

# HEALTH CENTER HIGHLIGHTS

News and notes from your Community Health Center

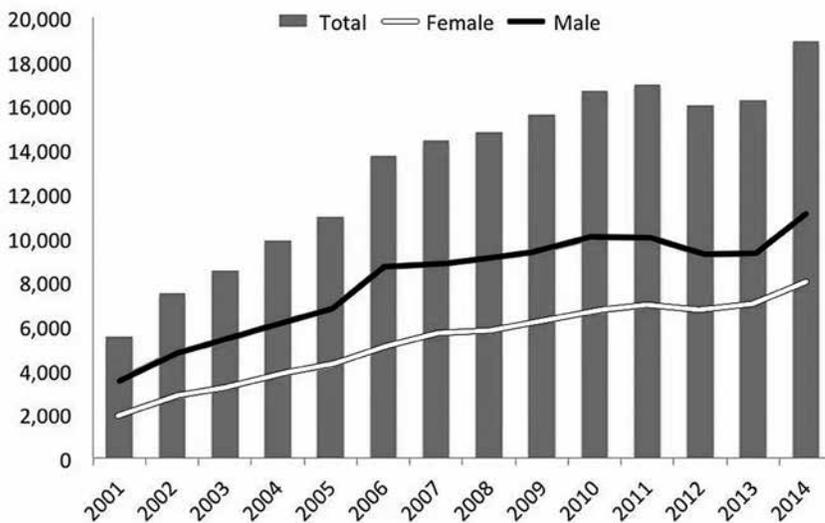


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A quarterly newsletter for HealthReach Community Health Centers

Autumn, 2017

## HealthReach Awarded \$175,000 for Behavioral Services and Opioid Crisis



In September, HRSA (the Health Resources and Services Administration) awarded \$200 million to health centers nationwide to tackle mental health and fight the opioid crisis. HealthReach will utilize our award of \$175,000 to add staffing resources, increase training, and improve the security of our computer systems. The awards are named: AIMS (Access Increases in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services).

Since 2010, HealthReach has been integrating Behavioral Health Consultants into the medical teams at each of our 11 health centers to assist patients of all ages who experience substance use or mental health issues impacting their overall health. Our social workers offer a gamut

**Among prescription drugs, opioids accounted for 73% of overdose deaths and 44% of all drug overdose deaths.**

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, CDC Wonder

*AIMS Grant...continued page 2*

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# A Message from the President



HealthReach President/CEO  
Constance Coggins

Dear Community Members,

I was fortunate to be able to attend the Annual Conference held by the Maine Primary Care Association in October. This year's theme was 'Charting CHC (Community Health Center) Value in Uncertain Times'. While there is uncertainty and potential change in the healthcare environment, the recognition of health center staff from various community health centers across the state at the 2017 Clinical and Administrative Excellence Award Ceremony at the end of the first day of the conference reminded me that some things do stay the same---there are and will continue to be talented staff members working at community health centers who have dedicated their careers to helping others. It was inspiring to hear their stories. This year, the Physician Excellence Award was renamed the 'Carol Eckert MD Memorial Award' in honor of Dr. Carol Eckert, a longtime physician at HealthReach Community Health Centers who passed away a year ago after a tragic biking accident. Her husband accepted the award in tribute to Carol. Carol's story was one of the many amazing stories we heard as each award recipient was recognized. I am thankful to have the privilege to work at a community health center.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Constance Coggins".

## AIMS Grant...continued

of services to patients throughout their life cycle including substance abuse counseling, coping with a new diagnosis, handling a life-changing event or managing a chronic condition. The AIMS funding will assist us in expanding our Behavioral Health Consultant team and supporting continuing education opportunities in substance abuse treatment for our clinical staff. HealthReach will utilize a portion of the AIMS funding to continue ensuring the latest, most robust systems are in place to safeguard the security of patient records and corporate data in the wake of multiple reports nationwide of computer viruses and security breaches.

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## Automated Appointment Reminders



"I admit, I have never been a fan of automated phone calls. So, it has been a pleasant surprise to hear from patient after patient that they like the new appointment reminder system. Times change!" Dr. Roy Miller ~ Sheepscot

In spring of this year, **Strong Area Health Center** piloted a messaging service, which gives patients 3 options for receiving automated appointment reminders: text message, email, or voice mail. It was a success! We then implemented this initiative at **Sheepscot, Madison, and Western Maine** in July. The next group of health centers, **Bethel, Bingham, and Lovejoy** will join the initiative soon. Not only does this allow front office staff at participating sites more face-to-face time with patients, our patients appreciate the option of being reminded in the manner they choose on their phone, computer

# Open Enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace

November 1<sup>st</sup> - December 15<sup>th</sup>

By Katharine Calder, Director of Development and Provider Recruitment

For the fifth year, HealthReach Connectors at each health center are available to assist patients and the general public with the Health Insurance Marketplace. **The Marketplace is for people who do not receive health coverage through a job, Medicare, Medicaid, Veteran's Healthcare or other source.**

This year, enrollment and renewal for the Health Insurance Marketplace plans starts on November 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on December 15<sup>th</sup>. **The new plans activate on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2018.** People who move, marry, deliver or adopt a baby, or experience certain other changes may be eligible for a special enrollment period outside of open enrollment. The open enrollment period this year has been shortened from 12 to 6 weeks. To make an appointment, please call your health center.

**The HealthReach Connectors are Certified Application Counselors (CACs) through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services and provide free, unbiased support.** Juanita Bean, Tina DeRaps, Crystal Fitch and Ann Schwab are ready to assist people and McKenzie Gray, VISTA member is also certified and will be traveling to health centers to work with Connectors.

**People may apply for MaineCare at any time (no open enrollment period) and HealthReach Connectors are available by appointment for this service also.**

**Starting November 1**

You can:

- ✓ RENEW
- ✓ UPDATE
- ✓ COMPARE PLANS

Health Care .gov

## National Health Center Week Revisited

*During the week of August 13th, 2017, our sites participated in recognizing National Health Center Week by engaging with partner organizations, patients, and their communities. The following are some highlights of our events that week:*

- **Belgrade Regional Health Center** held a 2-week Toiletries Drive, collecting 2 large boxes of items to benefit Mt. Vernon Baptist Church.
- **Bethel Family Health Center** enjoyed great community support for their School Supplies Drive, collecting hundreds of items for Bethel schools.
- **Lovejoy Health Center** collected over 500 items for local students at Albion Elementary School over a 2-week period.
- **Madison Area Health Center** held a Toiletries Drive, collecting several hundred items to support Madison High School's Food Cupboard. The local branch of Bangor Savings Bank generously supported the effort by donating many items.
- **Mt. Abram Regional Health Center** collected 241 pounds of food and \$250 to support their on-site Food Closet.
- **Rangeley Family Medicine** held a Well Child Check Day for school entrance and sports clearances, with a \$100 discount available after insurance, thanks to support from Rangeley Health and Wellness.
- **Richmond Area Health Center** partnered with their local library to hold a Poster Contest where kids identified and used 5-2-1-0 Let's Go! themes and images in magazines to create poster collages.
- **Sheepscot Valley Health Center** held a Student Supplies Drive, collecting over 200 items to distribute to students during well child checks.
- **Western Maine Family Health Center** staff offered a Healthy Eating Week table on-site with a different nutritious snack samples and recipes each day of the week for patients to enjoy and try making at home.



Photos (l-r): HARC participants, Functional Fitness classmates, HELP volunteers. Photos submitted by RHW.

## Rangeley Health and Wellness and HealthReach: Partners in Well-being



In 1994, a partnership with RHW (Rangeley Health and Wellness) and HealthReach (then known as Kennebec Valley Regional Health Agency) was formed to open the Rangeley Region Health Center (now Rangeley Family Medicine). The partnership between HealthReach and RHW has continued and thrived. Since that time, RHW has enhanced and expanded their vision with the construction and operation of Rangeley Fitness Center, ASCENT Rangeley Lakes Rehab, and by providing facilities and support to Rangeley Family Medicine as well as Orthotic, Podiatry, Acupuncture and Massage Therapy services.

RHW also provides a wealth of services for elders in the Rangeley region. Their HELP (Helping Elders Live in Place) committee consists of a dedicated volunteer group that provides services to the regional senior population in an effort to keep them active, happy and healthy. Current senior programming includes the following services which are generously supported through grants, municipal contributions, individual donations and the work of a volunteer corps:

**HARC (HELP Adult Respite Care) program** provides needed aid for caregivers by creating a safe place where functionally and cognitively challenged seniors can participate in activities designed specifically to enrich their daily lives. This program runs every Tuesday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. throughout the year in the lower level of Rangeley Family Medicine. The HARC program, based on the Brookdale Model focusing on participant's capabilities, experience, interests and personalities, is currently licensed with the state for up to 6 clients per day and has the ability to expand as needed.

The HELP group also runs the **Winter Senior Social Program** during January, February and March. The social program is held every Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Rangeley. The Food Pantry is also open that day in the same location and can provide some extra necessities for seniors.

**“These winter months can be a time of isolation for seniors living alone,” shared Jeanne Thorvaldsen, Executive Director at RHW. “The program offers conversation, games, cards, puzzles, adult education programs, and a noon meal.”**

**Functional Fitness** is a low-intensity strength and balancing class offered year round by Lindsay Richards, Fitness Director at RHW. These free classes provide active instruction for both the senior population and those in the rehab program. The classes are held at the Rangeley Fitness Center and at the Senior Town Houses every week.

**“The class is really for anyone,” shared Lindsay. “We work on improving balance, coordination, flexibility, and strength. The class supports participants on their individual paths to improved health and wellness.”**

**Neighbors Calling Neighbors** provides a daily phone call to seniors who appreciate a daily check-in and contact with a caring person. HELP volunteer callers have received training in listening skills and are able to make connections for additional help, when appropriate, to supply important links for these isolated individuals. Volunteer callers have paired students from the high school Interact Club (Rotary) with senior citizens needing help with chores, such as bringing the firewood in or weeding the garden. The relationship is very rewarding and beneficial to both young and old alike.

We highly value our partnership with RHW, knowing that together, we can bring resources to bear in support of our senior population, providing a safe, healthy and enriching environment for our elders across the Rangeley Region.

## New Providers at HealthReach



**Melissa Covenant, FNP** ~ Location: Madison

“Growing up without health insurance for most of my childhood has motivated me to help others with barriers to accessing medical care. I enjoy working as a primary care provider in a community health setting where I can help families who face social, economic and health disparities access quality health care.”



**Michael Landrum, DO** ~ Location: Belgrade, Richmond, Western Maine

“My philosophy is to optimize structural challenges to produce healthy function and decrease pain. In this setting, I will provide specialist assistance in the understanding and treatment of pain conditions.”



**Laurie Rodrigues, LCSW** ~ Location: Belgrade

“The position as a behavioral health consultant at Belgrade Regional Health Center appealed to me because it offers a unique opportunity to participate in an interdisciplinary team of providers in one setting where more integrative, effective and efficient care can take place.”

## New Practice Managers at HealthReach



**Priscilla Bartlett**

I am very pleased to join HealthReach and to be part of the team at **Strong Area Health and Dental Center**. I am a native of Western Maine and have worked in the medical community for 30 years. I am a married, thankful mother of three daughters and two grandchildren.

I like to spend my free time quilting and traveling with family. I look forward to working with the amazing team at Strong and am thankful for the opportunity this new adventure will bring.



**Lori Gardner**

I am excited to have the opportunity to join the team at HealthReach and more specifically, at **Richmond Area Health Center**. I am a Maine native

and I love the great outdoors. I received my Associates Degree from Angelo Community College in San Angelo, Texas. I come to the organization with 26 years of experience in the healthcare field, which includes an excellent understanding of the revenue cycle and what it takes to run a busy family practice. Change is constant in the healthcare world. I always try to bring a positive outlook to my workplace and embrace the necessary changes that we will be faced with as we move forward.

In my time away from work, I love scrap booking, traveling and spending time with my family.



**Michelle Witham-Tuttle**

I want to thank **Belgrade Regional Health Center** for choosing me to be part of their team. I cannot tell you how thrilled I am to have the opportunity to join HealthReach and work at a wonderful

practice in such a beautiful area. I live in Central Maine and have worked in the Medical field for over 20 years; 15 years at my local hospital and 8 years at another Federally Qualified Health Center. My husband and I have two children in high school. My son is a senior and my daughter is a junior. We enjoy attending and supporting my son’s soccer games and track events, my daughter’s variety of dance, traveling, and spending time at the lake.

I look forward to working with the Belgrade team, our community board and patient council, and will strive to make this the best health center for the patients we serve.

### HealthReach’s Mission:

To provide high quality, affordable, patient-centered healthcare in the medically underserved communities of Central and Western Maine



Members of a Living Well Class recently held in Kingfield

## “Even though you have an illness, there is always something you can do to make yourself feel better.”

Last year, Joy Dyer participated in a Living Well for Better Health class hosted by the Strong Area Health Center. The free series consists of two and a half hour long sessions once a week for six weeks. It is designed to help people living with chronic health conditions manage symptoms and lead active lives. Each class focuses on a different topic such as nutrition, exercise, and dealing with the frustration, pain, or fatigue associated with ongoing health conditions.

Joy participated so she could learn strategies to deal with her asthma. Each week participants develop an action plan with a personal goal for the upcoming week. Participants share their successes and work together to brainstorm solutions to any problems others encounter in reaching their goals. At the beginning of the class, Joy’s goal was to walk her dog 15 minutes each morning. She has stuck with this goal even after finishing the class. **“Now I walk my dog at least 2 miles a day. I do at least 8,000 steps a day,”** she stated. She has also lost 20 pounds and is now off one of her asthma medications.

## “My biggest hope would be that more people take advantage of this, especially the ones that have major health issues”



(l-r) Crystal Fitch, LSW, and Juanita Bean, two of HealthReach’s five trained leaders

For Joy, her biggest takeaway from the class was learning how to set realistic goals and to accept that you may not meet your goals every day. It is doing the baby steps that count. **“So I didn’t walk 10,000 steps today, but I did 6,000. I had always felt like I had failed when I didn’t meet my goal,”** she said. It was through this class that she learned how not to feel discouraged while trying to make healthy changes in her life. Crystal Fitch, a HealthReach Connector and a leader of the series, shared, **“participants often discover they are not alone in their struggles with chronic health issues.”** The support system they find with Living Well classes is a major benefit for many participants.

The series is led by a team of two trained leaders from HealthReach staff. This year HealthReach has coordinated series at local community meeting spaces in Rangeley, Bingham, Bethel, New Portland, and Kingfield.

If you would like more information about Living Well classes, contact [communications@healthreach.org](mailto:communications@healthreach.org).

### Share Your Story!

Do you have a positive HealthReach experience to share like Joy did? Visit our website and click on the “Your Stories” tile.

“I had always wanted to become a small town doc since I was a little kid going to a small town office for my allergy shots.”



In August of 1993, Dr. Kevin Finley joined Bethel Family Health Center, just two months after Dr. Richard DeCarolis had arrived.

“It was not much of a coincidence that we ended up here together,” shared Kevin. “Richard and I knew each other in medical school and we were both interested in the same residency program. After residency, we were both looking for rural family practice and a chance to get our loans paid. Bethel was a National Health Service Corps repayment site, so he found it first and notified me of an opening. We were able to get the loans paid off and build the practice to what it is today. Some providers might only stay long enough to get out of debt, but Richard and I both worked to see how we could make it work long term. And here we are over 24 years later!”

Kevin could have pursued any number of paths in medicine, but he had an appreciation of family practice instilled in him at an early age.

“I had always wanted to become a small town doc since I was a little kid going to a small town office for my allergy shots. My grandfather was a small town doc who delivered most of the town and spent most of his time doing house calls,” recalled Kevin. “We still do some house calls, but not like we used to. I love the idea of getting to know the entire family, across many generations. It’s like looking into the future for some patients, as they are often just like their parents or grandparents in so many ways.”

Kevin has actively participated in community events since he arrived to practice in Bethel. He joined Rotary in 1994 and has been on the board since then, serving twice as president. Most recently, beginning in 2016, Kevin was integral in organizing a successful May Day 5K race in Bethel, for the purpose of creating an event for parents and children to come together and engage in healthy pursuits and friendly competition. For this year’s 5K, they made registration free for kids age 17 and under and participation increased significantly, with great support from the community.

Kevin is a terrific role model for his patients, in that he lives the active, healthy lifestyle that he recommends - plenty of exercise and a well-balanced diet.



Kevin Finley in a ready stance with his Sensei, Kristen O’Conner in Bethel

“I especially enjoy educating patients on the importance of physical strength. I encourage them to push themselves to do just a little bit more than they feel they can. Our body is just a bag of bones held up by muscle. Unfortunately, we are all losing muscle as we age and gravity is always against us! We have two choices as we age: we can live or we can exist. If you do nothing and retire to the recliner, you exist. If you stay strong with regular strength training, you will live and enjoy life.”

Aside from working at a bustling health center and engaging in efforts to improve the communities he serves, Kevin has many passions.

“It seems like I do not have a lot of ‘free’ time, but I enjoy doing almost anything active. I am the captain of my dart team, I like to ski, hike, play golf and recently, I was promoted to Black Belt in Kyokushin Karate. I enjoy spending time traveling with my 17 year old daughter and hearing all the drama in the day-to-day life of a teenage girl! I enjoy cooking, but find that time is often a barrier. Fortunately, my dishes tend to turn out really well, but I improvise so much, they are never the same!”



**Belgrade Regional Health Center**  
2,060 patients totaling  
6,859 visits in 2016



**Bethel Family Health Center**  
3,764 patients totaling  
12,236 visits in 2016



**Bingham Area Health & Dental Center**  
2,316 patients totaling  
5,695 visits in 2016



**Lovejoy Health Center**  
4,029 patients totaling  
14,049 visits in 2016



**Madison Area Health Center**  
2,045 patients totaling  
7,931 visits in 2016



**Mt. Abram Regional Health Center**  
1,526 patients totaling  
4,368 visits in 2016



**Rangeley Family Medicine**  
1,527 patients totaling  
3,480 visits in 2016



**Richmond Area Health Center**  
2,697 patients totaling  
8,621 visits in 2016



**Sheepscot Valley Health Center**  
4,027 patients totaling  
13,536 visits in 2016



**Strong Area Health & Dental Center**  
3,444 patients totaling  
11,615 visits in 2016



**Western Maine Family Health Center**  
2,330 patients totaling  
6,809 visits in 2016

## HealthReach Patients Can Now Pay Online

**Do you pay your bills online? Many of us do, and now our patients can too!**

A 'Pay a Bill' tile now appears on our homepage and 'Pay a Bill' buttons are located on each of our health center webpages, enabling patients to pay HealthReach bills whenever it is convenient for them.



The 'Pay a Bill' functionality offers two different options. A patient may either: set up an account with InstaMed, our credit card processing vendor, allowing for automated payments or a payment plan arrangement; or a one-time 'Make a Payment' option may be used by a patient entering information from her bill.

## WELCOME

July - October 2017

- **Kelly Barnes**  
Medical Assistant ~ Lovejoy
- **Priscilla Bartlett**  
Practice Manager ~ Strong
- **Melissa Covenant**  
Family Nurse Practitioner ~ Madison
- **Lori Gardner**  
Practice Manager ~ Richmond
- **Brittany Gould**  
Clinical Support Specialist ~ Belgrade
- **Dianne Grudda**  
Medical Records Technician ~ Lovejoy
- **Christie King**  
Family Nurse Practitioner ~ Mt. Abram
- **Peter Mackin**  
Medical Assistant ~ Lovejoy
- **Britney Michaud**  
Report Writer ~ Central
- **Laurie Rodrigues**  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker ~ Belgrade
- **Shannon Santillo**  
Medical Assistant ~ Bethel
- **Deborah Staier**  
Patient Service Representative ~ Strong
- **Rachel Steward**  
Registered Nurse ~ Madison
- **Hollie Vitale**  
Patient Service Representative ~ Bethel
- **Mia Wentworth**  
Patient Service Representative ~ Belgrade
- **Michelle Witham-Tuttle**  
Practice Manager ~ Belgrade

## MILESTONES

July - October 2017

### 30 Year Anniversaries

- Juanita Bean**  
Connector ~ Central
- Eileen Castonguay**  
LPN, Care Manager ~ Western ME

### 20 Year Anniversaries

- Carolyn Tranten**  
Director of Operations ~ Central

### 15 Year Anniversaries

- Kathleen Lecowitch**  
Medical Assistant ~ Western ME

### **Angela Ward**

- Patient Account Representative ~ Central

### 10 Year Anniversaries

- Kimberly Harrington**  
Patient Service Representative ~ Bethel

### 5 Year Anniversaries

- Shelby Banks**  
Patient Service Representative ~ Mt. Abram
- JoHanna Davis**  
Family Nurse Practitioner ~ Madison
- Judith Day**  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker ~ Richmond
- Samantha Hamlin**  
Medical Assistant ~ Lovejoy
- Kathleen Lord**  
RN, Care Manager ~ Lovejoy
- Devin Ponsant**  
Medical Assistant ~ Richmond