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It continues to be a very busy time throughout Care New England.

This past week much attention was again placed on our response to the opioid crisis. Local reporting turned to the importance of increased testing capabilities for the drug fentanyl—the major player in the current spike in cases—and how CNE is setting the standard for response, treatment and recovery. Read on to get the details of some upcoming national media attention on our response.

In addition, much work is taking place behind the scenes in preparation for our Certificate of Need application and upcoming hearing for the Women & Infants Obstetrics Program. I've included some important information that is useful for all of us as we talk with family, friends and neighbors about the caring and compassionate work taking place here. Additionally, I have taken the opportunity to highlight some important resources provided through Integra, our Accountable Care Organization. While often met with questions and some confusion about this topic, you can read for yourself some real-life applications helping patients manage their complex care needs.

I know you continue to wonder about progress on our partnership fronts—both for the system and Memorial Hospital. I can assure you that while all is quiet publically, there continues to be much planning, discussion and strategic decision-making that I am hopeful will yield some exciting news in the near future. I continue to appreciate your patience in this matter. I know the waiting and even apparent lack of information can be discouraging. As I have mentioned previously, because of the complexity and legal ramifications, there is much I am prevented from saying at this time so please bear with me a little bit longer.

In closing, I hope you continue to read this space each week, to be informed, updated and perhaps most importantly, to share in the success and accomplishments of each other and our great team.

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Care New England's response to local opioid epidemic focus of national media attention

With the alarming statistics and growing attention to the opioid epidemic in the region, Fox News Network's Rick Leventhal and his crew spent time at Kent and Butler hospitals last week. After spending time in the Kent ED hearing about the frontline response, the crew visited Butler, interviewing patients who graciously shared their amazing stories of recovery. **I expect this segment to air**

tonight, April 10, during Brett Baier's 6 p.m. broadcast, found on the Fox Network. This will be the first in a four-part segment on drug use in America. Despite the difficult subject matter, I'm proud and honored to see Care New England being highlighted for its leadership role on such a critical issue. This is truly life-saving work and for that I thank you.

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Preparing for Women & Infants Certificate of Need

I've written before about the two obstetrics certificates of need (CON) now being considered by the Department of Health—a Women & Infants CON to renovate labor and delivery and a Rhode Island Hospital CON to build a new obstetrics program. While we still await a hearing date, it is worth a brief reminder of just how important the stakes are here.

The State of Rhode Island and RI Department of Health will be making a very important decision about where obstetric services will be provided and in what type of environment. In essence, they will be deciding if they will be supporting Women & Infants Hospital—the market leader in quality and patient outcomes, with an incredible team of nationally and internationally renowned experts in maternal child health, which has provided a full complement of excellent obstetric services for generations—and/or Rhode Island Hospital—whose plan for an obstetrics program is duplicative of existing services and is costly.

The full applications have been deemed complete, and a series of letters in support of the Women & Infants CON and in opposition to the Rhode Island Hospital CON have also been submitted. The next step is a public meeting at which people can show their support for an application, oppose an application or ask questions. The Department of Health has decided to consider both CONs in one meeting. We are currently awaiting a final date for this public meeting. At that time, Women & Infants' President and COO Mark Marcantano and members of his leadership team will be making a presentation with an overview of our proposed renovation plan and a second presentation outlining our arguments in opposition to Rhode Island Hospital's proposed duplication of services. We will provide information on dates and times of these meetings once it becomes available.

Last week, Mark offered some information about the two CONs, and I think this information could be helpful for all of us in our discussions with friends and colleagues. Mark wrote:

“Many of you have asked what you can do to help ensure that our certificate of need (CON) to renovate labor and delivery is approved and that the Rhode Island Hospital CON to build a new obstetrics program is not approved.

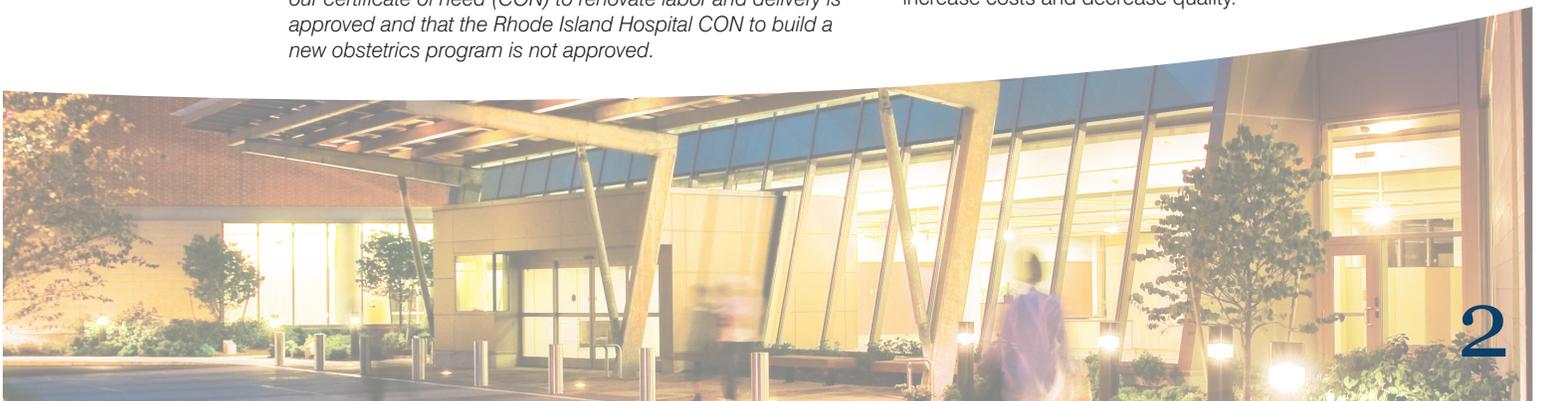
For many people in our community, the only voice they may hear about both of these projects is yours. Whether it's at the dinner table, in the supermarket or at the baseball fields, your friends, family and acquaintances will surely want your opinion about the future of obstetrics in our state. I'd like to provide you with some information and talking points that I think you will find useful in these discussions.

Why is it so important that we get approval of our own CON?

- Women & Infants is a well-cherished gem, providing incomparable care to the women and newborns of our region.
- Our existing labor and delivery opened 30 years ago. At the time, this was a state-of-the-art design; however, it no longer meets today's architectural standards or patient and family expectations. It's time for our physical environment in labor and delivery to match the incredible level of clinical care provided here.
- Women & Infants Hospital provides a full complement of excellent obstetric services for the most high-risk, fragile pregnancies to the lowest intervention births, and everything in between. As the market leader in quality and patient outcomes, we have an incredible team of nationally and internationally renowned experts in maternal child health—physicians, midwives, nurses, allied health professionals. We need comparable facilities to perform this high level of care.

Why are we opposing the Rhode Island Hospital CON?

- The Rhode Island Hospital proposal duplicates services that are already available to all at an exemplary level. Women & Infants Hospital already provides a full complement of excellent obstetric services for the most high-risk, fragile pregnancies to the lowest intervention births, and everything in between.
- There is no demonstrable need for a new obstetrics and NICU service in Rhode Island. Births in Rhode Island have declined over the past decade and are projected to be stable or continue to decline over the next decade.
- The current collaboration between Women & Infants and Rhode Island hospitals is a perfect model of an integrated system of care, making maximum use of existing resources. Destroying this collaboration will increase costs and decrease quality.”



24/7 Care Management Hotline benefits Integra's complex care patients

As the health care landscape continues to shift, innovative approaches to providing the right care at the right time are continuing to take hold. When Integra launched its 24/7 Care Management Hotline last fall, the goal was to assist complex care management patients who required additional clinical coordination due to the complexity of their care plans and treatments. The hotline, which allows patients to share their concerns with a nurse care manager after normal business hours, has seen a steady increase in activity, receiving 284 phone calls and deferring 29 ED visits since the launch in October.

Addressing patients' concerns immediately is critical as their conditions often lead this patient population to turn to emergency rooms or walk-ins when unable to contact their care teams. Simply put, better care leads to better patient outcomes and more efficient use of health care resources.

"When we respond to patients who have an urgent need, we can help them make the right decisions and get them the most appropriate care as quickly as possible," said Dr. James E. Fanale, Integra's chief clinical officer. "This shift in the delivery of health care is a critical component of making accountable care organizations work for both patients and providers."

Since October the on-call nurse care managers have assisted in an array of situations, including:

- Helping a patient refill the prescriptions locally, avoiding an ED visit.
- A highly depressed patient, seeking safety as they awaited their counselor.
- Easing patients' anxiety due to uncertainty of when and how they should be taking their medications.
- A patient called complaining of increased shoulder pain. The NCM connected the patient with his primary care provider for an appointment first thing in the morning, avoiding an ED visit.
- Setting up an expedited admission to hospice where the person received the necessary care.
- Answering questions on pain issues, blood pressure, and blood sugar readings.
- Setting up a follow-up call with the patient's assigned NCM for the following day.



"The growing success of the 24/7 Care Management Hotline is minimizing the disruption of care coordination. With on-call access to our NCMs we can minimize the amount of unnecessary expenses our patients are faced with and reduce the risk of them receiving inappropriate care," said Ruth Scott, Integra's director of care management.

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Lace up those sneakers and get ready to walk

I would like to personally encourage all of you to be sure and sign up for this year's Heart Walk. Help take a stand against heart disease and stroke, while raising hope for a healthier future right here in Southern New England! Take part on June 4 by [creating your own team or joining one of Care New England's teams](#). Tish Devaney from CNE Human Resources is this year's walk champion leading the way for team recruitment and the best walk yet! Can't make it to the event in Providence? You can always support your colleagues and contribute to making

healthier longer lives possible by making a donation. I know it's easy to find a reason not to get involved but it's the right thing to do for a great cause. We all have a heart so let's walk to keep them healthy while supporting lifesaving research.



[Take a look at this video](#) and see why others are joining the cause.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis D. Keefe".

Dennis D. Keefe
President and Chief Executive Officer

ConvergenceRI 
[Click here](#) to view this week's ConvergenceRI



Butler Hospital designated as “Top Performer in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality”



In 2017, Care New England participated in the Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). The HEI is the national LGBTQ benchmarking tool that evaluates health care facilities’ policies and practices related to the equity and inclusion of their LGBTQ patients, visitors and employees. During its 2017 evaluations HEI assessed 1,619 health care facilities nationwide.

The final evaluations designated Butler Hospital as a “Top Performer in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality.” Butler, Kent, and Women & Infants hospitals all received a score of 75 (out of 100) or greater. Achieving such scores is a great achievement as Butler, Kent, and Women & Infants ranked higher than any current or historical Rhode Island health care institution, including Lifespan and Charter Care facilities. Across CNE we continue to make strides as a leader in equality and inclusion, and participation in such surveys provide us with key insights as to how we can improve on LGBTQ inclusiveness both for patients and employees.

TPC’s Maggie Raczowska receives nursing advancement award

Recently The Providence Center (TPC)’s Maggie Raczowska, a residential nurse that works in TPC’s group homes, achieved clinical nurse (CN) III status as part of the Nursing Clinical Advancement Program. The program is a four-stage scaled curriculum that recognizes and rewards TPC nurses for professional growth.

In order to move from CN II (competent nurse) to CN III (proficient nurse), the candidate must declare an intent to apply and complete a detailed portfolio that includes:

- Recommendation letter from manager
- Support letters from three peers
- Proof of 16 hours of clinical education units

CN III candidates are also required to become involved with four (out of 17 suggested) leadership activities of their choosing. The activities can include projects like making contributions to a performance improvement task force, coordinating a community health education event, or developing patient or family educational materials.

Raczowska is the fourth nurse to achieve CN III status. TPC has plans to develop a similar advancement system for case managers.



Women’s reproductive health research scholar to study preterm birth

Dr. Sarah Davis was recently named the seventh scholar in the Brown University/Women & Infants Hospital [Women’s Reproductive Health Research](#) (WRHR) Career Development Program.

Dr. Davis has been a member of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Women & Infants since 2015 and is an assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at The Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. She was selected as a WRHR scholar to support her research looking at causes of preterm birth, specifically on a study entitled “Mechanisms underlying obstetric pathobiology: The study of cell-free fetal DNA, TLR9 mediated inflammation, IL-10 and parturition using human in vitro modeling.”



“Preterm birth remains an important public health concern. Current studies indicate that there are multiple pathways that may lead to preterm and term delivery, including inflammation,” explained Dr. Davis. “Certain cells in the placenta release fetal DNA that circulates freely in maternal blood and may

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contribute to inflammation that could serve as a stimulus or biomarker for labor. I am excited to have the opportunity to investigate the underlying obstetric mechanisms as they relate to cell-free fetal DNA, inflammation and labor.”

Dr. Davis will work with Dr. Kristen A. Matteson, research director for the WRHR program, as well as her WRHR mentors Dr. Surendra Sharma and Dr. Jim Padbury, and Dr. Katharine Wenstrom.

Care New England Centers of Rehabilitation Services host amputee networking meeting

The New England Amputee Association will be meeting on Wednesday, April 26 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Memorial Hospital Outpatient Rehabilitation, 11 Brewster Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860.

The meeting, ‘From Limb Loss to Limitless,’ is dedicated to bringing amputees and their families together, allowing those who have experienced amputation to share how it has changed their lives, and to give support for others facing the same struggles.

During the networking event, Faddi Ghassan M. Saleh Velez, MD, post-doctoral research fellow at the Neuromodulation Center, Spaulding Hospital, Harvard Medical School, will discuss amputation and the correlation with the development of phantom limb pain.

A large attendance is expected, so those interested are encouraged to register promptly by calling (978) 365-2580 or emailing Rose@NewEnglandAmputeeAssiciation.com for more information. 

