

WHAT'S HAPPENING

A newsletter for the Maine Medical Center family

MMCRI Receives Funding to Study Opioid Prescribing Laws

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded Maine Medical Center's research institute and its partnering institution, the University of Vermont (UVM), a \$339,000 grant to study the impact that stricter opioid prescribing laws have had on population health in northern New England. The research will be done through the Northern New England Clinical and Translational Research Network

(NNE-CTR), comprised of researchers from the Maine Medical Center Research Institute (MMCRI) and UVM, and funded by the NIH.

In 2016, Maine and Vermont responded to the opioid crisis with legislation instituting stricter opioid prescribing guidelines and requirements for prescription drug monitoring programs. The goal was to reduce access to prescription

opioids and make it more difficult for patients to obtain prescriptions from multiple providers. Investigators Kathleen Fairfield, MD, DrPH, of MMCRI and the Department of Medicine at Maine Medical

Center, and Valerie Harder, PhD, MHS, and Timothy Plante, MD, MHS, of UVM will analyze whether that legislation has successfully led to a decrease in opioid-related overdoses, hospitali-

zations and other medical events and whether there were unintended consequences, such as patients suffering from substance use disorders turning instead to the illegal use of heroin. The team also will analyze whether outcomes are different for various patient demographics, such as whether they live in a rural or urban area.

'MMCRI Grant'
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LEFT: MMC's Hospital Emergency Response Team (HERT) triages actors portraying patients in a preparedness training exercise simulating a mass casualty event following a hypothetical chemical spill at a local manufacturing facility.

BELOW: Members of MMC's Hospital Incident Command System team coordinate the response to the mock mass casualty event during last Thursday's training drill.



'MMCRI Grant' From Front

"This research provides us the opportunity to study the impact of state laws regarding opioid prescribing while engaging with a wide variety of community members in real time," said Dr. Fairfield. "We hope this work will help inform clinical care of patients, community-based interventions, future policy changes and additional research."

The NIH awarded MMC and UVM a \$20 million research grant in 2017 to establish the NNE-CTR, a

regional network that would help researchers develop and implement innovative medical treatments for many chronic diseases prevalent in our region including cancer, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease and substance abuse. Research activities also focus on defining optimal methods of prevention and health care delivery in rural environments, where approximately 60 percent of Maine's population resides. This grant provides additional funds for the NNE-CTR to focus specifically on the impact of the

opioid crisis on this community.

"There is confidence the program will provide options and opportunities for development of a blueprint to address opioid overdose, with the potential to have a powerful influence on addressing addiction in northern New England," said Clifford Rosen, MD, Director of the Center for Clinical and Translational Research at MMCRI and Principal Investigator, NNE-CTR. "The \$339,000 grant leverages the research infrastructure of the NNE-CTR and will reinforce its reach

in a high-priority medical challenge for our region and beyond."

"A decisive strength of the program is our collaboration with colleagues at the Maine Medical Center Research Institute," said Gary Stein, PhD, Principal Investigator, NNE-CTR and Director of the University of Vermont Cancer Center.

"This new initiative launched on September 1. The complementary institutional expertise will have an impact locally, regionally and beyond."

MMC Receives Recognition for Quality in Cardiac Care

Maine Medical Center has been designated an Aetna Institute of Quality® (IOQ) Cardiac Care Facility for Cardiac Medical Intervention, Cardiac Rhythm and Cardiac Surgery Programs.

IOQ-designated Cardiac Care Facilities meet evidence-based and recognized standards for clinical outcomes, processes of care and patient safety, according to Aetna. Factors weighed in designating the IOQ facilities include Board certification, participation in quality improvement surveys and low mortality, morbidity and readmission rates, among other criteria. IOQ Cardiac Care Facilities also need to meet cost-

efficiency standards.

"This designation validates Maine Medical Center's continuous commitment to quality patient care. It is a testament to the dedication

of our physicians and staff," said Douglas B. Sawyer, MD, Chief Cardiovascular Services and Physician Lead for Maine Medical Center Cardiovascular Service Line.

Aetna makes information about the quality and cost of health care services available to its members to help them make informed decisions about their health care needs.

THE EMPLOYEE FLU BLITZ IS OCTOBER 2-26

Anyone with an employee badge gets the flu vaccine for FREE

See eNews for the schedule

All employees must be vaccinated, show proof of vaccination, or submit a declination form to Employee Health



Maine Medical Center
MaineHealth

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