

Anchored in Our Community



UMass Memorial Health — committed to improving the environmental, financial and physical health of the people of central Massachusetts

SEPTEMBER 2021

◆ FROM THE DESK OF ERIC DICKSON, MD

President and CEO, UMass Memorial Health

The heart of our mission at UMass Memorial Health is to improve the health of the diverse populations we serve in central Massachusetts. We recently announced our merger with Harrington HealthCare, based in Southbridge, to help strengthen that mission and serve more people in our region. We came together with Harrington because both of our organizations have a fundamental commitment to the communities we serve. That's why we made our Anchor Mission investment strategy a central part of our affiliation agreement with Harrington. This may have been an unusual step to include in an affiliation agreement – we understand from the Healthcare Anchor Network that this might be the first of its kind in the country – but we felt it was an important commitment to make as Harrington joins the UMass Memorial Health family.



So, what does that mean exactly? UMass Memorial Health will invest \$4 million into community organizations located in Harrington's service area over the next five years with the goal of addressing some of the issues that affect their region's ability to improve its overall health and well-being. We know from our colleagues at Harrington that there are inequities that can be a barrier to good health in the Southbridge area that they have been working to address in their own Anchor Mission work – challenges with people in certain neighborhoods having access to transportation, addressing food insecurity and access to affordable housing, for example.

Now that Harrington is a part of the UMass Memorial family, our leadership teams are also getting involved to see how we can help. For example, can we look to purchase supplies and other items from local businesses – particularly those that are minority- and women-owned? Can we encourage Harrington and UMass Memorial employees to participate in volunteer opportunities to help local non-profit organizations in that area? How can we get more involved with the local food pantries to address a lack of affordable healthy food options? The opportunities to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the people of the Southbridge area are endless, and we are excited to work with our Harrington colleagues to do just that. After all, it's a part of our mission. ◆

ANCHOR MISSION STEERING COMMITTEE

◆ CO-CHAIRS

Douglas Brown
President, UMass Memorial Community Hospitals Inc. and Chief Administrative Officer, UMass Memorial Health

Cheryl Lapriore
Senior Vice President, Chief of Staff, Chief Marketing Officer, and President, UMass Memorial Health Ventures, UMass Memorial Health

◆ COMMUNITY BENEFITS DEPARTMENT

Monica Lowell
Vice President, Office of Community Health Transformation/Community Benefits, UMass Memorial Health

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

To provide feedback or request more information, email communications@umassmemorial.org.



UMass Memorial Health

THE RELENTLESS PURSUIT OF HEALING

◆ “FOOD IS MEDICINE” PROGRAM GROWS WITH NEW MEMORIAL CAMPUS GARDEN

In June, several intrepid UMass Memorial Health caregivers took on the challenge of planting a new vegetable and flower garden at UMass Memorial Medical Center – Memorial Campus as a step toward the launch of the UMass Memorial Health Anchor Mission “Food Is Medicine” program. This program will include a medically tailored food pantry to ensure that patients who are food insecure can access the nutritious foods they need.

A significant part of this model includes fresh produce. Kathleen Hylka, Interim Vice President of Facilities and Support Services at UMass Memorial Health, explained, “We are hoping that this garden will provide us with proof of concept that will help us fully understand what inputs are necessary to yield — and sustain — healthy produce for the pantry.”

The medically tailored food pantry will use a validated screen for food insecurity and provide appropriate patients with a personalized prescription to the pantry, where they will receive food for themselves and their family. The prescription will also allow the patient to meet with a registered dietitian nutritionist to receive education and foods that are appropriate for their disease states, such as diabetes. The Food is Medicine team is actively fundraising and building partnerships as the initiative gets closer to launch.

For the garden, Kathleen worked closely with Bridgette Daley, Director of Facilities, to purchase a variety of high-yield vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers and squash, as well as herbs and flowers for the initial planting. Facilities caregivers

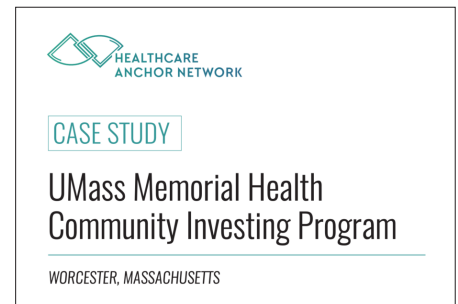


Jimmy Pavone and Carlos Carmona joined Kathleen in the garden planting. Caregivers on the Memorial Campus tended the garden throughout the summer. Kathleen and her green-thumb team are looking forward to harvesting produce this fall and reflecting on the project’s successes and areas for improvement as our Food is Medicine initiative grows. ◆

◆ HEALTHCARE ANCHOR NETWORK CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS ANCHOR MISSION INVESTMENT COMMITTEE AS BEST PRACTICE FOR HEALTH INSTITUTIONS



Since 2017, UMass Memorial Health has been a proud member of the Healthcare Anchor Network (HAN), a health system-led collaboration that helps effectively advance institutions’ anchor missions. As part of its mission, the HAN shares best practices for advancing an anchor mission approach within health institutions. In June 2021, the HAN published a case study highlighting UMass Memorial Health’s leadership in the community investing space. As of early 2021, UMass Memorial Health had already invested \$2.4 million in five different community projects. The study explored the breadth of the projects to understand what makes these investments successful. The HAN’s case study determined the following key takeaways as crucial parts of our community investment approach:



- **Ensuring support from senior leadership to drive internal engagement and enable program success:** “The support from senior leadership ... has been instrumental in getting the entire organization behind the Community Investing Program.”
- **Improving the organization’s reputation in the community through publicizing this work:** Sergio Melgar, Chief Financial Officer at UMass Memorial Health, is quoted in the study, “Our standing in the community has risen ... They see that we’re really about furthering the health care and the well-being of the community as a whole.”
- **Creating a leadership team filled with highly experienced individuals from a variety of backgrounds:** “Leadership of highly experienced and capable individuals from different departments and programs ... has contributed significantly to the program’s success.”

“This kind of ‘place-based investing’ creates healthy and thriving communities by increasing available capital for positive social, economic or environmental impact.”

- **Leveraging community relationships already established through existing community health initiatives:** “UMMH’s long-standing Community Benefits program provided a strong foundation ... by providing connections with community organizations and helping establish UMMH’s positive reputation in the community.”
- **Educating internal stakeholders on the importance of impact investing:** “To address the challenge [of a lack of shared understanding],” the study explains, Robert Feldmann, former senior vice president of finance and corporate controller at UMass Memorial Health, “has worked to educate the Investment Committee on how impact investing works and its value for local communities.”
- **Anticipating that projects may take longer than expected:** “For many of the projects that UMMH has invested in, UMMH’s financing has been one piece of the overall financing,” the study notes, which may increase the, “... length of time it takes for many projects to come to fruition.”
- **Ensuring that all investments align with the anchor mission strategy:** The study explains that UMass Memorial Health has been, “...very intentional in choosing investments that align with UMMH’s anchor mission strategy,” and adds that UMMH has, “...turned down several projects... even though they had potential to generate meaningful impact in other ways,” because they did not align with the organization’s anchor mission strategy.
- **Expanding into focus areas outsider of affordable housing, such as small business development:** Kathryn Behan, senior director of clinical affiliations and anchor mission strategy at UMass Memorial Health, is quoted in the study, “We now want to mature into a new set of investments, so that we can have more impact.”

The HAN case study reinforces the UMass Memorial Health Anchor Mission position that, according to Eric Dickson, president and chief executive officer of UMass Memorial Health, “This kind of ‘place-based investing’ creates healthy and thriving communities by increasing available capital for positive social, economic or environmental impact.” ♦

◆ CAREGIVER VOLUNTEERS CREATE POSITIVE IMPACT ON SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



The Volunteering Pillar of our Anchor Mission is closing in on its goal of highlighting at least 500 UMass Memorial Health employee volunteers to become agents of change for good in our communities by improving the overall social and economic health of our community members beyond our hospitals’ walls. The Anchor Mission Volunteer Committee continues to offer a variety of rewards for caregivers who already volunteer and tell us about it. The committee is also providing a clear path to



volunteering opportunities that improve the health of our patients for those who want to do so in the future. rewards for this type of activity include a \$100 to the Emergency Assistance Support for Employees (EASE) Fund for every eight hours that a volunteer spends

at an Anchor Mission-approved program, 250 myHealth Matters points through the employee wellness portal for every four hours of volunteering an employee completes. These points can help employees earn health reimbursements funds and gift cards. Volunteers also receive a free Anchor Mission volunteering t-shirt, and more!

Employee Volunteer Spotlight: The UMass Memorial Health’s Managed Care Team spent a day helping combat food insecurity in our community. The group of volunteers took a trip to the Community Harvest Project (CHP) in Grafton. CHP is a non-profit farm that engages volunteers to grow fresh fruits and vegetables to provide to those experiencing hunger, and they are one of UMass Memorial Health’s community partners that caregivers can contact for ongoing volunteer opportunities. Our team of caregivers worked with CHP staff to plant the last 4,000 plants that were waiting to get into the ground. Their work will end up providing over 16,000 individual servings of fruits and vegetables. The hands-on event was organized by Karie Lee, Manager, Managed Care Network. ♦



◆ COMMUNITY SNAPSHOTS

Students in **UMass Memorial Health—Community Healthlink’s** School-Based Intervention Program at Knox Trail Middle School in Spencer have taken ownership of an eyesore on school property and converted it to a thriving community garden. The students, with



oversight from program staff, have cleaned up and planted a flower and vegetable garden. In the process, they have learned about gardening and caring for

the environment, as well as the power of community. They also have reached out to the local food bank so they can provide fresh produce for those in need. The School & Community-Based Intervention Program is run in collaboration with local middle schools throughout Worcester County to provide free, voluntary support services to at-risk students. Programming is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services.

The **UMass Memorial Health – Harrington** COVID-19 vaccination site has provided more than 50,000 vaccinations to residents of Southbridge and the surrounding region, and has been lauded by patients, community members and legislators for the efficient, effective and compassionate way it administered vaccines to the



community. Medical care staff from across Harrington’s services came together with community volunteers to provide quick access to the vaccine. This included focused outreach and assistance to help underserved communities get vaccinated, such as interpreters to help

serve Spanish speaking residents and partnerships to help provide transportation to and from the vaccination site. In addition to the vaccination site, Harrington has also partnered with community organizations and agencies to provide mobile vaccine clinics to further reach community members, including on July 24 at the Southbridge Police Department as part of a Community Connections event.

UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital recently invested \$717,000 to fund community-based initiatives aimed at tackling the urgent health challenges of food insecurity,

substance abuse, and workforce development. To date, the hospital has committed more than \$820,000 in resources, including emergency COVID response funding. This funding was made available by the Massachusetts Determination of Need process regulating community investment as hospital capital improvement projects are approved. As a result of the addition of a new Emergency Department, the hospital agreed to invest more than \$2 million over a five-year period. Recipients included Germinemos & Sprout Change, LUK, Inc., the Spanish American Center, the Clinton Public Schools and more.



UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital, in partnership with the City of Marlborough Public Schools and the Board of Health and the Town of Hudson Public Schools and the Board of Health provided vaccine clinics for students at Marlborough High School, Hudson High School, Whitcomb Middle School (Marlborough) and Quinn Middle School (Hudson). Marlborough Hospital caregivers



administered 480 vaccines to students and family members. The collaboration between the schools, the local boards of health and the hospital was tremendous. “We held kids’ hands when they needed to be held, we “high fived” kids once they received their shot, we gave out stickers and celebrated with them. Whitcomb Middle School Principal Brian Daniels said, “I believe the majority of these children would not have been vaccinated if we hadn’t gone to the schools to make it happen.”

UMass Memorial Medical Center was honored by American Essential Hospitals with a Gage Award for outstanding work in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular the hospital was recognized for its COVID-19 “Feet on the Street” community outreach and education effort and its leadership role in the Massachusetts Stop the Spread testing in areas of Worcester with high rates of COVID-19. The hospital developed and implemented a flexible testing operation that could successfully test up to 340 people per hour. The association announced the 2021 Gage Award winners at its virtual annual meeting, VITAL2021 held in June.



◆ UMASS MEMORIAL HEALTH

UMass Memorial Health is the largest not-for-profit health care system in Central Massachusetts with more than 15,500 employees and 2,100 physicians, many of whom are members of UMass Memorial Medical Group and Harrington Physician Services. We are the clinical partner of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Our comprehensive system includes UMass Memorial Medical Center, UMass Memorial Health – Harrington, UMass Memorial Health – HealthAlliance-Clinton Hospital, UMass Memorial Health – Marlborough Hospital, and UMass Memorial Health – Community Healthlink. Together, we impact every aspect of life in the region by making health and wellness services available to everyone, advocating for social equality and providing economic stability and opportunity. There are many ways to heal. We pursue them all. Relentlessly. Visit www.ummhealth.org.

To find a physician in your community, call 855-UMASS-MD (855-862-7763). ◆