

Health Matters

Community Health Programs | Fall 2025

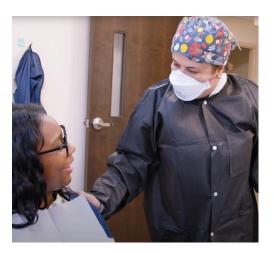
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The Value of National Health Centers

Providing quality, comprehensive healthcare to all residents

During the week of August 3rd through 9th, CHP was proud to participate in National Health Center Week, the week each year when health centers across the United States take time to honor the work of our dedicated staff and volunteers. CHP is proud to be one of 1,500 health centers nationwide who have provided quality, comprehensive healthcare services to all residents of the United States since the health center movement was born in the 1960s.

To recognize and celebrate the work we do in our community every day, CHP employees enjoyed a week-long series of luncheons at our practices across the county, allowing practitioners, staff, and administrators an opportunity to connect over our shared mission and to be honored for their hard work and dedication. CEO Bethany Kieley visited each practice during the week to thank staff and delivered CHP t-shirts and tote bags as small tokens of appreciation. Every patient who visited one of our sites during the week also received a CHP gift.





How CHCs Began

The journey of Community Health Centers (CHCs) in the U.S. began in 1965, thanks to doctors and citizens who worked together to address a critical need for affordable primary care in underserved communities. The first CHCs (originally called Neighborhood Health Centers) were funded as a demonstration project under the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity under Johnson administration. CHP is proud to be celebrating 50 years as a health center serving the Berkshires and officially became a Federally-Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in 2007.

Why CHCs Matter Today

Today, CHCs like CHP provide comprehensive primary and preventive healthcare services to underserved populations across the nation, saving lives and dollars. Established to ensure that everyone, regardless of their ability to pay, has access to high-quality healthcare, CHCs operate over 16,000 sites nationwide.

When you support CHP, you are contributing to our piece of a critical network of centers that have strengthened healthcare across the US for nearly 60 years. CHCs in the US:

- Serve 32.5 million patients annually
 1 in 10 Americans
- Provide care to approximately 1 in 5 uninsured individuals
- Serve 1 in 3 people living in poverty
- Serve 1 in 5 rural Americans
- Care for more than 1.4 million individuals experiencing homelessness
- Deliver mental health services to nearly 2.8 million patients annually

Why We Need You

Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) such as CHP rely on government support and funding to exist and operate. When the role we play comes under threat, we are at risk of not being able to serve our community as services and programs may be forced to reduce or close altogether. Your support of CHP – your local community health center – will help mitigate impacts that may come from changes occurring at the federal and state level.

Stay connected and watch for upcoming "day of service" opportunities as we continue to celebrate our 50th anniversary.

Learn more by scanning the code

CHP Leadership

Bethany KieleyChief Executive Officer

Andrew Beckwith, MDChief Medical Officer

Eric BurtonChief Financial Officer

Eva SheridanChief Human Resources
Officer

Carrie BarthVP Advancement and Family
Services

Lori GravelleVP Operations and Patient
Experience

Amy LisewskiVP Innovation, Technology &
Communications

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Our Mission

To nurture and inspire healthy lives for people throughout the Berkshires by delivering exceptional and compassionate health care and family services.

Stand Up for Community Health

Your voice and support can protect care for 32,000 Berkshire neighbors

Dear Friends,

I'm writing to you at a time of real uncertainty for CHP Berkshires and for community health centers across the country.

Federal and state policymakers have approved **major cuts to Medicaid**—cuts that pose a direct threat to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) like ours. **More than 40% of CHP patients rely on Medicaid** to access the care they need and deserve.



Here in Massachusetts, the Medicaid program—MassHealth—has historically reimbursed community health centers fairly. But now, even that critical support is under pressure. And while many assume Medicaid is the biggest financial challenge we face, there's another growing issue: **commercial insurance plans are reimbursing us far below the actual cost of care.**

CHP proudly serves all patients, regardless of ability to pay. But to keep our doors open and our services strong, **we depend on fair and sustainable reimbursements.** Today, we face a perfect storm: Medicaid cuts combined with unsustainably low payments from commercial insurers are **threatening access to care for the 32,000 patients who count on us.**

The stakes are high. **CHP may be forced to scale back or eliminate essential services**—like behavioral health, dental care, and chronic disease management—just to survive. These are not "nice-to-have" programs. They are core components of community health that help people stay well and live their lives fully.

When we lose these services, we don't just lose care—we weaken the entire healthcare delivery system in the Berkshires.

We cannot let that happen. Now more than ever, your support is critical to protecting the future of CHP and the health of our region.

Here's how you can help:

- **Advocate**: Contact your elected officials to support Medicaid and fair reimbursement for health centers.
- **Share**: Help spread the word by forwarding this message to friends and neighbors.
- **Donate**: Your financial support helps us continue providing life-changing care during this time of crisis.

Over our 50-year history, we've faced many challenges—but this moment is especially urgent. Thank you for standing with us—and for being a champion of community health in the Berkshires.

With gratitude,

Bethany Kieley, CEO

Meet Board Member – and Donor

Lina Maria Barstow



When and why did you become a CHP Board member?

I've been a board member for a little more than one year. I am new to the [Berkshire] community and have lived here for about 2 years. Being on the Board is important to me because CHP was seeking to add diversity to the Board, specifically a Latina representative. I want to help CHP connect to our Latino community so that Latinos in the Berkshires know about our services and impact.

What made you want to serve on the Board?

It is important to let people know what makes CHP different. Even in my mind before I learned about CHP, I thought it was just about clinics and providing medical treatment. But when I researched CHP before joining, I learned how the organization is unique because it is about community and community ties. In our times right now, we have a lot of divisions – political divisions, racial divisions – and with CHP it doesn't matter.

What matters is that CHP wants to be able to make things better for everyone. I love that, and I want to support that. I think that is so important. It is not easy for somebody to say they need help, but CHP is here, and is looking to help people.

What have you learned as a CHP Board member?

Not only am I new to the community, I am new to the experience of being on a non-profit Board. So, I have been trying to understand the process and my role. I have been reading and doing a lot of research about the healthcare system in the US. Right now, we are in a crisis. I spend a lot of time reading about different things that impact CHP. I want to not just listen but help make important decisions, to be a voice for Latinos.

Are there CHP activities that you feel most proud to support?

I feel most closely tied to our work with Latinos and elderly people. The population is so large in our community. And people really need to know what CHP is – we are not just a medical clinic, we are community. We are working to make people's lives better.

Why did you decide to become a donor as well as a board member?

Sometimes we can say oh I am not rich, or I don't have money to give. But it doesn't matter the size of the gift. You can imagine if everybody in the community gave \$10 how much that would be. That is my goal – every one of those donations adds up and counts and makes a difference. People think we get funding from the government and that everything is paid for, and that is not the case. CHP builds bridges and closes the gaps we have in the community. That is important, and we need to support that right now.



1975

Children's Health Program was founded by Dr. Thomas Whitfield along with its first executive director, Linda Small, children. In response to a growing need

in the Berkshires for child wellness visits before kindergarten. The founders envisioned a healthcare system that supported women's needs as mothers and their role in raising.

1970s - 1980s

CHP's first parent-child playground is held at Sheffield Congregational Church to provide social opportunities to new mothers and babies. Pediatric dental care first launches to address gaps in oral health in Berkshire school children. CHP's first Ob/Gyn practice opens to provide pre-natal care after an uptick in infant deaths were reported in Berkshire County.

Standing by Immigrant Families

With care, not barriers

We believe that healthcare is a human right. We offer healthcare and family services to everyone in our community, regardless of whether they were born in the U.S. or elsewhere. We provide high-quality medical care, dental care, and family support including food access, nutrition education, parenting support, early childhood education, home visiting programs, and more to any person who walks through our doors. Importantly, we are the only organization in Berkshire County that employs a Civil Surgeon, a qualified doctor that can perform immigration physicals for individuals pursuing legal status in the US.

As our legislative environment shifts, there are increasing challenges to our ability to care for the immigrant community. Threats to individuals' safety and security create significant barriers to accessing care. Even the act of asking about someone's immigration status can create fear and mistrust, making it harder for them to access our services. And as funding environments shift, our ability to get reimbursed for providing services to this community will change. To be clear, our goal remains to serve all; we will however face financial challenges in being able to continue this important work for all our community members.





1995

Family Services adds WIC programming to provide nutritional services to families with children in need. Food packages were delivered by the County's only dairy, Crescent Creamery of Pittsfield. 1997

Health Center opens at Fairview Hospital, connecting CHP patients to state of the art medical care in Great Barrington. 2007



CHP obtains designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) to receive federal funding to deliver primary care services to underserved populations and expands to serve adult patients.



Our immigrant community members already face obstacles impacting their social determinants of health, access to medical care, dental care, and family services support. Without us, the health and well-being of our immigrant neighbors would be significantly and negatively impacted. Individuals and families could lose access

to protective care like vaccines and check-ups, sameday care for their sick child needing to see a pediatrician, critically needed women's health care and contraception, oral health issues that negatively impact overall health, food and nutrition assistance necessary for healthy growth and development, and more.

You can help! When you give to CHP, you help us continue to live our mission to serve all regardless of income, insurance, ability to pay, demographics, or immigration status. Your support is a statement that everyone, including our immigrant community members, deserve access to compassionate, quality healthcare.

Ways to Give:

- Donate online at chpberkshires.org/donate or by scanning the code below
- Mail a check to P.O. Box 30, 442 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230
- Want to donate another way? Email or call Carrie Barth, Vice President of **Advancement and Family Services at** cbarth@chpberkshires.org or 413.528.9311 ext. 1179



2008

Children's Health Programs becomes Community Health Programs to better reflect the new mission and reach of the organization across the Berkshire community. CHP's caseload grows from 1,400 to 4,000 patients virtually overnight.

2010

Neighborhood Health Center (NHC) joins CHP and **Great Barrington Family** Dental Center opens.



2013

CHP's administrative offices, **Great Barrington Health** Center, and Family Services unite at a new 8-acre Great Barrington campus on Stockbridge Road.

In Their Care

Meet the doctors, nurses, and care providers making a difference every day, one patient at a time.

Featuring: Michelle Bedard, DNP

"My journey into the medical field began with my own birth—I arrived early into the world as a premature infant," shares Michelle, known fondly by many of her patients as 'Mimi.' "From that vulnerable start, I developed a deep curiosity and appreciation for medicine, which sparked a lifelong interest in healthcare. Even as a child, I felt drawn to nursing, inspired by a desire to care for others and support them during their most challenging moments."

At times, Michelle doubted whether she could succeed in such a demanding profession. Living with a learning disability made the path to her dream difficult. "But my strong sense of purpose—and my naturally nurturing spirit—kept me moving forward." Becoming a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) wasn't easy; it required incredible determination, resilience, and many late nights of studying. Throughout her journey, she was uplifted



by the unwavering support of her teachers, family, and friends. Their encouragement helped her push through the toughest moments, and earning her DNP became a symbol not only of academic achievement but of personal strength.

2015

Lee Family Practice joins CHP, covering a new portion of South County to reach more patients than ever.

2019



Neighborhood Dental Center opens their doors, giving access to dental and medical care in one convenient and accessible central location at the Neighborhood Health Center.

2020

Berkshire Pediatrics joins CHP, bringing additional specialty care under the CHP umbrella and creating access for thousands of local children in Pittsfield. "I chose to work at CHP Adams Family Medicine because I believe deeply in the organization's mission to serve everyone in the community, no matter their background or circumstances. I value the nonjudgmental, inclusive care we provide, and I feel connected to the organization's purpose. For me, this work is more than a job—it's a way to give back and make a real difference in the lives of those who need it most."

"I remain committed to CHP because I love my patients, I respect my colleagues, and I believe in the quality of care we deliver together. Being part of the CHP family allows me to live my calling every day—supporting, healing, and serving others with compassion."

What's your favorite local Berkshire attraction?

Nothing beats a sunny day on the lawn at Balderdash Cellars.



It's always a large, iced coffee – doesn't matter if it's Dunkin' or Starbucks.

What are you watching or reading right now?

The Pitt on HBO Max. It's a drama about emergency medicine doctors juggling crises as they unfold in the ER over the course of a single 15-hour shift.

Michelle joined CHP in 2023 and has been working as an Adult Gerontology Practitioner at North Adams Family Medicine which relocated to Adams under the name Adams Family Medicine in early 2025. Michelle was the recipient of the 2025 MCNP Exceptional Preceptor Award by the Mass Coalition of Nurse Practitioners for her role in mentoring the next generation of healthcare professionals.



2024

Adams Family Dental and Family Services open and Great Barrington Dental re-opens after renovation, bringing two new state of the art dental facilities to the Berkshire community.



2025

CHP celebrates its 50th anniversary and commitment to its mission with community events and days of service to honor and recognize its important history!



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A Giving Tip!

Are you 70½ or older and planning to make your gift to CHP between now and the end of 2025?

If so, a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your retirement account is a wonderful option. That's because it allows you to support CHP – with a gift from \$100 to \$108,000 without the distribution counting as taxable income.

This giving option is a direct contribution from your traditional IRA (or certain other retirement accounts) and can satisfy retirement account required minimum distributions.

Interested in making a gift through your QCD? Consult with your retirement account provider, a financial advisor, or a tax professional to determine if this is the right strategy for you.

