



COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES
OF LAMOILLE VALLEY*

Valley Health

Spring 2017

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Keeping the books balanced-

*Cindy Clark (left)
and Barb McWherter (right)*

CHSLV's accounting team

One of CHSLV's smallest, least-known, yet indispensable departments is finance. Without the two women who make up the accounting team, employees might not get their paychecks, bills would not be paid, and required financial reporting that keeps CHSLV's funding sources flowing might be in jeopardy.

Cindy Clark and Barb McWherter both reside in Lamoille County and are the two accountants who keep the books balanced at CHSLV's administrative offices. Clark, who has a business degree, is the accounting manager and has been with CHSLV for five years. She is responsible for month-end and year-end closing in general ledger and preparing monthly financial reports that are submitted to CEO Kevin Kelley and CFO Jose Zirena, and reviewed by the finance committee and board of directors.

McWherter has been with CHSLV for a year. She has a degree in finance and is responsible for payroll and accounts payable, and also for preparing management reports that provide important payroll information to the CEO and CFO.

"I'm a numbers geek, and being organized and deadline-oriented suits me well," says Clark. "I like working for CHSLV because it's a nonprofit and we

provide necessary services to the community and find ways to make those services affordable to all, including programs like sliding fees for those who need it. Barb and I are support staff, and we do everything we can to be efficient and serve the CHSLV staff that care for our patients. I've worked for for-profit companies and non-profit is a whole different focus. CHSLV's focus is caring for people, and is vastly important to our local communities."

McWherter echoes Clark's sentiments. "I also love working with numbers and what we do here, serving a rural, widespread community. It's very gratifying to help support such a great group of people providing such valuable services. Both of us enjoy working closely with the rest of the admin team."

Both Clark and McWherter prepare CHSLV's year-end audit documentation that is reviewed and dissected by an outside accounting firm. "We must prove that the information provided in our financial statements is accurate and accounted for properly. Our goal is for CHSLV to have a successful clean audit, and we met that goal again for FY16. The annual audit report issued by the independent accounting firm is used by, and shared with, many agencies vital to CHSLV, including the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). It's very important that everything we do all fiscal year is documented and properly reconciled. It's a lot of work and most people would not find it very exciting, but it is rewarding to get the desired result!"



Women's Health Initiative

Kathy Mai,
MSW

Currently, half of all pregnancies in Vermont are unintended. These pregnancies often result in unhealthy mothers and babies and their long-term wellbeing. Vermont has launched the Women's Health Initiative (WHI), which will "ensure women's health providers have the resources they need to help women be well, avoid unintended pregnancies, and build thriving families."

The statewide program is for women who visit women-specific health care providers, such as OBGYN offices, midwifery practices, and family planning clinics. These practices will provide screening to assess mental health, substance abuse, trauma, partner violence, and access to food and housing. Women identified as at risk will immediately be connected to a WHI social worker for brief intervention and counseling, and referral to more intensive treatment as needed. Each social worker is a member of a local Community Health Team and will connect women with a network of health, social, economic, and community service providers in their area.

Kathy Mai, MSW, is the WHI social worker who will assess and work with patients at the Women's Center. She is currently a social worker at Behavioral Health and Wellness Center (BHWC)

and a member of the Community Health Team. She will perform standardized screening, discuss options, provide access to contraception, and make available same-day treatment if necessary.

"As I learned more about the WHI, I saw it was also an opportunity to work with women and also to collaborate with community providers to create and increase access to care, as well as resources, with the overarching goal of improving women's, children's, and family's health and wellness," Mai says. "The initiative focuses on prevention, a rather novel approach for a culture that often intervenes and responds during or after crises, or when problems are already present. It's exciting to be part of the initiative from the ground up. And the work—screening, case management, brief intervention, counseling—is similar to what I currently do at BHWC, as well as other social work positions I've held."

Mai hopes to help develop a model that incorporates what the Women's Center already does in terms of screening and assessment and make it more comprehensive, based on WHI principles and best-practices. "I want to provide brief counseling for women at the Women's Center based on individual needs. As the medical social worker I'm also looking at potential groups I could offer based on client needs. I'm really excited about the varied opportunities."

CHSLV received funding from the Vermont Blueprint for Health to start WHI at Copley Hospital's Women's Center.





Breaking ground on our new building

CHSLV is moving forward with their plans for a new medical facility located at 609 Washington Highway in Morrisville, across from Copley Hospital and next to Morrisville Family Health Care. To date, the preliminary Act 250 meeting was completed, all permits have been applied for, and the plan has been presented to the Morrisville Development Review Board. The project is on schedule to break ground this spring.



The new building will be the home of Appleseed Pediatrics and the Neurology Clinic. Both are scheduled for occupancy by the end of the year. Eventually Morrisville Family Health Care, the MAT Team, and the Community Health Team will also make the new facility their home.

The architect is Joseph Green of Joseph Architects of Waterbury. Green has extensive experience in designing buildings for the health care industry, having conceived plans for numerous facilities, including Central Vermont Medical Center, University of Vermont Health Care, Copley Hospital, Gifford Medical Center, CHSLV's Dental Clinic, and many more.

Construction will be managed by HP Cummings Construction Company. They have built a number of health care facilities in New England, including Copley Hospital in Morrisville, Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital in St. Johnsbury, and North Country Hospital in Newport.

Plans for the medical facility include 108 parking spaces, accommodations for 49 employees at any given time, a basement with a break room, conference room, work-out facility, and showers. The sidewalk will extend from Copley Hospital to directly across from the new building.



Sharon Brahmstedt

joins the psychiatry team



Behavioral Health & Wellness Center has a new psychiatric nurse practitioner. Sharon Brahmstedt, PMHNP, joined the team in January. Previously she was a psychiatric nurse practitioner for

Northern State Correctional Facility, where she provided acute mental health care and medication management for incarcerated patients at the Newport and St. Johnsbury prisons.

“I wanted to work closer to home and expand my experience with a wider variety of people, not just adults,” Brahmstedt explains. “My work in substance abuse and corrections has given me good experience working with co-occurring disorders, such as substance dependency along with other diagnosis, like anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.”

Brahmstedt, who is a seventh-generation Vermonter, grew up in the Lamoille Valley and received her BS in biology at Johnson State, and her registered nursing degree at Vermont Technical College. Her interest in biology and nursing prompted her to return to school at UVM, where she received her master’s in science, specializing in psychiatric nursing. “I wanted to do more with my nursing

degree,” she says. “I want to help the underserved population and work in the psychiatric field with people experiencing substance abuse.”

“In corrections I was often their first encounter with a psychiatric practitioner, and they really appreciated knowing that someone does care about their mental health. I think it’s hard for people to talk about their feelings. I like getting my patients to open up. It’s rewarding when patients thank me,” Brahmstedt says. “At Behavioral Health & Wellness Center the coordination of care is really good. Patients can get more than just counseling. They can get medical support, and we treat the entire family, not just adults or individuals.”

In her spare time, Brahmstedt enjoys going for walks in the woods, “where it’s really quiet.” She also enjoys snowshoeing in the winter and kayaking on Vermont’s many inland lakes in the summer.

Meet Dominique Couture,

our new emergency department medical social worker



CHLSV’s Community Health Team has placed a medical social worker in Copley Hospital’s emergency department. Dominique Couture, BA, is meeting with individuals who have been admitted to the emergency department to address social concerns, such as insurance coverage, the use of a primary care provider, lack of transportation, and help with prescriptions. Couture has previous experience with Department of Children and Families in Morrisville and is familiar with the issues in our community and the resources available. She wants to help others in her own community.

“The purpose of the new position is to work with people who are using

the emergency department as a primary care setting,” says CHT Director Corey Perpall, RN. “We are trying to address barriers patients may be experiencing in the health care system. If we can eliminate some of these barriers, it that may reduce unnecessary emergency department use and ultimately lower health care costs.”

Couture will not be seeing everyone admitted to the ED, but once patients have gone through the intake process, any unanswered questions might trigger a referral. Couture will assist patients in finding a primary care provider, transportation, housing, and insurance.

“We are very excited about this new position,” Perpall says. “We believe it is going to help a lot of people.”

Dr. Richard James

provides his expertise at Stowe Family Practice

Vermont's aging and arthritic population means orthopaedic specialists are in high demand. CHSLV saw the need for non-operative orthopaedic services and brought in Richards James, MD, to provide his expertise at Stowe Family Practice (part of CHSLV). Dr. James is a fellowship-trained sports medicine specialist with previous training as a Family Doctor. "It is often more efficient and convenient for patients at Stowe Family Practice to receive arthritis and orthopaedic care inside their medical home. The patient could be a CHSLV patient with a new orthopaedic problem or they could be doing a follow-up exam with me after seeing another provider in CHSLV. Also, I sometimes get informal questions from colleagues in Stowe Family Practice."

Currently, Dr. James is at Stowe Family Practice two days a month. That may increase to four if needed. Many of his patients come with osteoarthritic problems, and at SFP

he can perform ultrasound hip and knee cortisone injections for pain relief. Some of those hip and knee patients are preparing for future joint replacement surgeries, while others are simply trying to cope with their pain. He also sees same-day visits for acute injuries, such as simple fractures, when a trip to the emergency department is not necessary.

But it's not all about bones for James. He also sees patients for general health care, and even performs commercial driver's license exams. At the end of the day, though, it's arthritis that he treats the most. "I can't believe how much arthritis there is in Vermont. It's an aging population with a low birth rate, and we will continue to see more arthritis in the future."



Our new virtual machine, an improved environment for patients and providers

Last summer, CHSLV outgrew its computer infrastructure. The network was stretched to its limits as it processed the high demands of documenting medical records, patient portal usage, radiography, scheduling, billing, communications, and all the typical computer-related procedures that transpire within medical offices.

Mark Baker, CHSLV's director of information technology, spent the past nine months overhauling the system. "We have essentially replaced every single piece of infrastructure and also doubled the bandwidth. It will be a much better platform moving forward," Baker explains. "With the new virtual machine (VMware) environment, we can create

servers virtually. It is a more secure, robust site for both patients and providers."

In addition to speed and space, the VMware saves money. Once purchased there are few costs, and the system's cooling requirements are not as great. Looking ahead, a new backplane will allow faster connectivity between CHSLV's new medical center site and other buildings. "CHSLV is positioning itself to be a leader in secure, robust, fast network infrastructure that allows patients to access their medical records and providers to perform their jobs and focus on patients," Baker says. "They can enter the data they need to quickly and spend more facetime with their patients."

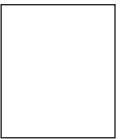


Mark Baker, IT Director



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Megan Lapan joins the CHSLV support team

Megan Lapan has joined the support staff at CHSLV's business offices in Morrisville, as executive assistant to President/CEO Kevin Kelley. Lapan started in December and comes from the Echo Center, where she was the event and sales manager for six years. "I wanted a change and to work closer to home. I have an interest in health care and being in the field indirectly is satisfying," she says.

Lapan attended Champlain College and received a BA in business. Her duties as executive assistant include answering calls, scheduling meetings, setting up meeting agendas and taking minutes, formatting documents, and anticipating Kelley's needs. "Basically I help him with anything he needs done," Lapan explains.

Lapan, who was married last August, lives with her husband in Johnson, where they are remodeling a house they bought last fall. She also enjoys reading, hiking, being outdoors, and spending time with family. "CHSLV has been a great company to work for," she says, "and it is a great asset to the community."



Congratulations to the following employees on their CHSLV employment anniversaries. They joined CHSLV during the first quarter of the year (January, February, March).

We look forward to many more successful years with them.

President/CEO Kevin J. Kelley,
Director of Human Resources Vicki Emerson

Employee	Years at CHSLV	Employee	Years at CHSLV	Employee	Years at CHSLV
David L Roy	21	Catherine Whitaker	5	Richard James	1
David M Coddaira	21	Cynthia Doerr	4	Sarayalu Balu	1
Carol L Kapusta	20	Robert Quinn	4	Halicia Barney	1
Janice Borg	9	Clea James	3	Jenna Boudreau	1
Tracey Chauvin	8	Casey Hayden	3	Mark Montgomery	1
Katherine G Marvin	8	Danielle Mears	3	Rachel Mezak	1
Ashley Jerome	8	Julianne Chase	3	Ceili Quickley	1
Heidi M Hemingway	5	Jessica Terrien	2	Barbara McWherter	1
				Nicole Fulford	1


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