMC Pediatrics, helps Bianca Lazarus check her heartbeat with a stethoscope, as Roy James looks on.

Center, Angela Menino, wife of Mayor Thomas Menino, reads If You Give A Mouse A Cookie *to a group of enthusiastic children at the Reach Out and Read booth.*

At right, Sergeant McGruff the Crime Dog reminds Lucia Leonardo and her daughter Brianna to "take a bite out of crime."

Culbert

continued from page 1

Culbert is an ideal person for the project, as he has spent more than two decades working with students, and has already been involved in the development of a state-of-the-art electronic career advising program called *Profile MD*, which assists students in understanding and prioritizing their career needs.

Culbert, a trained sociologist, says his experience of working closely with students will work to his advantage when developing the new advising plan. "I've been working with students. I know what influences them in their decision making, and I understand many of the problems they face. With that knowledge, I can help to develop a program that will best meet their needs."

"Being appointed a scholar-in-residence by the AAMC is a well-deserved honor for Dr. Culbert," says BUSM Dean Aram Chobanian, MD, provost of the BU Medical Campus. "He has been an outstanding head of Student Affairs at the school of medicine and will play an important role at the AAMC in developing national programs in career advising of medical students." ✧

BMC HealthNet Plan enrollment under way

BMC and Boston HealthNet health centers have begun enrolling members in the BMC HealthNet Plan (BMCHP), a ground-breaking, innovative program that will provide full medical coverage to many of the state's uninsured.

More than 1,000 applications have been received since enrollment began in early September, says Robert Witzburg, MD, medical director of the plan, who adds that the goal is to enroll approximately 50,000 members in the first three years.

Those enrolled in this comprehensive, full-service, pre-paid health plan receive a BMCHP membership card and have access to adult, adolescent and pediatric primary care, obstetrics, an intensive care nursery, trauma treatment, HIV testing, appropriate doctor visits, necessary hospital services, and 24-hour emergency care. The insurance plan is accepted at BMC and the 11 Boston HealthNet health centers.

BMCHP is distinct and different from the pilot free-care program, The HealthNet Plan. That program will, for the foreseeable future, remain an option for those individuals who do not meet the state's eligibility criteria for MassHealth (previously Medicaid) and cannot enroll in BMCHP. The hope, according to Witzburg, is that most members currently enrolled in The HealthNet Plan will transfer to BMCHP. Patients with questions concerning the plan should be referred to the eligibility counselors at BMC or the Boston HealthNet health centers.

In anticipation of the increasing number of applicants and members, Witzburg says a significant number of people are being added to the BMC and BMCHP staffs. Kate Ackerman, MD, Department of Geriatrics, has been named as quality coordinator for the plan. "Dr. Ackerman has an extensive background in managed care and quality improvement," says Witzburg. "Her appointment reflects our commitment to providing the highest quality health care to members of the community." The program has also hired 20 enrollment counselors.

BMCHP, in compliance with state requirements, offers two coverage programs: MassHealth Standard and MassHealth Basic. Patients will be enrolled in one of the programs, based on state-mandated eligibility criteria. Patients switching to the plan from the state's MassHealth plan are eligible for the same benefits through the MassHealth Standard package. In addition, individuals previously not eligible for MassHealth may now be eligible for medical coverage through the plan under the state's expansion of MassHealth.

Training sessions continue for administrative and clerical staff, as well as for clinicians, in an effort to familiarize all staff with the "ins" and "outs" of the program. The sessions are scheduled at Boston University Medical Center and at the Boston HealthNet centers. Witzburg urges all staff members to attend.

For more information concerning the training sessions, call 534-6130. Providers who have questions on the BMCHP should call 888-566-0008. ✧

NEWS MEDIA

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

- **Nezam Afdahl, MD**, chief of Hepatology at BMC and associate professor of medicine at BUSM, discussed the treatment of Hepatitis C on WLVI-TV Channel 56 News and WABU's *Doctors on Call.*
- **Sanford Auerbach, MD**, director of the Sleep Disorders Center at BMC and assistant professor of neurology and psychiatry at BUSM, was interviewed by the *Boston Herald* about sleep schedules for children.
- **Nefal Istfan, MD, PhD**, medical director of the Nutrition Program at BMC and associate professor of medicine at BUSM, appeared on WHDH-TV Channel 7 News and WCVB-TV Channel 5 News regarding the diet drug Phen-Fen.
- The *Boston Business Journal* discussed the need for more certified workers in the biotech industry with **Randy D. Krauss, PhD**, an instructor of biochemistry at BUSM and laboratory coordinator of BUSM's CityLab.
- **Ron Medzon, MD**, Emergency Department physician at BMC, was quoted in the *Boston Herald* about the hazards of mixing alcohol and antidepressants.

SDM celebrates 35th anniversary

At the SDM "Welcome Back Breakfast" last month celebrating the school's 35th anniversary, (from left) Beverly Fraser, administrative assistant for External Affairs; Glenn Kaufhold, director of Development; Christine McDonald, director of communication for External Affairs; and Mari Megias, communications specialist, brightened the morning with free coffee, juice, bagels and T-shirts in the lobby of the Goldman School of Dental Medicine building.

The doors swung open for the first students at SDM more than three decades ago under founding Dean Henry M. Goldman, DMD. To celebrate 35 years of providing the best in dental education, SDM started the 1997/1998 academic year with a "Welcome Back Breakfast" for staff and students.

Established in 1963 as part of Boston University Medical Center, the school's mission is to provide superior education to dental professionals, to pursue advanced basic and clinical research in oral medicine, and to offer outstanding health care services to the community within a respectful and supportive environment. From a small brownstone on East Concord Street to a seven-story educational, clinical and research facility, SDM has maintained its success in fulfilling this mission.

With a faculty of nearly 300 educators, clinicians and researchers, SDM continues to offer a full spectrum of postdoctoral specialty education, as well as a complete range of dental programs and degrees to approximately 600 students annually. Currently, there are more than 3,000 SDM graduates practicing throughout the world. ✧

ONtrack

Bills due by Oct. 13
With fiscal year 1997 ending on Sept. 30, all BMC bills related to the past fiscal year must be received by the Accounts Payable Department no later than noon on Monday, Oct. 13.

Any departments with bills that have not been submitted by the deadline because there is a discrepancy or the invoice for services has not yet been received, must e-mail or send a memo to the appropriate Accounting Department so an expense accrual can be made. The e-mail or memo should include: department, account number, sub-code and cost center, vendor name, the dollar amount and the date services or materials were received.

It is vital that all invoices and accruals are processed to ensure the hospital's fiscal 1997 financial statements are accurate, and no departments are charged in fiscal 1998 for expenses incurred this past year.

MBTA adds rush hour service to South Shore
With the initiation of the Old Colony commuter rail line last month, Boston University Medical Center employees living on the South Shore can now travel to and from work during rush hour with the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA). Trains originating in the Middleborough/Lakeville and Plymouth/Kingston areas will travel to South Station, stopping at Quincy Center and Braintree for connections to the Red Line. Full service to the South Shore is expected to begin in mid-November. Information concerning schedules, prices, location of stations and parking at each station are available at information kiosks in lobbies throughout the medical center or by calling the Transportation Office at 638-7473 or 638-7477.

Payroll Department moving
Effective Monday, Oct. 6, the BMC Payroll Department is consolidating its operations into Vose Hall, room 401, on the East Newton Street Campus. The payroll offices at 818 Harrison Ave. and 1010 Massachusetts Ave. will no longer exist. For employee convenience, a payroll timecard drop-off and paycheck distribution center will be located in room 226 in Vose Hall. Timecards can also be brought to 1010 Massachusetts Ave. on the sixth floor and room 223 in Vose Hall (East Newton Street Campus timecards only) no later than 10 a.m. on Mondays. For more information, contact Chris Mullen, payroll manager, at 638-7406.

Outdoor playground for Pediatrics planned

Many of the children in the Pediatrics Inpatient Unit are anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Mermaids Fountain and Adventure House, two structures to be installed as part of BMC's new rooftop outdoor playground at the Inpatient Building on the Harrison Avenue Campus.

Construction of the playground, funded by the BMC Kids Fund in collaboration with Celtics Wives Save Lives, is expected to begin this month. The Celtics Wives Save Lives, a fund-raising organization formed in 1991 by wives and significant others of Boston Celtics players, has raised more than $75,000 for the playground.

After meeting with several groups of young patients, clinicians and child life advocates, Rose Bailey, project manager, recommended the theme "It Takes A Village," modeled after the title of First Lady Hillary Clinton's book. The goals of the playground are to encourage social interaction, self-expression, experimentation and most importantly, provide a safe and nurturing environment.

"The playground, with equipment to climb on in fresh air and sunshine, will give children a chance to play and forget their illnesses," says Meryl Langbort, director of The Kids Fund.

Located on the fourth floor of the Inpatient Building, adjacent to the Pediatric Inpatient Unit, the 2,000-square-foot playground will be visible from pediatric patient rooms and is expected to open in early spring of next year.✧

Guidelines to working with media

The Corporate Communications Department (CC) at Boston University Medical Center focuses a significant amount of resources on raising the visibility of BUSM, SPH, SDM and BMC. In addition, the department responds to media requests, counsels staff who have media needs and publishes internal publications, including *Boston University Medicine, MedCenter News* and *This Week.*

Interaction with the media is a common occurrence at Boston University Medical Center. In order to ensure the department's effectiveness, the Corporate Communications staff offers the following guidelines to assist employees:

- Refer all media calls to CC at 638-8491.
- Staff members and employees who have agreed to an interview with a member of the media should notify CC. The staff will follow the story and any subsequent publicity.
- CC facilitates camera crew and media representative visits to the hospital. The department organizes all aspects of the visits, including scheduling, parking and entrance to the facility. If any visit is scheduled, CC must be notified as soon as possible.
- Physicians, professors and researchers whose studies are going to be published in professional journals should notify CC as soon as they are notified of the article's acceptance. With advance preparation, the staff can optimize potential media coverage locally, regionally and nationally.
- Media requests for patient information must be directed to CC. The department usually releases only one-word conditions to the media. In some cases, however, the patient or a family member may allow the hospital to release further details. CC staff follows BMC policy while protecting patient confidentiality.
- Director of Corporate Communications Ellen Berlin and Media Relations Manager Gina DiGravio-Wilczewski are the media relations contacts and can be reached at 638-8491 to help with media inquiries and to discuss possible story ideas.

For more information on these guidelines or for assistance with media relations, call CC at 638-8491. ✧

CALENDAR

October

20 Seminar — The Health Law Department at SPH and BUSM are presenting a seminar entitled *Patients' Rights in Managed Care* at the George Sherman Union Conference Auditorium on the Charles River Campus, from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. The conference, featuring speakers from SPH and BUSM, examines whether the concept of patients' rights is compatible with the concept of managed care, whether adequate mechanisms exist to protect the rights of patients, and whether new substantive or procedural rights should be developed. The cost is $150. For more information, call 638-4626.

22 Benefits Fair — Sponsored by Human Resources, the Benefits Fair is aimed at providing employees information on the benefits that are available at BMC. It will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 22, and Thursday, Oct. 23, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Conference Rooms A and B in the cafeteria on the Harrison Avenue Campus, and Conference Rooms A and B in the cafeteria on the East Newton Street Campus. Information concerning open enrollment will be available at the fair.

25 City Year cleanup — Volunteers from City Year will be performing a massive community-service project throughout the city. The volunteers will work at BMC and throughout the surrounding neighborhood. To request an area for City Year volunteers to work on, call David Hinchen, assistant director of the Volunteer Services Department, at 534-7153.

31 Pumpkin Decorating Contest — Entry forms for the third annual Pumpkin Decorating Contest should be completed and returned to Scott Tripp on the East Newton Street Campus or Alan Levine on the Harrison Avenue Campus by Friday, Oct. 17. Pumpkins are available on Thursday, Oct. 23, from the Food and Nutrition Department to those who returned the entry forms by Oct. 17. Pumpkins should be decorated in a manner that reflects your department's role at BMC and brought to the appropriate campus cafeteria by 9 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 31. Trophies will be awarded to the top three winners at each campus, and the first-place winners will also receive a catered meal for all members of their department or cost center. The awards ceremony will take place in the appropriate cafeteria at 1 p.m. on Oct. 31.

Finishing touches being placed on Talbot

The new home of SPH will be celebrated with an official grand opening ceremony of the Talbot Building on Friday, Oct. 24. The ceremony will include a reception, ribbon cutting and tours of the building, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Kevin Dunn, project manager, says the finishing touches are being made and tenants are expected to move into the building shortly.

Renovations to the oldest building on the medical campus began in April 1996 and involved extensive work, both structurally and cosmetically.

An Open House for the BU Medical Campus community is also being planned for Friday, Dec. 19. For more information about purchasing tickets to the October event, call 638-4640. ✧

Environmental Services Week

Wanda Phipps, BMC Environmental Services, enjoys the luncheon honoring Environmental Services employees. BMC recognized National Environmental Services Week, Sept. 15 - Sept. 21, by holding breakfasts, luncheons and dinners for all Environmental Services staff.

People

New Appointments

Michael Barricelli has been appointed director of Financial Operations at BMC. Prior to BMC, he served as director of Finance at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center. There, he oversaw accounting, treasury and reimbursement. He was also responsible for accounts payable and payroll functions for the medical center's clinical operations, including the teaching hospital, two community hospitals, the faculty practice plan and other affiliated entities.

His other functions included directing the consolidation of the finance operations, which had been previously dispersed throughout various entities, as well as the conversion to the core software applications of the medical center. Barricelli obtained his bachelor's degree from Northeastern University.

Brian Jack, MD

New vice chairs for Family Medicine Department

Two key positions in the new departments of Family Medicine at BMC and BUSM have been filled.

Brian Jack, MD, who started in August, is the vice chairman for Academic Affairs, and **Glennon O'Grady, MD**, who started in September, is serving as vice chairman for Clinical Services. Between them, they bring close to 30 years of experience in the field of family medicine. At BU Medical Center, Jack's responsibilities will include overseeing residencies, fellowships and undergraduate affairs within the department. O'Grady is responsible for increasing the presence of family medicine as a discipline throughout the organization, as well as in the community.

Jack, a family medicine physician for more than 15 years, comes to BMC from Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island, where he served as an associate professor of family medicine.

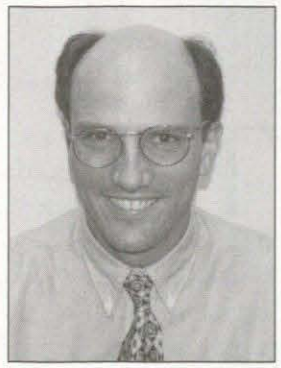
Jack received his bachelor's degree in biology in 1977 from Clark University and his medical degree from the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1981. He completed his residency training in family medicine at Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island in 1984, serving as chief resident in his final year. He has also completed a fellowship in obstetrics and family medicine at the University of Washington Medical School, Spokane, Wa.

Nationally recognized in the field of family medicine, Jack has received numerous honors and awards, including the 1989-1990 Teacher of the Year award from the Department of Family Medicine at Brown University. He was also a 1992 nominee for the Young Professional Award, Maternal and Child Health Section, American Public Health Association, and received a Special Citation of Recognition for Work in Developing Family Medicine from the mayor of the second district of Budapest, Hungary in 1995.

An author of numerous articles and publications, Jack also belongs to many national academic organizations including, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine, the American Medical Association and the American Public Health Association

O'Grady comes to BMC from Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, where he held the position of medical director since 1989. While there, he managed the medical services program of a multi-specialty group medical practice, which included 33 physicians, six nurse practitioners and 24 family practice residents. The practice served approximately 27,000 patients. O'Grady was a family practice physician in obstetrics throughout his time at the center and was also acting director of the center's residency program from 1991 to 1993. He also worked as a staff member in the Department of Family Medicine at Lawrence General Hospital.

A member of many professional organizations, including the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Massachusetts Medical Society and the Society of Teachers in Family Medicine, O'Grady was also involved in various teaching activities at Beverly Hospital, Hitchcock Medical School, Harvard University, Tufts University, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Vermont and Dartmouth University.



Glennon O'Grady, MD

A 1981 graduate of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, O'Grady received his medical degree from Tufts University Medical School in 1985. He served as a resident in the Brown University Family Medicine Residency program and at Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island. He completed his training in 1988, serving as chief resident in his final year.

A leader in his field, O'Grady has received many awards and honors for his work, including the Chrysallis Award in 1995 and the 1994 Clinical Education and Training Award, presented by the National Association of Community Health Centers in Miami. He was also named Medical Director of the Year in 1994 by the New England Community Health Centers Association.

LOCAL HERO

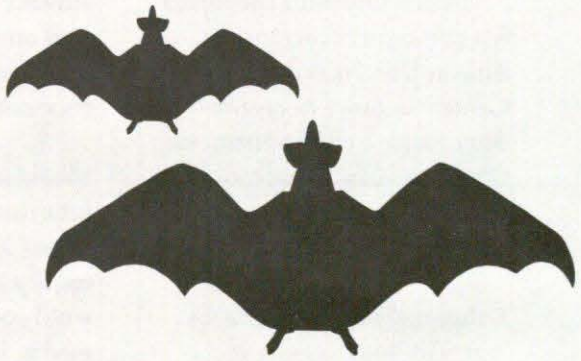
Simple requests that are often taken for granted, such as asking for a glass of water, become major obstacles for patients who cannot communicate in English. This month's local hero, BMC interpreter Marie Civil, removes these road blocks by ensuring that all patients are understood.

"Everyone needs someone to talk to, especially when at the hospital," says Civil, who specializes in Haitian Creole. "It makes me feel so special to be able to help comfort those who are ill."

Civil spends most of her time at scheduled appointments in clinics or making rounds, helping patients communicate their needs to physicians and other caregivers. Her compassion, along with her flawless and accurate translations, has built a reputation that precedes her and causes patients and doctors to often request her by name.

"It's clear when she walks into a room, that patients and physicians are happy to see her," says Oscar Arocha, director of Interpreter Services. "Her kind, gentle nature and her friendly smile put everyone at ease."

Her job takes her beyond interpreting words, however. James Fish, Interpreter Services supervisor, shares a story characteristic of Civil's tireless commitment to BMC patients. Several months ago Civil was called in to interpret for a patient in labor, a refugee from Zaire seeking political asylum. The two women formed a strong bond as Civil helped her through the birthing process. Today Civil shares her home with the woman and her child.



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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