



circa 1920

The BOSTON HOME

Notes from Home | WINTER 2006

Introducing The Boston Home Institute

By Marva Serotkin

Setting standards for excellence in residential care. Conducting research. Sharing knowledge. These are the goals of our new Boston Home Institute. We have launched the Institute as a way to further our leadership role in our field. Specifically, we plan to advance the development of clinical standards of care for our residents and residents in other facilities, share the knowledge gained with clinicians throughout the country, conduct research to inform best practices, and add our voice to public policy debate about the future of long-term care for people with disabilities.

The Institute is one of the key initiatives of our Strategic Plan approved in June by the Board of Trustees. I am excited about our progress to date and pleased to share the fol-



lowing highlights with you:

Designation as *Center for the Promotion of Excellence in Long-Term Care*

One goal of our Strategic Plan is for The Boston Home to become a National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS) *Center for the Promotion of Excellence in Long Term Care*. This

new designation (an idea that we introduced and promoted with the NMSS) is designed to promote access to a continuum of high-quality, affordable, and age-appropriate long-term care services for people with MS across the United States. Achieving this honor will affirm our role as a leader in service excellence, training, and collaboration.

Training New Physicians

In April, we will host a visit from the National MS Society Sero Pfizer clinical fellow in MS, Dr. Douglas Woo, along with his mentor, Dr. Elliot Frohman, from the University of Texas at Dallas. The visit will be hosted by our Medical Director, Dr. James Mahoney, and will include multidisciplinary sessions with our nursing, assistive (Continued on page 7)

Freedom of Speech: Voice Augmentation Finds a Home

Boston Home resident Joan MacQuarrie loves lively conversation. She is a stickler for good grammar and has a razor sharp wit. Our staff has listened patiently and carefully to understand her, since Multiple Sclerosis has diminished her capacity to speak audibly and distinctly.

Recently, Don Fredette, our adaptive technology specialist, attached a Mercury speech

output device to Joan's wheelchair. Manufactured by Assistive Technologies, Inc., the Mercury is a computer programmed with Microsoft Windows and a Boardmaker program for communication called *Speaking Dynamically Pro* (DSP).

Kristy Lopez, a speech therapist at TBH, explains, "When the doctor asks, 'where does it hurt?' Joan can answer him precisely using the 'medical board' screen. The screen has an image of a human body and numerous point and click options. This will help her communicate more quickly and accurately. Better informed, the doctor will be more responsive to her needs."

The DSP program supports spontaneous conversation. For that, Joan prefers the nuanced capabilities of the phonetic, alphabetical screen to the general picture symbols screen. When Mercury gives voice to her chosen words, she can alter the pronunciation and personalize the phrases. She uses her wheelchair's mouth switch to control the screens.

There is the potential for Joan to use email,

surf the Internet, and submit letters and documents. In rooms with environmental control units, she can adjust her room temperature, TV, and radio through the Mercury. It will even speak through her telephone for her.

Our residents are using these and other devices (see photos on page 7) to regain some functions they have (Continued on page 7)



Joan MacQuarrie operates the Mercury with her wheelchair's mouth switch.



Michelle Hurley uses the Dynavox system for vocal communication.

Quality Comes First: Perfect for the Second Year!

For the second year in a row, The Boston Home received a perfect score from the Department of Public Health on DPH's annual survey of quality care. DPH performs exacting evaluations of Medicare and Medicaid-certified nursing homes in which healthcare professionals assess compliance with federal standards such as adequacy of staffing, level of care, and cleanliness of facilities. These unannounced inspections also assess how facilities empower residents and protect their safety.

"This recognition affirms that The Boston Home maintains the highest standards of care year after year," says Marva Serotkin, President and CEO of TBH. "Our residents are self-determined, and receiving excellent care allows them to get on with their lives, despite the many challenges they face." Serotkin is now leading a quality initiative for the Massachusetts Extended Care Federation.

Fighting the Flu

This season, we have a special challenge to keep our residents free of the flu, so we have established an aggressive flu prevention program and ask for your cooperation: To ensure that the virus does not enter our facility, please **DO NOT VISIT** The Boston Home if you have any flu-like systems. Contact our Infection Control Nurse, Kathy Pavidis, R.N. with any questions (617.326.4272). Thank you!

Words on Wheels

Shooting for More Independence

Fort Independence at Castle Island is a place I have known and visited since early childhood. With the use of adaptive photography equipment, I now have the ability to take my own photographs and have a permanent visual reminder of precious childhood memories.



This shot of Castle Island is just one of many photographs that Ellie has taken with use of the adaptive photography equipment.

Photography has opened my eyes to a whole new world; sparked my interest. It has given me an incentive, a goal. I may be physically disabled, but my mind is still very active. The adaptive photography equipment has enabled me to regain some independence, and I take pride in what I am able to achieve.

—Resident Eleanor Kasilowicz

Note: Our unique digital photography program was recently featured in the Boston Globe. See back cover.

We Are the Champions

Bridging the Gap: Volunteers Keep Residents Thinking...and Laughing

Every Friday at 3 p.m. in The Boston Home Dining Room, about 10 residents routinely attend to some very serious business. Gathered around a couple of tables, they prepare for two hours of strategy, stimulation, spirited competition...and bantering. You can bet on it.

Thanks to volunteers Carl Saldinger and Jack Stuart, the residents are thoroughly engaged in games of Bridge.

Coached by Carl and Jack, the residents look forward to Friday afternoons as social events as well as opportunities to tax their intellects and their imagination. And have a few laughs.

Carl is a longtime bridge instructor who teaches at other locations as well, but he and his colleague, Jack, have developed special relationships with the avid Bridge players at TBH. Jack, a devoted bridge enthusiast, recalls with affection when he would visit his son at our Home, where he was a resident.

With Carl and Jack, a good time is always in the cards.



Above: Janice Kushner and Carl Saldinger discuss their next move.



Left: Joan MacQuarrie, Carl Saldinger, Lillian Carr, and Jack Stuart joke around while enjoying a game of Bridge.

holiday photo gallery



(L-R) Duncan Morrison, Mary Catherine Calisto, and her brother Luigi.



Donna Corbet and her husband, William Corbet.



Linda Strenieri (bottom left) and family visit during Thanksgiving.



Doris White and her sister Gloria White-Hammond strike a pose.



Ann McNulty and family.

For Staff:

Serious Health Issue with Fun Solution

Introducing The Boston Home "Biggest Loser" Competition. In response to a serious health problem, we have launched a fun contest organized by Kerry Donohue: The staff member who loses the highest percentage of his/her starting weight at the end of 12 weeks will win a cash prize. Kathy Pavidis, RN, says, "We are a health facility after all, and excessive weight and lack of exercise contribute to preventable and serious health problems. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't have fun and support each other as we 'work out' a solution." Daily, on-site walks, weekly weigh-ins, BMI measurements, and nutrition tips are part of the program.

The Boston Home: 125th ANNIVERSARY



dignity and comfort



YESTERDAY

Thank you to our 2005 donors

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A Vital Legacy

The Vision

Since 1881, when Cordelia Harmon opened the doors of "The Boston Home for Incurables," the original vision has been intact: "to provide for those [with permanent disabilities] for whom there is elsewhere no provision... To preserve a sort of psychological independence and self-respect."

—Fund-raising brochure, 1925

The language sounds old-fashioned, but the message is as fresh and true today as it was then. Today's vision: "Through our core residential facility, we develop and deliver innovative, state-of-the-art services for our residents; convinced as were our founders, that people with physical disabilities can lead creative and purposeful lives, in a residential setting." We are, above all, a home—The Boston Home.

125th Celebrations in 2006—Watch your Mail!

Art Exhibition and Sale

The Boston Home Family Birthday Garden Party

Fall Fund-raising Gala and Awards Dinner

The Boston Home History Commemoration Ceremony

leadership and
outreach



TODAY

innovation and
compassion

TOMORROW

Dr. Robert Mendoza
Mayor Thomas Menino
Mrs. Phoebe C. Miller
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Sheila Monks
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Mr. & Mrs. John F. Morse
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Grants

Allergan, Inc.
Cabot Family Charitable Trust
McKeen Fund
Kenneth B. Schwartz Center

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. If errors are noted, please notify Florence Rawls, Director of Community Development, at 617.326.4310.

The Boston Home Endowment
Create an enduring legacy through a bequest.

For information about The Boston Home Bequest Program, contact Florence Rawls, Director of Community Development, 617.326.4310

Caring, Coping, and Channeling Compassion: Staff Share in Schwartz Center Rounds

At The Boston Home, we take great pride in our medical program and the clinical expertise of our staff. But how do we help them cope with difficult emotional, social, and cultural issues related to their work?

Staff professionals at TBH routinely try to enhance the wellbeing of residents by treating them with sensitivity and compassion. They perform their duties diligently, but they still need support in addressing common-but-complex issues every day. Now, staff members have a forum for examining these issues and arriving at a higher level of understanding. They accomplish this through special forums called the Schwartz Center Rounds.

A grant from the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center brings the Schwartz Center Rounds to our Home, where Schwartz professionals meet with our doctors, nurses, and social workers in open and relaxed sessions to explore specific issues related to resident care. Coordinating these sessions for TBH is social worker Lucille Haratsis, who organizes the programs geared to the staff,



(L-r): Janet Dillon, Maureen Hedderman, Maryanne Fennessy, Lucille Haratsis, Mark Williamson, and Pam Morgan discuss resident care issues.

but ultimately benefiting our residents as well.

“After a brief topic presentation and discussion, the Rounds are a time for questions, exchange of experiences, and feelings in relation to the topic,” says Haratsis. “The Rounds provide welcome mutual support. They foster insight and ideas; they are a learning process.”

“The participants come away knowing they are not alone,” adds Haratsis. “They also develop a deeper understanding of their role in bringing compassionate care to the residents,

along with new tools to provide it.”

Ten years ago, in response to his experiences while fighting terminal lung cancer, Kenneth B. Schwartz “asked his family, friends, and caregivers to create a center that would advance health care built on compassion and empathy.” Since then, the Schwartz Center has offered grants to conduct Rounds in over 80 hospitals, health centers, and nursing homes in 21 states. The Boston Home is one of only four nursing homes that received a grant in 2005.

Dr. Mark Ostrem Honored for Medical Excellence

“Dr. Ostrem is a superb role model for all caregivers...highly respected by patients and colleagues for his compassion, boundless energy, and special devotion to the care of the disabled.”

So said Joyce A. Murphy, former president of Caritas Carney Hospital, upon the presentation of the hospital's esteemed Norman A. Welch, MD Award Honoring Medical Excellence bestowed



Dr. Mark Ostrem at the Hospital's 21st Annual Foundation Awards dinner with Mary Ryan, chairperson, Caritas Carney Board of Trustees, and Joyce A. Murphy, former president of Caritas Carney.



upon Mark S. Ostrem, MD at a recent awards dinner.

Dr. Ostrem, a primary care physician at The Boston Home who has cared for more than 50 residents for two decades, has been affiliated with Carney Hospital for over 25 years. At the hospital, he has served as Medical Director of Ambulatory Medicine, Medical Director of the Transitional Care Unit, and Director of the Foundation Board.

Dr. Ostrem graduated from the University of Minnesota Medical School in Fargo, ND, where he married his high school sweetheart.

“I seek him out when he's here,”

says Linda Strenieri, a TBH resident. “He is very caring, he gives you his full, personal attention, and he has a wonderfully wry sense of humor.”

According to Cindy Walsh, TBH Director of Clinical Services, “We are thrilled that Carney chose Mark for this award. He is a great role model as a community practitioner, and we are very fortunate that he sees our residents.”

Congratulations, Dr. Ostrem! You have truly set a standard of medical excellence to all those you serve in the Boston area.

Editor's Note: Other members of the distinguished physician team at TBH include James Mahoney, MD, Medical Director; Steven Carr, MD; and Leslie Rigali, DO.

MECF Honors Maria Olava Cardoso

At a recent award ceremony at the Massachusetts Extended Care Federation (MECF), Maria Olava Cardoso, a Senior Nursing Assistant at TBH, received a special accolade—the Peter



Olava receives award from Ned Morse, President of MECF.

S. Gordon Scholarship.

Olava took advantage of this honor and is realizing her dream of becoming a nurse. After receiving her LPN, Olava is now studying for her RN. Her colleagues say that her caring and integrity will be great assets to the nursing profession.

A resident of Dorchester and a native of Cape Verde, Olava has already benefited from opportunities at The Boston Home to hone her skills as a CNA. Her dedication has been rewarded.

Marva Serotkin, Mark Williamson, and other TBH staff showed their support by joining in the presentations at MECF.

Institute (Continued from page 1)

technology, rehabilitation, social work, and resident life staff as well.

Sharing Best Practices

We are fortunate to have received a generous educational grant from Allergan to sponsor a two-day conference designed to share best practices in long-term care for persons with MS. The participants will be a leadership team from each of seven nursing homes nationwide that have demonstrated a commitment to caring for people with MS. This program, co-sponsored by the National MS Society, offers TBH another opportunity to take a leadership role in promoting excellence in long-term care. Also, The Director of Research and Programs for the U.K. MS Society and three associates will visit TBH in March. The MS Society has identified a need for specialized long-term care services and hopes to learn from our experiences. In April, I have been invited to the U.K. MS International Conference in Manchester, England to present about assistive technology at The Boston Home.

Developing Clinical Guidelines

As we highlighted in a previous issue, our NMSS John Dystel nursing fellow in MS, Norma Harrington, RN, SW is working with her mentor at

TBH, Cindy Walsh, RN, Director of Clinical Services, and with colleagues at the MS Center at Mount Auburn Hospital to develop best practice guidelines in four clinical areas: pain, cognition, elimination, and nutrition. These clinical guidelines will be of great value in educating other long-term care providers about the most effective ways to care for residents with MS.

Training MS Nurses

As an expansion of the John Dystel Nursing Fellowship in MS, the NMSS is developing a three-day, intensive course for nurses who want specialized training in MS nursing care. After participating in this course, the nurses will be prepared to perform basic assessment and interventions involved in nursing management of MS and pursue work as MS nurse specialists. TBH is delighted to host the first of these intensive courses.

Supporting Research

Another important pursuit for the Institute is research. The Boston Home clinical care center presents an opportunity to confirm best practices and provide evidence for the most effective ways to care for people with MS. Examples of the types of research we might pursue include measuring the effectiveness of a multi-

disciplinary approach to management of spasticity, investigating the impact of interventions to improve cognitive function, and gaining insight into the effectiveness of wellness/spirituality programs in improving quality of life.

Expert Advisors

To help guide us through these ambitious undertakings, we have assembled an advisory panel to provide advice and suggestions as we seek to improve our residential care program, disseminate our clinical expertise, and conduct a range of activities that will enhance the quality of care for people with MS in various care settings. This multidisciplinary panel met in the fall 2005 and will continue to assist our efforts with the Institute.

Former Board member Debra Frankel, Senior Associate at ABT Associates in Cambridge, and Cindy Walsh, RN, Director of Clinical Services at TBH, have joined me in leading this initiative. Our residents and families, the advisory panel, and a wealth of outside experts, including staff at the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, are helping us realize the goals of The Boston Home Institute.

Marva Serotkin, *President and CEO*

Freedom of Speech (Continued from page 1)

lost due to their disease. The Boston Home will evaluate the benefit of each devise. And, we will share what we learn with others through The Boston Home Institute symposiums. [See related article on this page.]

Dynavox, Inc., another company that manufactures speech-generating devices, has loaned one to The Boston Home. We are grateful for this arrangement. However, in order to make

B! Able

We are very grateful to the McKeen Fund for its generous donation, which established **B! Able**, our fund for assistive technology. We welcome your donations. Please refer to the enclosed remittance envelope.

this kind of liberating assistive technology available to more residents, we are seeking funding from individuals and foundations.



(Left): Rehabilitation aide acclimates Jane Hildenberger to the "standing machine," which promotes circulation, alleviates pain, and supports exercise for arm strength and manual dexterity.



Physical therapist helps Janice Kushner relax as the Moto Med cycle, which can detect spasms, moves her arms. The exercise causes muscles to expand and contract, and increase tone, flexibility, and range of motion.

TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

Arthur Hindman Comes Onboard

A warm welcome to Arthur Hindman, who was recently elected to our Board of Directors! We know we will benefit from his extensive professional and volunteer experience.



Hindman, Vice President of Cambridge Applied Systems, previously served as Managing Partner of Sexton International and Vice President and General Manager of Instron Corporation's Asia-Pacific/Latin America Division.

A community leader, Hindman serves on the WGBH Board of Overseers and the Board of Governors of the Harvard Business School Alumni Association. He is a member of Harvard Business School's Community Action Partners, the Headmaster's Council for the Brooks School in North Andover, MIT Enterprise Forum, SBANE, and the University Club of Boston.

Hindman received an undergraduate degree from Northeastern University and a General Manager Program certificate from Harvard Business School. He lives with his family in Brookline.

Phone Directory

NURSING

Director of Nursing:

Helen Hall: 617.326.4332

Charge Nurse: First Floor

Marie-Louise Charles
617.326.4322

Charge Nurse: Second Floor

Judy Bellevue: 617.326.4325

Evening Charge Nurse

Dorothy Abel: 617.326.4291

Weekend Charge Nurse

Johanna Longo: 617.326.4333

Staff Development

Kathy Pavidis: 617.326.4272

MDS Coordinator

Rosemary Kenney
617.326.4280

Quality Improvement/MMQ

Pat Coughlin: 617.326.4327

ADMINISTRATION

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Marva Serotkin: 617.326.4356

Director of Clinical Services

Cynthia Walsh: 617.326.4358

Director of Human Resources

Mark Williamson: 617.326.4359

Chief Financial Officer

Paul Carroll: 617.326.4294

Medical Director

James J. Mahoney, MD
617.825.3905

John Dystel Nursing Fellow

Norma Harrington
617.326.4334

DEPARTMENTS

Activities

Kerry Donohue: 617.326.4277

Business Office

Kevin Buckley: 617.326.4263

Manager of Special Projects

David Young-Hong
617.326.4300

Community Development

Florence Rawls: 617.326.4310

Dietary

Mary Jo Joachim: 617.326.4349

**Maintenance/Housekeeping/
Laundry**

Larry Cosom: 617.326.4357

Rehabilitation

617.326.4303

Social Services

Shirley Peterson: 617.326.4346
Mary Spagnuolo: 617.326.4353

Volunteer Services

Sally Gorman: 617.326.4299

Wellness & Spirituality

Lucille Haratsis: 617.326.4348
Sr. Bridget Haase: 617.326.4298

Happenings at Home

MS Walk

Join The Boston Home team for the annual MS Walk in Boston, Saturday, April 8th. TBH CNAs and Co-Captains Maria Gomes and Ena Wint will depart with our team at noon from the Boston Common. Sponsor them or get sponsors and walk with us! Opt for the 3 or 6-mile routes along the Charles. For more information, contact Maryanne Fennessy at 617.326.4296 or mfennessy@thebostonhome.org.

Start Spreading the News!

The Boston Home has been making a lot of headlines lately. Some examples:

- *The Boston Globe*. A profile on Sister Bridget Haase and our Spirituality and Wellness program.*
- *Globe City Weekly*. A feature story on our adaptive photography program.*
- *Inside MS*. Feature on Dystel Fellow Norma Harrington, RN, SW.
- *International Journal of MS Care*. An article by seating specialist Faith Savage, PT, APT.
- *Nursing Homes Long Term Care*. An article about our advanced technology and building renovation (to be published in March).

In addition, Marva Serotkin was recently quoted in the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Business Journal*.

*Visit www.thebostonhome.org to read all about it!



Resident Sandy Shapiro and State Representative Linda Dorcena Forry chat at the Holiday Party.

NOTES from HOME

The Boston Home | Winter 2006

The standard for care of adults with MS
and related neurological diseases

125th ANNIVERSARY



2049 Dorchester Avenue
Boston, MA 02124-4799
Telephone: 617.825.3905
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