

# Belgrade Health Center

# HEALTH BEAT



News from the Belgrade Regional Health Center

Summer 2011

## Welcoming our new staff!

Over the past few months, we've had the opportunity to hire several new staff. We'd like to use this space to introduce some of the new faces among us! The entire staff wants to welcome the new members of the front office team.



**Debra Morris**

At the check-in desk, our new addition is Debra Morris. She lives in Wilton with her fiancé, and she also has two sons. Debi enjoys playing in her garden and traveling.



**Wendi Wainer**

There's a new practice manager in town! Longtime manager Deborah Rocque retired in April and we are pleased to have Wendi Wainer as our new practice manager. Wendi brings a strong background in medical practice management, as well as experience in managing change and Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) development.

A resident of the Belgrade Lakes Region, Wendi says that she is looking forward to making an impact in the health of her community. "As a member of this great community, it will be an honor to support my fellow citizens by ensuring quality health care in a caring, comfortable environment," she says. "I plan on supporting the tradition of quality care that distinguishes Belgrade Regional Health Center and keeping us moving in the right direction."

As practice manager, Wendi will manage the staff and day-to-day operations of the health center and serve as the liaison between the practice and the community.

She enjoys camping and exploring the north woods of Maine. Welcome aboard, Wendi!

**Debra Reynolds**

Our new face at the check-out desk is also Debra. Her name is Debra Reynolds, a former Maine General employee who lives in Belgrade with her husband. She has three children and four grand-children who keep her busy.



**Gene Gilbert**

Our clinical staff has had a busy spring as well! Gene Gilbert has changed careers after 34 years and joined the nursing staff at Belgrade as a medical assistant. Gene has a great attitude and enjoys a variety of outside activities including hiking,

biking, kayaking and cross country skiing. Gene has hiked extensively throughout New England. He has a one year old grandson who he hopes will hike with him someday. We are lucky to have him as part of the clinical team.



**Susan Morey**

We have also added Susan Morey to our medical records staff. Susan lives in Oakland with her husband. Susan enjoys outside activities, hiking, gardening and trips to the ocean.

## Conversation with Crystal Fitch, Navigator Expert

At Belgrade Regional Health Center, we value very highly the skills and services of Crystal Fitch. Crystal is a Licensed Social Worker (LSW) who helps to connect our patients with various resources and remove barriers that prevent them from accessing needed medical care. Crystal has worked with HealthReach Community Health Centers since 1994, and we are grateful for her expertise. Crystal very graciously agreed to an interview about her background and her services:

**BRHC: Crystal, describe what you do for us here at the clinic.**

CF: I actually have two positions. Through the Navigator Program, I connect with patients to try to help remove barriers that prevent them from accessing medical care and prescription medications. I work with folks who have no coverage, minimal coverage, high deductibles, or who are uncertain what coverage they do have. I also work with folks who have multiple co-payments/expenses which add up to be unaffordable. I refer to helping agencies as well as sit down with patients (if needed) to complete applications and/or to make telephone calls.

With our Patient Assistance Program, we work with patients who cannot afford their medications. Drug companies often have free or low-cost drugs. We work closely with the provider to discuss options to an expensive medication if the med is not easily available through the company. In 2010, Belgrade patients saved \$97,693.55 via PAP.

**BRHC: How did you become interested in this work?**

CF: Some of my early background came from my personal experience of being a single mom, attending college and having “safety nets” in place for me while I worked on my degree and found a job. I graduated from UMF in 1987 as a “nontraditional student.” Soon after, I was licensed as a LSW. For 20 years I worked with pregnant and parenting teenagers. Nearly 10 years ago, Franklin Memorial Hospital contracted with HealthReach Community Health Centers for me to help them with a program called Franklin Health Access. FHA (no longer a program) worked with folks who had no health insurance. Working with FHA and developing

working relationships with various agencies, I gained a lot of experience about available programs and how to “navigate” through the paperwork and requirements.

**BRHC: What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

CF: The most rewarding aspect of my job is when I know I have helped someone access medical care or medications. Or, if they already have bills and are unable to pay, I get satisfaction in helping them work with the billing departments to get expenses reduced or payment plans set up. Paperwork and the telephone can be intimidating for many folks. I enjoy advocating for those who find it difficult to advocate for themselves.

**BRHC: How about the most challenging?**

CF: It’s challenging to work with patients who feel like they are being

dishonest if they were to use the benefit programs I suggest to them. Most of the time, people I meet with qualify for some kind of assistance. That is what these great programs are for. They are there to help those who need it and meet the requirements. There is nothing dishonest about that.

**BRHC: How can our patients access your services?**

CF: I am at Belgrade Regional Health Center three Thursdays a month. People can call the clinic to schedule an office visit, call my work cell phone at 649-4631, or leave a message for me at 1-800-427-1127.



Crystal Fitch, right, helps many patients apply for programs that save them money on health care.



Crystal shows a grateful client all the options he has to have what he pays for health care greatly reduced.

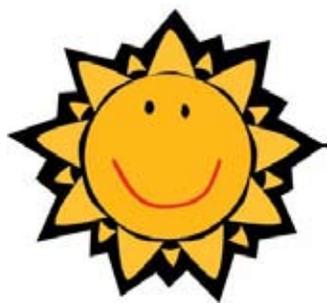
## Patient Advisory Group is up and running

We are pleased to have several patients of the health center involved in our first patient advisory group. We had an excellent kickoff meeting on April 27th at the health center, including staff and guest speakers, to discuss the role of the group and background of the Patient Centered Medical Home. Here are some key concepts behind the group and work they are hoping to accomplish.

The patient advisory group is considered a foundation for engaging patient centered care through practice improvement projects, feedback and improving health care at a systemic level. The group is made up of 11 patient

advisors and several staff members. They meet the last Wednesday of every month from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the health center.

At the most recent meeting, patient advisors offered ideas about implementing a same day survey for patients to give feedback after a healthcare visit. Since the group works closely with staff we will be able to collaborate on different ideas and implement some changes in the care that all patients receive. If you would like more information on the patient advisory group, please feel free to ask one of our staff members!



## SUN SAFETY ... RULES!

*By Nancy Flewelling, LPN*

**We are into that time of year again... summertime! And time to brush up on some rules that can help to keep our skin healthy while still enjoying the warmth of the sun.**



### **Some quick notes from the American Cancer Society and the Skin Cancer Foundation:**

- 1 in 5 people at some point in their lifetime will develop skin cancer
- One American dies every hour of malignant melanoma
- Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the U.S.

### **Here are some tips to help protect you from the summer sun...**

- Sunscreen is a great start, but the key to its effectiveness is in how you apply it. Sunscreen should be applied liberally, to any area of exposed skin.
- You should re-apply sunscreen every 2 hours (yes, there's an app for that) as well as after going swimming or if sweating heavily. This is true even for "waterproof" or "water-resistant" sunscreens.
- Sunscreen should be applied under make-up
- Don't forget to protect your lips with a lip balm containing sun protection
- Clothing will also protect you from the sun, especially clothing made from tightly-woven fabrics.
- Hats and sunglasses protect the face, neck, and eyes
- Remember that the sun's rays are the most intense between the hours of 10AM to 4PM

**Enjoy the sun and the summertime, but don't forget the protection!**

**BELGRADE REGIONAL  
HEALTH CENTER**

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# Splish, Splash, Be SAFE!

By  
Patricia Fleming, RN

Summer is here, and with that comes fun in the sun and water. Pools, lakes, ponds, streams, and beaches are full of summer fun and cool relief from the hot weather. Water can also be dangerous if we do not take the proper precautions. Below you will find helpful information for water safety, courtesy of The American Red Cross:

- Attend a Red Cross CPR class. Learn CPR and be able to rescue an adult or child in need.
- Learn how to swim well. Be proactive to stay safe in and around the water by learning to swim.
- Never EVER swim alone – always have a swim buddy.
- Always know your limits in the water. Do not try to keep up with a stronger swimmer or even encourage other swimmers.
- Watch the weather – always stop swimming or boating as soon as you see lightning or hear thunder. Wait at least 20 minutes after the last sound of thunder and flash of lightning before you re-enter the water.
- Keep out of the water when you are overheated. A person of any age or size could easily tire. Let the body cool itself down first. Drink a lot of fluids before jumping into the water.
- Never chew gum or eat while swimming. A person could easily choke.
- Use common sense about swimming after eating. Although it may not be necessary to wait an entire hour after eating to swim safely – allow digestion to get started before doing anything strenuous such as swimming.
- Never drink alcohol and swim or go boating. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination and reduces your body's ability to stay warm.
- Pack a "swimming" bag for the day at the water. Include water-proof sunscreen, SPF 15 or higher, water shoes to keep feet from injury.
- Entering the water is always safest when done feet first. Diving into shallow water is a recipe for injury.



## Water safety specific to children:

- Always supervise children in or near water ~ never leave a child unattended. This includes pools, streams, lakes, ocean, tub, toilet, buckets of water – it does not matter how shallow the water is.
- A child can drown in just inches of water in the time it takes to answer a phone.
- Keep a cell phone with you at the beach or lake/stream. Keep a cordless phone or install a phone by a pool so 9-1-1 can be called in an emergency.
- Learn American Red Cross Infant/Child CPR. Insist that babysitters, friends and family members who care for your children know CPR.
- Do not allow running or rough play around any water.
- Do not rely on flotation devices or inflatable water toys to replace parental supervision. Water devices can deflate or slip out from under a child, leaving the child in danger. Remove all toys from the water after use so that children are not tempted to reach for them and re-enter the water unsupervised.

**Let's make the summer of 2011 a fun and safe summer for everyone. Use sunscreen appropriately and be safe in and around water.**