

## Early Childhood Intervention Leads to Academic Achievement

*Changing the lives of families through home visiting program*



“When Leonardo started the program, he was non-verbal and using sign language to communicate his needs,” recounts ParentChild+ mentor Lindsay Tillou. “Working with him and his parents, he made steady progress and began to make sounds within six months of starting the program. Now, at the end of the second year, he can count, sing, name colors and even ask simple questions. We are so proud of him!”

Six home mentors, like Lindsay, are visiting over 40 families in the Southern Berkshires to deliver the **ParentChild+** program to children between 16 months and 3.5 years. Mentors visit families weekly, following a set curriculum and bringing a book or a toy that facilitates a learning activity. Children benefit from the

educational aspect of the activity, parents benefit from developing positive parenting skills, and both benefit from spending quality time together. Parents are tasked with repeating the activity between visits to reinforce the lessons learned. By the end of the year, each child has 12 age-appropriate books and 11 high-quality educational toys. For some children, these books and toys are some of the only ones in the house.

**The program is open to all families in the southern Berkshires. It is especially beneficial for those who face obstacles such as language or literacy barriers, poverty, or parenting as a young adult.**

Research demonstrates that early childhood home visiting programs develop protective factors by equipping parents with knowledge about parenting and child development, and providing concrete support in times of need. Participating in ParentChild+ also helps connect families to other CHP Family Services programs and resources.

After completing the program, children emerge with improved cognitive skills and go on to have higher academic achievement and high school graduation rates compared to their peers. Program coordinator Katelyn

*continued on page 7*



*Watson and ParentChild+ mentor, Lindsay Tillou, practice age-appropriate developmental skills using educational toys and books.*

## You Can Make a Difference!

Interested in sponsoring a **ParentChild+** field trip to local institutions such as the Berkshire Botanical Gardens, Hancock Shaker Village, Winterlights, and more?

**Contact Carrie Barth, Senior Director of Grants & Philanthropy, at 413.528.9311 x1179.**

## CHP Leadership

**Bethany Kieley**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Eva Sheridan**  
Senior VP, Human Resources

**Andrew Beckwith, MD**  
Chief Medical Officer

**Thomas Duchesne**  
Senior VP, Operations

**Mary Feuer**  
Director of WIC and  
Family Services

## Board of Directors

**Brian Drake**  
President

**Allyson Holmes**  
Vice President

**Chuck Leach**  
Treasurer

**Arlene D. Schiff**  
Secretary

Lina Maria Barstow  
Erik Bruun  
Gloria Escobar  
Dena Fisher  
Tom Flynn  
Christopher J. McLaughlin  
Rachel Melendez-Mabee  
Katherine Westgate

## Our Mission

Our mission is to nurture and inspire healthy lives for people throughout the Berkshires by delivering exceptional and compassionate health care and family services.

## Building CHP's Workforce Today is an Investment in the Health of Tomorrow



In the rural healthcare landscape around the U.S., community health centers like ours face unique challenges in recruiting qualified professionals for patient care positions. We compete with urban and suburban regions where healthcare education and jobs tend to concentrate and with regional healthcare organizations for our limited local talent pool. So, how do we stand out?

Providing competitive pay and benefits often isn't enough. We must also shine a light on our unique workplace mission and culture, our Berkshire lifestyle, great schools and communities.

But we do more. We take charge of our own workforce development with on-the-job training to build our staff, and we financially support our team members' professional advancement. As you'll soon read, our first on-the-job Medical Assistant training program is now underway. We've also developed a pilot project for on-the-job training for dental assistants. Our preceptor program for newly graduated family nurse practitioners provides the mentorship they need to settle into new clinical roles and build their panels of patients.

We also offer financial support to employees who seek education to become registered nurses and licensed practical nurses. To help our doctors and nurses with student loan debt, we facilitate federal loan repayment support to help ease their financial burden.

## Our commitment to investing in the next generation of healthcare professionals is also a commitment to ensuring the health of future generations of the Berkshire community.

By creating professional development opportunities for our team members, we support the Berkshires economy in addition to supporting hundreds of local families. We are proud that we offer long-time and new Berkshires residents easier access to healthcare, a doorway into healthcare professions, and an elevator to move upward in life and work.

A handwritten signature of Bethany Kieley in black ink. The signature is stylized and cursive, with the first letter 'B' being large and prominent. Below the signature, the text "Bethany Kieley, CEO" is printed in a simple, sans-serif font.

Bethany Kieley, CEO

**P.S. Flip to page 7 for exciting news!**



---

# Creating Partnerships to Cultivate Local Talent

## CHP receives grant to launch medical assistant training program



*From left to right: CHP CEO, Bethany Kieley, with medical assistant trainees Nicole Sprague, Melissa Twing, Anastasia Girard, program director Amanda Galvagni, and Dakotah Hunt.*

“When I saw this opportunity to earn an income, learn a new skill set, and put me on a career track in the medical field, I knew this was the right program for me. It gives me the chance to get my foot in the door as a Medical Assistant and possibly go even further if I like it,” shares Melissa Twing, Medical Assistant-in-training.

Melissa is one of four participants in the inaugural cohort of CHP’s Medical Assistant Training Program. As part of the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s \$16.3 million investment in workforce development across the Commonwealth,

the MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board has awarded grant funds to CHP to build a talent pipeline to support the delivery of healthcare services in the Berkshires. Across the country, there is a shortage of healthcare workers. This statewide initiative attracts new talent and further improves existing talent. CHP’s program participants reside in the towns of Adams, Lanesborough, and Pittsfield.

Program participants will complete a 26-week training program, emerging with a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant credential and a two-year job placement with CHP. Participants will complete clinical rotations across CHP’s medical offices, gaining hands-on experience and mentorship.

Cohorts are set to launch every six months through the end of 2026, to train and certify 15 new Medical Assistants over three years. **Interested participants should email [HR@chpberkshires.org](mailto:HR@chpberkshires.org) for more information about how to apply during the next application period.**

---

## Mark Your Calendars—CHP Prepares to Celebrate 50 Years in 2025!

Do you have stories, mementos, or photos of CHP from years past? We are collecting examples of CHP’s work in the community over its 50-year history and would love to hear from you.

To send submissions or join our mailing list to stay informed about special events marking the 50th anniversary throughout 2025, please **email Karen Martin at [kmartin1@chpberkshires.org](mailto:kmartin1@chpberkshires.org).**



# All Kids Deserve a Lifetime of Smiles

*CHP stands out as a dental care provider for children*



For pediatric patients with Mass-Health insurance, it has become increasingly difficult to find a dentist. CHP dental practices are one of only two dental groups in the Berkshires that accept these 6,500 patients.

Lack of dental care for children leads to cavities, pain, speech delays, challenges with eating and digestion, low

self-esteem, and in severe cases, can even interfere with school attendance and academic achievement. Tooth decay is the #1 chronic disease among children in the United States with more than 40% of children having had some amount of tooth decay by the time they reach kindergarten. At CHP, 75% of pediatric dental patients require special

treatment to protect against cavities, underscoring the importance of CHP's recent efforts to expand access to dental care.

Plans are in development to deploy the CHP Mobile Dental Unit to offer basic dental hygiene services and education to students at local public schools once renovations are complete on a new Great Barrington Family Dental facility at 444 Stockbridge Rd. Partnering with schools will reach both students and parents. CHP's outreach efforts will help identify children who need essential dental care during a formative time in life. When it comes to a lifetime of smiles, good oral hygiene habits are formed during childhood.

**Great Barrington Family Dental will be fully operational by the end of September 2024 in its brand-new location. The team is ready to see patients of all ages in their state-of-the-art facility, just call and speak to one of our friendly receptionists at 413.528.5565.**

**Lack of dental care for children leads to cavities, pain, speech delays, challenges with eating and digestion, low self-esteem, and in severe cases, can even interfere with school attendance and academic achievement.**





# On the Road to Better Health

*The value of mobile health in our community*

Between July 2023 and July 2024, CHP's Mobile Health team criss-crossed the county holding 503 clinics at town halls, fire stations, libraries, senior housing, shelters, public events, and parks.

**Accessibility:** Not everyone can easily get to a medical facility. Lack of nearby options or transportation issues can get in the way of seeing a doctor.

**Approachability:** Some people don't feel at ease in traditional healthcare spaces. The Mobile Health clinics meet them where they are, delivering care to those who are less likely to come into our brick-and-mortar locations.

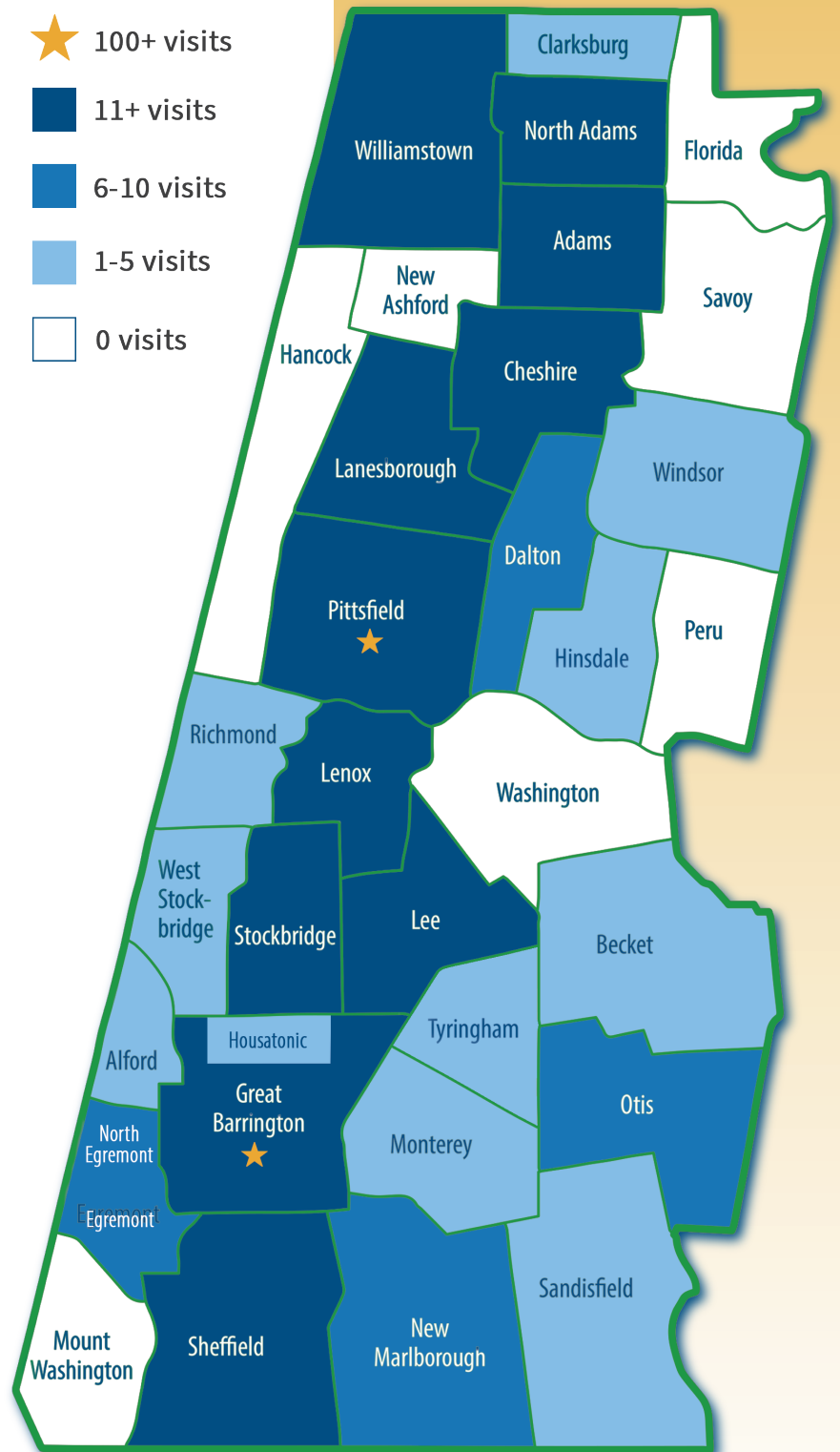
**Flexibility:** The Mobile Health team can change direction quickly and easily, responding to urgent needs within the community—such as offering Covid-19 vaccinations during the pandemic.

**Outreach:** In addition to providing health care services, the Mobile Health team connects patients to much-needed social support services such as WIC, housing assistance, food and nutrition programs, insurance enrollment, and more.

With the generous support of community partners and donors, the Mobile Health Units are kept fueled up and on the road!

**Would you like us to visit your location?**  
Call us at 413.528.0457!

**CHP delivers health-care to all corners of Berkshire County!**



For more info, scan the code or visit [chpberkshires.org/mobile\\_health](http://chpberkshires.org/mobile_health)

# Reducing Insurance Inequities in Our Community

*Patient Navigators team connects those in need with insurance options*



*Pediatric patient, Wesley, visits Laura Gariepy, FNP, for an annual check-up.*

CHP's promise to provide quality care to those who need it involves not only providing them with health services but also guaranteeing that insurance coverage or payment aren't barriers to accessing care.

Beginning in 2022, CHP received grant funding from the Massachusetts Health Connector Navigator Grant program to partially cover the cost of the organization's team of Certified Application Counselors – known at CHP as Patient Navigators. The team works across the county, assisting hundreds of Berkshire County residents who are uninsured or underinsured, providing guidance on the Massachusetts Health Connector – the state's agency that connects residents without health coverage to available plans based on income level.

**Patient Navigator services are available to any resident of the Berkshires who needs assistance. The program is designed to help the most vulnerable Berkshire populations—**

**uninsured residents, immigrants, and families who earn below the Federal Poverty Level.**

CHP's Patient Navigators have found that their services are particularly valuable to those in the farming and landscaping workforce who do not speak English as a first language. These workers are the backbone of the Berkshires' seasonal tourism. The bilingual skills of the Patient Navigators are an immense asset to this program. Lead Navigator William Cruz explains that his team is "responsible for assisting uninsured people in completing an application, selecting a health plan and answering questions about health insurance, Open Enrollment, and renewing coverage."

As part of the grant program, CHP's Patient Navigators also do outreach to promote their services in the community. Mr. Cruz explained that "the immigrant communities in our county are well organized and gather at multicultural events and

churches. Connecting with this important segment of our CHP patients has been very successful and very effective." Additional outreach locations have included food pantries, family centers, and community colleges, as well as presentations at community meetings, tables at local health fairs, announcements on radio stations, and ads in widely distributed Berkshire newspapers. Local partnerships have been crucial to connecting the community to our Patient Navigators.

Thanks to the success of the Patient Navigator program and CHP's ability to demonstrate its success in reducing inequities in insurance coverage, CHP has continued to secure grant funding from the state, allowing the team's work to expand its reach and impact.

**Our team of navigators is available at [enrollment@chpberkshires.org](mailto:enrollment@chpberkshires.org) or by calling 413.854.2816.**

**We encourage anyone looking for assistance with insurance enrollment and financial options to contact us.**



For more info, scan the code or visit [chpberkshires.org/insurance-help/](https://chpberkshires.org/insurance-help/)

## For your information:

**1 in 3 CHP patients are on public health insurance; your generosity guarantees that they have access to high quality health and dental care.**



## Early Childhood Intervention Leads to Academic Achievement

*continued from page 1*



*Winifred and ParentChild+ mentor, Lindsay Tillou, use imaginative play to connect and learn.*

Parks also organizes an annual field trip and end of year celebration to bring the families together. “Local support from generous donors helps make special outings possible for our families,” says Katelyn. “Opportunities to practice social skills with other children is another way we help prepare the children for school.”



For more info, scan the code or visit [chpberkshires.org/parent-child-home-program/](http://chpberkshires.org/parent-child-home-program/)

## Your Gifts Make Our Work Possible

*One sentence can make a lifetime of difference!*

To leave a gift in your will, simply share this sentence with your attorney or financial planner:

“I bequeath \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ % of my estate to Community Health Programs, Inc., 444 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230.”

For more information, contact Carrie Barth, Senior Director of Grants and Philanthropy at **413.528.9311 ext. 1179** or by email at [cbarth@chpberkshires.org](mailto:cbarth@chpberkshires.org).

## BIG NEWS!

### Double Your Dollar

*CHP launches its first-ever matching challenge!*

A generous local donor has stepped forward and committed to matching dollar for dollar first-time gifts to CHP and increased gifts from current donors to a maximum of \$50,000.

#### Make a gift today to double the impact of your generosity!

When you give, lives change. Because of you, CHP offers a wide range of social support and healthcare services that impact the lives of hundreds of Berkshire families each year. Your donation ensures that:

- No one is denied health or dental care due to insurance status or inability to pay.
- There is enough fresh, nutritious food available for any families that struggle to put meals on the table.
- Parents are supported in raising young children by offering lactation support, diapers, formula, a children's clothing exchange, and 1-on-1 mentoring.
- Young children have the opportunity to participate in school readiness programs that give them a social and academic boost heading into elementary school.
- The CHP Mobile Health fleet is on the road – reaching friends and neighbors in every corner of Berkshire County.

The care CHP provides to the community is a reflection of your care for your friends and neighbors. CHP is grateful for the support of donors like you, who guarantee that these important, life-changing resources remain free and accessible to all. Thank you.

## Ways to Give...

- **Scan** the QR code below
- **Visit** [chpberkshires.org/donate](http://chpberkshires.org/donate)
- **Set up** a recurring monthly contribution
- **Mail a check to:**  
Community Health Programs,  
**Attention:** Grants & Philanthropy,  
444 Stockbridge Road,  
Great Barrington, MA 01230



## Committed to Taking Care of You

### *Weekend appointments to work around your busy schedule*

Behind every decision is the question “how can we continue to provide excellent care to our community?” Offering weekend appointments is one way CHP supports community members with busy schedules, including working adults and school-aged children. Earlier this summer, CHP introduced weekend telehealth appointments to treat minor concerns and follow-ups that can be addressed without an in-person evaluation.

The extended hours especially help those who face the difficult decision between showing up for their weekday shift or taking unpaid time off to get the care they need. It keeps children in school during the week instead of struggling to catch up on missed lessons. **Because we at CHP know that factors like economic stability and quality of education impact one’s health throughout a lifetime, we are committed to giving all members of the community the best possible opportunity to live healthy lives.**

Weekend telehealth appointments are available to established CHP patients and are scheduled in advance. To book an appointment, call your home CHP office and speak to a receptionist.



**Check out our BIG NEWS on page 7!**