

Accelerating CHP Mobile Health Care *Of 5,000 mobile health units in the U.S., ours shine*

by Michelle Derr, Senior Vice President of Family Services and Mobile Health



Michelle Derr

This year, we are doubling down on mobile health, a staple of CHP care since the 1970s.

Back then, a local doctor and some nurses drove around our rural back roads looking for signs of young children who might need medical care—the origins of CHP.

Today, our countywide health network serves more than 30,000 patients, mainly in brick-and-mortar practice locations, but we are still on the road.

In the past two years, our mobile team (mainly on our ‘big orange bus’) counted more than 13,000 patient visits for vaccines, boosters, and other care. We are hardly alone: there are about 5,000 mobile health units on the road across the U.S. today.

Over the decades, technology and vans have evolved, but the idea is the same: Bring care to places where people work, live, play, and shop. On a sidewalk, grocery parking lot, or at a homeless shelter or elder housing residence, you can open a door to medical care for people who need it.

When COVID-19 demanded that we pivot fast, our mobile health teams became COVID fighters on wheels. They worked under extreme conditions: cold and hot weather, contagious illness, staffing shortages, vaccine skeptics, WiFi glitches, long hours of paperwork, and ever-changing vaccine protocols.

We found vaccine customers in unusual places. While fueling up our van,

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Mission Moment *Birthing with Barrington OB/GYN*

As a longtime patient of CHP Lee Family Practice, Sarah Kelley of Otis, was confident in choosing Barrington OB-GYN (BOG) for her obstetric care when she became pregnant with her first baby. In particular, she sought out Dr. Jill Samale.

With Dr. Samale and the BOG team, Sarah and her husband Zac partnered up for a detailed but flexible birth plan.

“We were all on the same page, but I also felt I could be flexible about decisions that we would make in real-time during the birth,” said Sarah. “All my questions were answered, and the care I received was consistently good.”

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Zac, Sarah, and baby Thomas Kelley.

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Clinician Spotlight: Dr. Stephen Alsdorf

Honored for clinical teaching excellence at the Boston University School of Medicine



Dr. Stephen Alsdorf, Community Preceptor of the Year, Boston University School of Medicine.

“Students who have worked with you tell us how much they learned, what a great, supportive teacher you are, and what an amazing overall learning experience they had. This award is much deserved and reflects your high-quality teaching, your commitment to training the future medical workforce, and your outstanding mentorship.”

—Leda Wlasiuk, MD, MPH, Clerkship Director, Department of Family Medicine, Boston University School of Medicine

Donor Spotlight: Edith Velmans

In memoriam



Former CHP board member and long-time CHP donor, Edith Velmans

Edith Velmans of Sheffield was a long-time generous donor and friend to CHP during her many years living in our community. She served as a CHP board member in the 1990s.

A survivor of the Holocaust in Holland, she went on to live a resilient life: she published a memoir of her Holocaust experience, became a psychologist, married Loet Velmans, and had three children.

In her mother’s obituary, Hester Velmans wrote, “She became an active and popular member of the local community; her life was full to overflowing with friends, music, philanthropic work...” In 1996, she was honored by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands with the Order of the House of Orange.

We thank Edith for her CHP support and legacy.

One Door Project

CHP, EFC partner to support survivors of abuse



From left: Carrie Barth (CHP) Brian Drake (CHP), Dawn Kohanski (CHP), Jennifer Goewey (EFC), Rick Gregg (CHP), Lisa Piedmont (EFC), Moira Lord (CHP) Katharine Meehan (CHP), Vincent Marinaro (CHP) at a recent meeting of One Door Project partners.



Lisa Piedmont and Jennifer Goewey of the Elizabeth Freeman Center.

For a victim of sexual or domestic violence, confiding in a medical professional might feel safer than calling a domestic abuse hotline. **CHP Berkshires and the Elizabeth Freeman Center have partnered to create the One Door Project to care for victims who need both health care and violence intervention support.** This special program is generously funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Research shows that women who experience abuse that confided in a medical clinician were four times more likely to seek out protection and 2.6 times more likely to exit an abusive relationship.



Moira Lord and Dawn Kohanski of CHP.

In Berkshire County:

- The per capita rate of abuse protection order filings for sexual and domestic violence is 35% higher than the state average, according to FY2022 MA court reports.
- Compared with the pre-COVID era, EFC has seen a 262% increase in calls to its Berkshire County hotline.
- Immigrant communities, especially undocumented immigrants, are particularly concerned about seeking help for fear of exposing their immigration status.



Event attendees sharing orientation time at the Berkshire Innovation Center.

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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.

Mission Moment

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Dr. Jill Samale

When the time came for baby Thomas to make his entry, Sarah headed to Fairview Hospital—he would be Fairview’s first baby of the 2023 new year.

“I loved having Dr. Samale in the room with me while I delivered,” Sarah says. “From the start, she let me know that I would deliver this baby when my body was ready and push when I was ready. In a lot of ways, she really let me take the reins. She listened, respected, and included me in the decisions.”

There was one unexpected moment during the birth: Thomas’ shoulder got stuck on the way out.

“Before I knew it, Dr. Samale sprang into action and helped to guide him out. And even in that one moment of worry, my experience went back to a calm one.”

“The care I received from Dr. Samale felt like having a mother figure in the room,” Sarah said. “My birth was a great balance of feeling intimate and as natural as possible, all while having the security of being in a hospital with doctors and support staff.”

Beyond Delivery

New moms and babies are invited to attend our post-partum group for moms and babies! Drop in to meet moms like you. Facilitated by CHP Barrington OB/GYN and Life-works Studio.

**Tuesdays, 10-11 AM, CHP Great Barrington Health Center
For more information call 413.528.1470**

One Door Project

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“These numbers mean many of our patients have had sexual trauma in their history—whether it was last night or years ago—so our care of patients must reflect this awareness,” said Dawn Kohanski, FNP, associate medical director of CHP Berkshires.

“Now, we have a stronger link between CHP and EFC to quickly help our patients get support and safety resources.”

Accelerating CHP Mobile Health Care

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we met gas station employees who wanted vaccines but didn't have time to schedule them. So, we added gas stations to our MHU itinerary.

What did we learn from COVID-19? Mobile health is here to stay and here to grow.

This spring, we take delivery of two new mobile units—for medical and dental care. We also added a refrigerated van for distributing food.

Many of our neighbors remain unvaccinated or have not received booster shots, so our mobile

health team will continue with vaccination efforts.

An additional van means we can also do more general preventive care, minor sick visits, nutrition support, and health screenings, especially in areas of Northern Berkshire County.

CHP mobile health is not only a source of care but a place to work. Our vans employ registered nurses, nurse practitioners, dentists, community health workers, drivers, and nutritionists. This non-traditional work setting and our “on the road” operation in the job-secure world of health

care means that each day is different.

CHP continues to be a source of health care for Berkshire residents and a significant local employer. Both of these important community contributions are made possible through the generosity of our donors, both large and small. Our mobile health-care team is gearing up for our expanded services and is grateful for the continued support of the community.

Spread the word. Step aboard.



CHP's new fleet of mobile health vehicles including a refrigerated van for food delivery (top left), a second medical vehicle (top right), and a mobile dental clinic (bottom).

By the Numbers

CHP Mobile Health

13,262

Mobile Health patient visits in 2021 (7,060) and 2022 (6,202)

7,200

Miles traveled visiting patients throughout Berkshire County

638

Miles from CHP's mobile health vehicle company in Ohio to Great Barrington

\$552

The cost of filling our primary Mobile Health Unit with 170 gallons of fuel

3

Dental chairs in the CHP Mobile Dental bus, coming soon!

0

The number of flat tires on our primary Mobile Health Unit

“Rising Star” at CHP Berkshires



Rania Markham, MSW, of CHP Family Services, was honored with the **Women in Leadership ‘Rising Star’ Award** by the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce for her initiatives in creating new CHP programs for families of children with special needs.

For more specific information on Rania’s programs visit CHP’s website at chpberkshires.org/families-like-ours.

Save the Date:

Southern Berkshire Chamber After Hours

CHP Berkshires hosts the **Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours** event on **Thursday, August 13, 2023**, at Crissey Farm in Great Barrington.

Not a chamber member? To attend as a CHP guest, please contact marketing@chpberkshires.org.

Reasons to Give to CHP Berkshires

CHP Berkshires relies on you—our friends and neighbors—to support many programs not reimbursed by insurance and other revenue, particularly our Family Services programs.

Family Services supports parents, children, and families through parent-child playgroups, school-readiness programs, parent education, and emergency assistance. We offer prenatal education, breastfeeding support, and postpartum groups. In addition to South Berkshire WIC nutrition programs for pregnant women and families with young children, CHP offers many other robust food security programs.

Family Services programs are free and open to all. Please consider a gift today to support and celebrate our work in your community.

To make a donation, visit chpberkshires.org/give

2022 Annual Appeal: Philanthropic Contributions

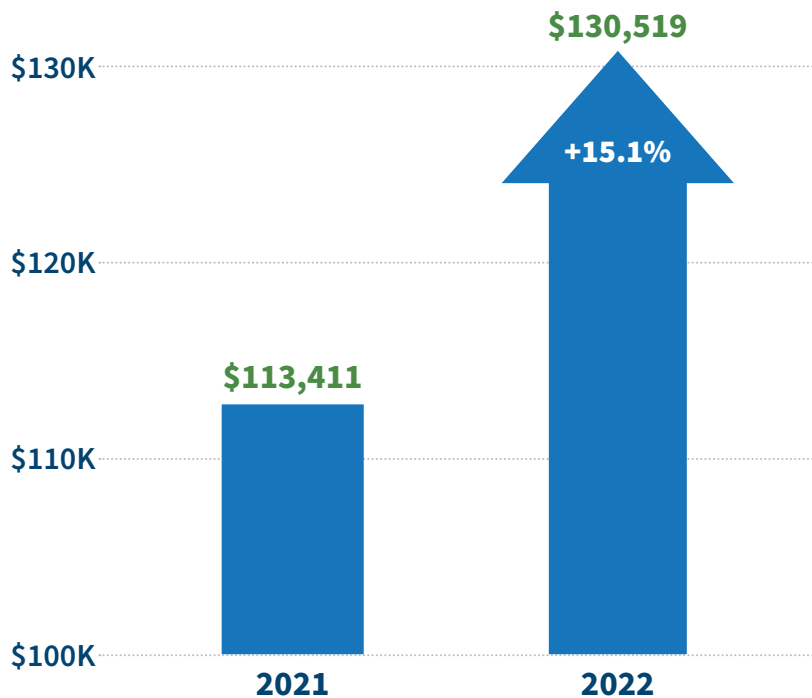
A heartfelt thanks to all our donors

Because of YOU, in 2023, CHP will be able to serve the Berkshires community better than ever before.

Your generosity will allow us to **feed more hungry families**, reach more underserved patients through our **Mobile Health** and **Mobile Dental** and **affirm our commitment to women's reproductive health** by covering the cost of IUDs for uninsured patients who seek them.

This community thrives because of YOU.

Thank you.



Grants and Gifts

CHP is honored to have received the following...

CHP Berkshires needs and welcomes gifts and grants to support programs not covered by insurance and other funding sources. In the past year, more than \$1.5 million has been given in support of our important programs.

- **Emergency Pandemic Relief Fund for Families**, from the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation
- **Sleep Safe Berkshire Baby**, from Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, the Jewish Women's Foundation of the Berkshires and The KareBear Foundation
- **Emergency COVID-19 Vaccine Access**, from U.S. Health Resources and Service Administration
- **Vitamin Angels Nutrition Funds**, from Vitamin Angels
- **Staff Recognition and Awards**, from the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
- **Food Security Program Grants**, from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)





FOOD FOR ALL

Find out how you can pick up a bag of free, fresh local food from a CHP practice location near you!

Call (413) 528-0457 for information.

In rural and underserved corners of the Berkshires, getting fresh local food onto the family table can be a challenge.

Now, two government grants totaling more than \$1.4 million are breaking through barriers to rural food access and affordability.

Mary Feuer, Director of CHP Family Services, said CHP medical practices are excited that they will have free food available twice each month. CHP calls it “**Food for All,**” and anyone can come and grab a bag.

But free food distribution is not a first for CHP: Through several other state and private grant programs, CHP already acquires CSA shares and other food to distribute to WIC and nutrition program clients.

Want to know more? Scan the QR code for the full article and CHP practice locations.

