

# What's Happening

at Maine Medical Center



February 2011 | VOLUME 45, NUMBER 2

## Enhancing Patient Experience a Top Priority

Your Aunt Mildred had surgery at her local hospital. The procedure went well, and she's home and well along the road to recovery. But when you ask about her stay, she talks about the noise — especially at night — and the food. And she's confused about when to take her medication.

Experts in customer satisfaction agree that while patients look first to results of their procedure or treatment, the little things also make an impact. In addition, we've seen patients who are more engaged with higher expectations, which pushes us to raise the bar each day.

Here at MMC, teams from across the medical center are tackling the challenge of improving the experience for patients and families by looking beyond the basics of care, at the entire patient experience. The focus on the patient experience is in part driven by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service's HCAHPS initiative for public reporting of hospital data and the Maine Health Management Coalition's "Blue Ribbon" status requirements.

The teams' focus falls into four key areas:

- Quietness of the hospital environment
- Communication about medications
- Communication with doctors and nurses
- Responsiveness of hospital staff

### PATIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM MISSION

To identify the key drivers for a positive patient care experience, through a designed and executed system, and achieve outstanding results in health care quality at MMC.

### GOALS

- Improve the overall patient experience as evidenced by positive survey results, better patient care, and better patient outcomes
- Foster a hospital-wide culture of compassionate care through partnerships with patients and families
- Align patient experience goals and priorities with the MMC Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)
- Communicate and celebrate patient experience initiatives and results

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## Inside: Q & A with Jeff Sanders



Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Sanders shares his thoughts after eight months on the job, page 6.

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# President's Message



## Lessons Learned From an Olympian

I recently had dinner with a group that included a silver medalist in the Beijing Olympics. As a sports fan, it was a great thrill to speak with this young woman and learn more about the incredible dedication that

level of performance demands to maintain such elite status.

It happened to be the young woman's birthday, and the waitress brought a piece of cake. After some good-natured prodding from all of us, she reluctantly took a tiny nibble from a corner of the cake. That, I thought, is what dedication is all about.

Commitment like this comes from wanting to be the very best, and knowing that your competition is doing everything possible to gain an edge over you, and if you are not advancing, you are falling behind.

Last month, I wrote about moving MMC from a very good organization to a great one. Advances in medical technology and care change the playing field almost daily, and we need to keep up, because other hospitals are working hard to raise the bar, and consumers expect — and deserve — the best care possible. Our competitors are running harder, faster, and smarter than ever before. As in my example with the athlete, if you are not advancing, you are falling behind.

How do we become a great organization? One way is to plan for it. We've just begun a process to develop a new strategic plan for Maine Medical Center that will identify a clear, compelling, and shared vision for our organization that will serve as a "touchstone" for us. The plan will also identify the key initiatives, strategies, and priorities necessary to sustain and further enhance Maine Medical Center's performance and position as a premier health care provider.

Becoming great also means keeping our eye on the delivery of high quality care. This month brings the introduction of Quality Improvement boards throughout the hospital. These provide a snapshot for staff, patients, and visitors. Look for them on units and in other public areas of the hospital

Take a look at the data on these boards. You'll see that we're doing well in some areas, but need to improve in others. Discuss the results with your team, your leaders, and even with patients. I'd love to see team meetings or huddles around the boards, and my hope is that they'll generate ideas for improvement in these key areas.

I've always believed MMC people are as good as you'll find in any health care setting. You show it every day in the care you provide patients. Now it's time to raise the bar and make the medical center a model for other hospitals.

Becoming great begins with you.

Respectfully,

Richard W. Petersen

President and Chief Executive Officer

*Becoming great begins with you.*

# Getting to know . . .

## Jocelyn Leadbetter



**Position:**  
Manager-Archivist/Librarian

**Years at MMC:**  
7

**What does your job entail?**

I collaborate with departments on projects such as the History Wall, the recently-installed photographic exhibit on the first floor, and a soon-to-be-completed book on the history of MMC. There is also a technical and academic aspect that involves preservation of documents and artifacts, research, and the acquisition of new materials. I have additional responsibilities within the Library as well.

**What people may not know is that:**

I have been a choral singer for most of my life. I have sung with the Choral Art Society here in Portland for about 25 years and with other organizations earlier. It is a challenging avocation and a real treat to perform with the Portland Symphony Orchestra at the Merrill.

**If I could have lunch with anyone, it would be:**

My grandchildren when they are my current age. I want to see how it all turns out: the global effects of the political, social, and economic decisions we are making in my time. On a personal and more important level, I want to know how the family is doing.

**I love working at MMC because:**

I am privileged to work with wonderful, dedicated staff in the Library and across the organization. There is a strong sense of history here and an appreciation of the people and events that have brought MMC through 143 years. Just as we wonder at faded images of large wards and gas lamps, we can provide insight for those in the future who ask what hospital life was like in the primitive days of the early 21st century.

## Research Institute Earns New NIH Grant

The National Institutes of Health has awarded MMC an additional 5-year period of funding for our Vascular Biology COBRE (Center of Biomedical Research Excellence) Award. MMC's VB-COBRE, which is entering its 11th year, is one of the nation's first COBRE to be awarded "Phase 3" funding status. "This represents a strong affirmation by the NIH of the outstanding research activities which have, and continue to be conducted by our vascular biology group at MMCRI," says Don St. Germain, MD, Associate Vice President for Research. "This five year award of \$5.5 million will help us to continue this strong tradition of vascular research."

## Flood Response Featured in Joint Commission Newsletter

The Richards flood of 2009 is the featured Case Study in January's issue of *Environment of Care*, published by the Joint Commission. The article shares the story of the flood, caused by a burst sprinkler pipe, and the efforts of staff to move patients, assess impact, and repair the damage. "One of the big things we learned during this event is that an internal emergency can be just as daunting and overwhelming as an external one," says Josh Frances, Director of Emergency Preparedness.

# AROUND THE MEDICAL CENTER

## Transplant Team Receives Award

MMC's Transplant Team received the Silver Medal of Honor from the US Department of Health and Human Services. It was presented by Richard S. Luskin, President and CEO of the New England Organ Bank. Maine Medical Center is one of only a few institutions in the country to earn this recognition, and it is our sixth such medal. This work truly is a hospital-wide team effort.

## SCU Team Honored

The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses recently named MMC's Special Care Unit (SCU) a recipient of its Beacon Award for Critical Care Excellence. The award recognizes top adult and pediatric critical care and progressive care units that meet evidence-based standards of excellence and patient safety.

## Privacy Reminder

Please remember that access to any medical record requires a job-specific purpose. Being mindful before accessing a patient record is an effective strategy for preventing privacy breaches.



## Quality: How are we doing?

Physical Therapy's Hannah Ribeck and R2's Kate Tucker look at one of our new Quality Improvement boards. The boards display quality and safety data — such as readmission rates and patient falls — for staff, patients, and family members to review. By making sure everyone knows our top quality priorities and how we're doing, we hope to accelerate improvement. Look for these boards throughout the hospital, and check back frequently, as new data will be added regularly.



## All In The Family

*Jessica Stevenson, Director of Nursing Floats, stands in front of a photo from the MMC Archives that hangs on the first floor of the Maine General Building. This and other photos celebrate the rich history and heritage of the medical center, and many of them were taken near where they hang. This particular photo has special meaning for Jessica. The nursing student in the second row, second from the left, is her great grandmother Irene Kelf.*

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### Decrease in Readmissions is Goal of Group

A microsystem team from across MaineHealth is working to decrease readmissions for adult medical patients. Using data from the Center for Performance Improvement, they have identified a group of patients who are 'high utilizers' of MMC, and are carefully evaluating this population of patients. The goal is to develop a bundle of interventions that may prevent unnecessary readmissions for all patients.

### MaineHealth Cancer Resource Site Unveiled

The MaineHealth Cancer Resource Center website is now live at [www.mainehealthcancer.org](http://www.mainehealthcancer.org). This patient-friendly website is the go-to resource for people affected by cancer, providing credible, up-to-date information, local support, and clinical services.

# New COO Likes What He Sees

*Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Jeff Sanders joined MMC last June. What's Happening asked Jeff for his thoughts on the medical center, our future, and more.*

*You've been here about 8 months. What are your impressions of MMC? Is it what you expected?*

Maine Medical Center is a wonderful organization; it has exceeded my expectations. We have an amazing tradition that reaches back to 1868. One of my first inquiries when I arrived was to find out more about the history of the medical center. As some may be aware, MMC was the first hospital incorporated in Maine. It was incorporated as Maine General Hospital in 1868. The law was signed by Governor Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, whose accomplishments in Maine and on the battlefield were enormous. I was not surprised to learn that General Chamberlain had a hand in the creation of the first hospital in his home state.



*How are we similar to, and different from, other hospitals that you've seen?*

Like my past experiences, Maine Medical Center is very dedicated to its three-part mission of patient care, education, and research. We are focused on quality and service, and we enjoy what I refer to as a high degree of “social capital.” We have colleagues and a community that place a great deal of trust and confidence in the work we do to serve the health care needs of the community.

Over the past decade, I worked for an “integrated delivery system” that owns 23 hospitals, employs nearly 1,000 physicians, and has a large health insurance plan. This level of integration among the providers and payors of health care allows the system to measure and manage the care to the community in a truly coordinated fashion. It is exciting to be working at MMC and MaineHealth as we evaluate the appropriate level of integration for the communities we serve.



### *What do we do well?*

We have a dedicated workforce across the board. We recently completed a physician satisfaction/engagement survey in which many of the key indicators to success measured statistically better than the benchmark of the survey group. This pattern matches an employee engagement survey that was completed this past spring.

Our focus on the patient is a strong value that is evident at Maine Medical Center. Like all acute care hospitals, we participate in the Medicare Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS), which measures patients' perception of inpatient care. Routinely, patients give our care teams and staff very high marks – nearly 80 percent — on their willingness to recommend the hospital. We should be proud of this feedback from our patients.

### *Where can we improve?*

We are working in health care during a period that may prove to be transformational. Historically, hospitals and other providers were compensated for the “volume” of patients or procedures they provided. There is a strong movement to shift the focus of reimbursement from “volume” to one of “quality” and “service.” Arguably, Maine Medical Center and other quality health care organizations have been focused on quality and service in the past. However, the increased link between reimbursement and quality performance in care process and outcomes and patient experience has heightened the importance of performance in these areas. As efforts proceed in this direction, we will need to be careful to align our service, quality, and financial goals.

While we have made strides in the patient experience measures as reported by HCAHPS and in the care process measures, these continue to be opportunities for improvement.

### *What challenges do you see in 2011?*

I like to refer to challenges as opportunities. Similar to our peers in Maine and across the country, we have many opportunities for continued improvement. Some key areas include: implementation of the SHR/Shared Health Record, achievement of our quality and patient experience goals, and evaluation of our organizational structure to ensure that we are structured optimally. We need to accomplish these key initiatives, among many others, in an environment in which those who pay the bills (private employers, individuals, Federal, State, and Local governments) are challenging us to build on our past success in a more cost-effective fashion. These challenges are not new, and I am excited to be at MMC working with our fabulous team of professionals to design our future.

# People

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*Lisa Bondeson, RN*



*Stacy Dow, RN*



*Kahsi Threlkeld, PhD*



*Edward Sihler*

**Lisa Bondeson, RN**, has joined MMC's Department of Epidemiology and Infection Prevention as a Nurse Epidemiologist. Bondeson will oversee infection control matters for Maine Medical Partners. Prior to coming to MMC, she worked as a field epidemiologist for the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Infectious Disease.

**Nancy Goodspeed** is the Interim Director of Financial Planning, as we conduct a search for a replacement for Dan Forgues, who left MMC in December. Goodspeed will continue in her role as Manager of Cost Accounting.

**Stacy Dow, RN**, has joined MMC as Nurse Manager of NICU/CCN and Newborn Nursery. Dow was previously Assistant Nurse Manager of the NICU/CCN at UMass Memorial Medical Center in Worcester.

**Sandra Ahlquist** has passed the American Nurses Credentialing certification exam in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing. Sandra is a nurse in the adult division.

**Marie Allen** has joined the Development Office as a Gifts Processor. Allen was previously an Administrative Associate in Employee Health.

**Kahsi Threlkeld, PhD**, is now working as a Research Navigator for MMC's Research Institute (MMCRI). As a research navigator, Threlkeld will be available to assist and guide faculty and staff in their efforts to conduct research. She was previously a Research Specialist with MMCRI's Family Medicine team.

**Gil Fraser, PharmD**, received the Maine Society of Health Systems (MSHP) Pharmacy Practice Award. His nomination noted "Dr. Fraser is extraordinary in his commitment to patient care and the overall advancement of knowledge through education and research."

**Don Watson, PharmD**, was awarded the MSHP 2010 Pharmacist of the Year Award, given to one MSHP member pharmacist who has demonstrated "outstanding contributions to health care in Maine during the previous year."

**Edward Sihler** has joined MMC as a Computer Systems Specialist. Sihler previously worked for the University of Michigan Department of Orthopedic Surgery running research computing.

**Douglas Howell, MD**, gave a presentation to the 2011 NYSGE (New York Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy) Annual Dinner and Dr. Paul Sherlock Lecture. The presentation was entitled, "Meditation on a Forest Path - Thomas P. Almy and Lessons on Mentoring." Dr. Howell spoke on the importance of mentoring and touched on the history of gastroenterology.

# February Anniversaries

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Linda Hanscom, 35 Years



Priscilla Kennie, 15 Years

## 40 Years

Susan Libby, Contract Office  
Donna Richardson,  
Patient Accounts  
Barbara Sevigny, Nursing Floats

## 35 Years

Linda Hanscom, R1

## 30 Years

Cheryl Wilbur,  
Health Information  
Management

## 25 Years

Linda Aspinall, ASU  
Mary MacFadyen, SCU  
James Smith, CICU  
Bonita Valls, SCU

## 20 Years

Timothy Cline, Ultrasound  
Stephanie Damboise, R2

## 15 Years

Tracey Beedle, Pediatrics  
Timothy Clement,  
Telecommunications  
Richard Harris Jr.,  
Building & Grounds  
Priscilla Kennie, Nursing  
Barbara Szatkowski, R7

## 10 Years

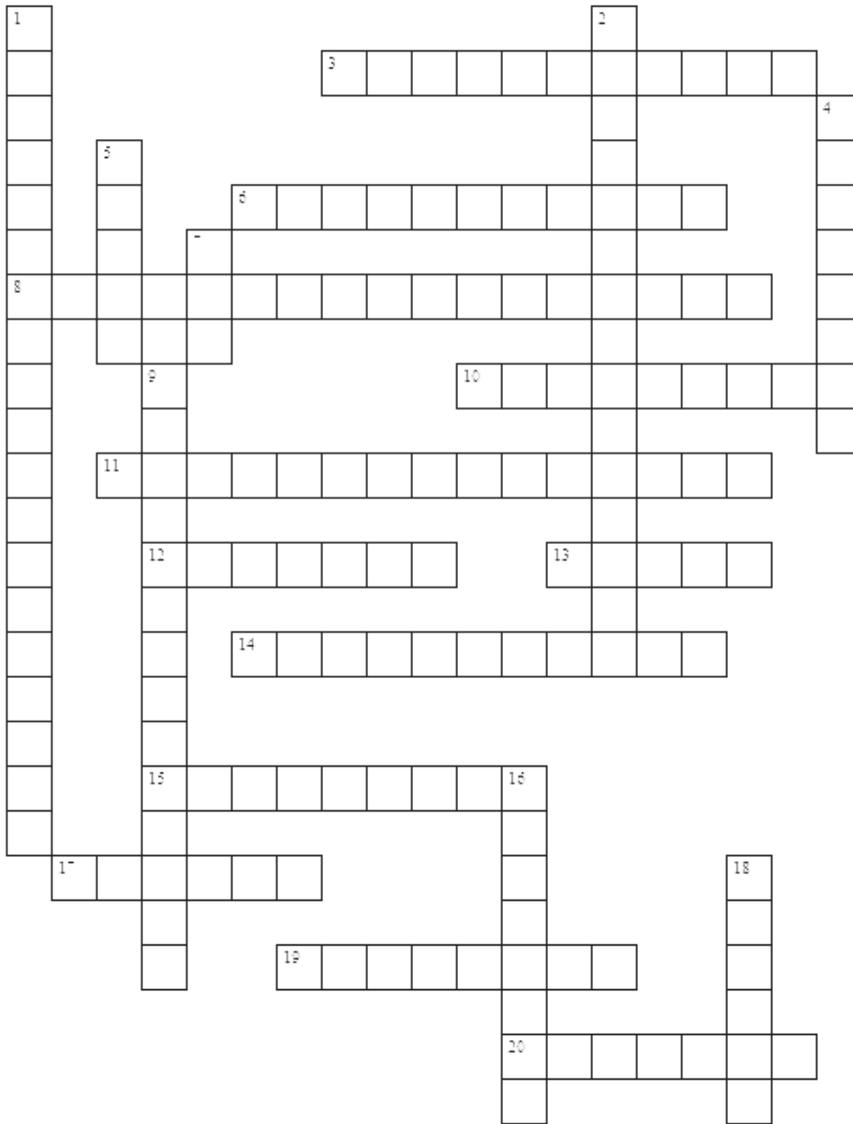
Marianne Athanosios, R4  
Jillian Barnes, Pharmacy  
Holly Beaulieu,  
Post Anesthesia Care  
Erin Bernard,  
Vocational Services  
Beth Coughlan, Pain Care  
Jeanne Gebhart, ED Nursing  
Dorian Glazier, Ultrasound  
Anne Harrington, MMCRI  
Kimberlee Illig, CICU  
David Luttrell,  
Environmental Services  
Kathy Maddin, Admitting  
Sue Malcolm, P6  
Mary McDonald,  
Human Resources  
Kathryn Mullins, P4C  
Amy Ouellette, R7  
Erin Petrocelli, ED Nursing  
Lyudmila Popova,  
Nutrition Services  
Mary Sissay,  
Environmental Services  
Edward White, Psychiatry

## 5 Years

Amare Berhe, Distribution  
Jeffrey Berman, Pediatrics  
Kimberly Bilodeau, Security  
Marc Blais, Endoscopy  
Susan Brown, Family Center  
Kristin Chapman, Birth Center  
Kristen Cooper, OR  
Rebecca Dionne,  
Dialysis Nursing  
Lisa Dittrich, Cardiac Cath Lab  
Wallace Garroway, Safety Office  
Marvin Grant,  
Nutrition Services  
Lesley Hanselman, R7  
Melissa Heckman, R3  
Peter Hedstrom, Pediatrics  
Amy Herrick, REMIS  
Michele Karolak, MMCRI  
Heather McDougal, OR  
Madalena Moto,  
Environmental Services  
Sonya Perkins, Gibson Pavilion  
Marilena Preda, MMCRI  
Bobbie-Jo Rand, Psychiatry  
Edward Runyon,  
Environmental Services  
Harley Spurling, Distribution  
Kimberly Susbury, NICU  
Jessica Walton,  
Occupational Therapy  
Mary Warming,  
Nutrition Services

# So, you think *you know* MMC?

Show off your knowledge of the medical center and you might win a prize. Send your completed puzzle to Communications and Marketing, MGB5, by March 10. If you answer all clues correctly, you'll be entered in a drawing for some fun prizes! Winners, prizes, and the puzzle solution will be announced in the next *What's Happening*.



## ACROSS

- 3 Children's hospital is named for her
- 6 \_\_\_ and Family Centered Care (2 words)
- 8 This department feeds us
- 10 Brighton \_\_\_ (2 words)
- 11 Keeps hearts healthy
- 12 Scarborough \_\_\_ Center
- 13 Our medical school partner
- 14 This prevents the spread of germs
- 15 Home of Family Birth Center
- 17 Northern New England \_\_\_ Center
- 19 22 \_\_\_ Street
- 20 This means fire

## DOWN

- 1 ED
- 2 Where an oncologist works
- 4 CEO Rich \_\_\_
- 5 Cover this when you cough
- 7 Annual Implementation Plan, for short
- 9 What you're reading
- 16 What MMCRI does
- 18 MMC has more than 2,100 of these

“This looks beyond the clinical care we provide,” says Team Leader Kathy Hale, RN, Associate Vice President of Nursing. “It means making sure patients are able to sleep at night, that they are well informed about the medications we prescribe, and feel comfortable speaking with staff and asking questions.”

The noise is particularly important, Hale notes, as plenty of rest and a good night’s sleep help with the healing process. It’s one area we can all help MMC improve.

## 75th Percentile

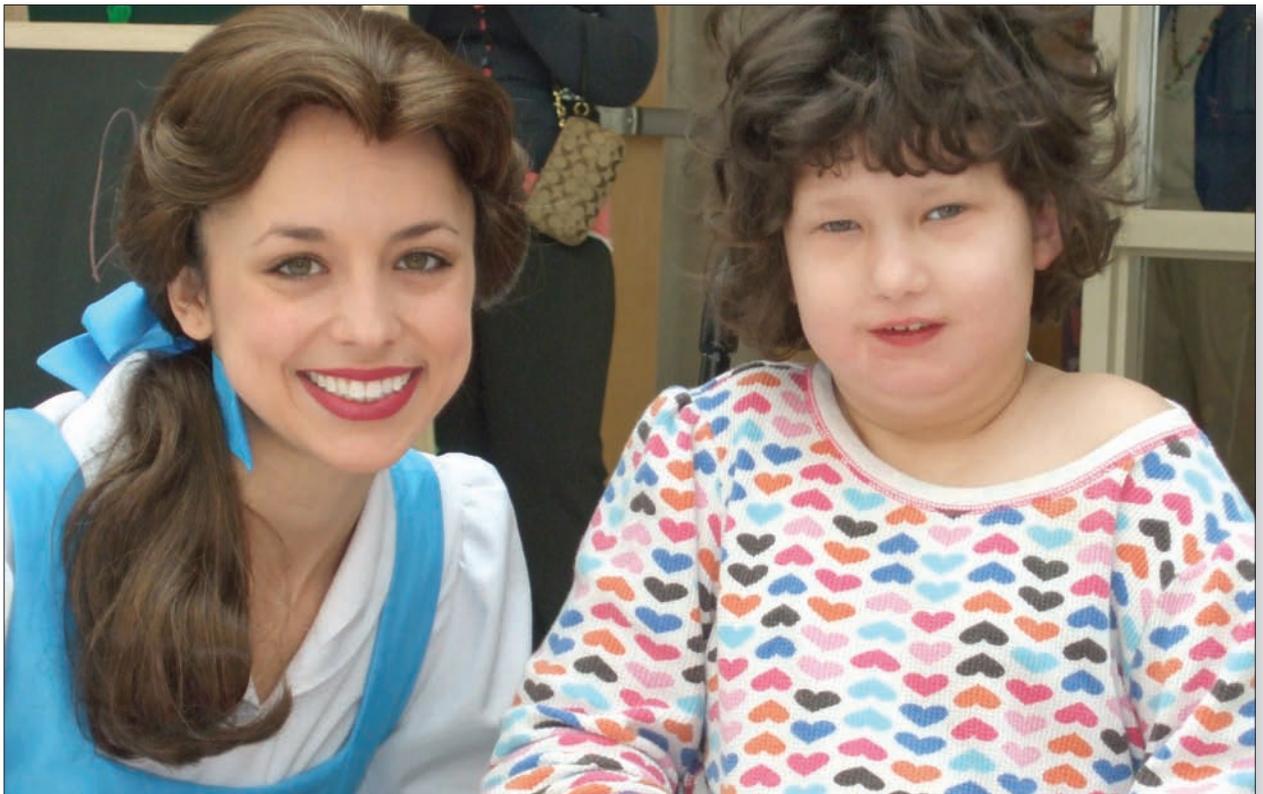
An NRC Picker-generated survey sent to randomly selected patients compares us to MMC-specific targets, as well as to other hospitals. Our goal is to score in NRC Picker’s 75th percentile among hospitals for our patient experience measures.

“Although we have a designated team addressing the challenge, everyone at the hospital plays a role in this effort,” says Lisa Almeder, MD, the Physician Leader of the Patient Experience Team. “Health care is very much outcomes-driven, but we’re looking at *how* we provide care.”

“This data is very important,” says John Bancroft, MD, Chief of Pediatrics. “Major employers are looking at patient satisfaction data and using it to decide which hospitals to direct their employees to, so this is something that benefits both our patients and the hospital.”

## What’s Next?

The Patient Experience Team will work with units and departments to find ways to improve patient visits, and you’ll be seeing a newsletter and website in coming months. In the meantime, think about ways you can make an impact. The patient experience is a team effort, and we all play a role.



## A New Friend

*Belle, one of the stars from Disney On Ice, stopped by The Barbara Bush Children’s Hospital inpatient unit to read a story and meet patients, like Jasmine Hodgdon.*

## February is National Cancer Prevention Month

You can reduce your risk of cancer:

- Eat a healthy diet including lots of fruits and vegetables.
- Be active – get some exercise every day.
- Don't smoke or chew tobacco. Free help is available. Call the MaineHealth Tobacco Treatment Center at 662-7150 or the Maine Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-207-1230.
- Get the right cancer screening for you. Preventive cancer screenings, such as mammograms and colonoscopies, are covered 100 percent by the MaineHealth health plan.

Questions about preventing cancer? Call MMC's Cancer Institute Resource and Referral Line at (877) 831-2129, or visit [www.mainehealthcancer.org](http://www.mainehealthcancer.org).

## Looking Back . . .

### *Let it Snow, Let it Snow . . .*



*Photo courtesy Maine Medical Center Archives*

*That's Charles Wittenzellner, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds at MMC in 1960, behind the wheel of his new 4-wheel drive Jeep utility vehicle. It was a snowy winter and Charlie was well equipped to handle the clearing of the parking lots and driveways. At that time there were no garages and the present visitors lot on Chadwick St. was a frozen reservoir. Only surface parking around the hospital buildings was available for employees and visitors.*



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*What's Happening* is published monthly at Maine Medical Center for members of the hospital community and for friends of the institution throughout Maine and northern New England.

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