

what's happening

Maine Medical Center
Portland, Maine 04102

September 7, 1988

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Comp package has a new look this year

The Maine Medical Center compensation package for 1989 is the largest ever, at \$12.2 million. The package was approved by the Board of Trustees at its August meeting, and will take effect the first week in October.

The Board approved the compensation package as part of a \$158.3 million operating budget for 1989. The cost of salaries including the package will be \$92 million, or 58% of the total operating budget. The budget as approved contains a \$2 million deficit, which the Board

approved rather than cut programs or reduce the compensation package.

This is the most complex compensation package in memory as well, because it is shaped to an unprecedented degree by market forces. "The labor market is very volatile," says Vice President for Employee Relations Ron Baril. "In the 'old days,' we could give everyone the same market increase, but today different occupations command different increases.

"Market forces make it very difficult to administer a compensation program," he says, "especially one we worked so hard to make equitable. When we developed the current job description and rating sys-

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Deficit is an omen of healthcare crisis

Maine Medical Center's Board of Trustees has approved a deficit operating budget for the first time in recent memory. The hospital's \$158.3 million budget for Fiscal Year 1989, which begins October 1, 1988, will be nearly \$2 million in the red. The Trustees took the action reluctantly at their August 25 meeting, amid growing concerns about the hospital's long-term ability to continue serving the needs of its patients.

Trustee John DiMatteo, who chairs the MMC Finance Committee, says "we've struggled to solve the real problems that face us: skyrocketing salaries, increasing demand, and burgeoning technology. But our ability to do that has been confounded by state and federal regulatory systems that have lost touch with reality."

Forecasts for 1990 and beyond predict even larger deficits. "The wild swings of revenue combined with inflexible state regulations will soon dramatically impact our rate structure," Executive Vice President and Treasurer Donald L. McDowell says, "as artificially low rate increases this October—3.7% on average—will be followed a year later by increases in excess of 20%."

McDowell explains that MMC received a major payment from Medicare this year to settle its accounts for 1986. Because of the deferred revenue provisions of the Maine Health Care Finance Commission, the entire amount must be "paid back" to Blue Cross, Medicaid, and other payors this year by reductions in our rates. "That artificially lowers our rate increases to 3.7% this year," he says, "while our operating expenses go up 13.1%."

The lion's share of the operating expense increase is due to increases in salaries necessary to recruit and retain



LITTLE VISITOR Jessica Dorgai of North Vassalboro, Maine brings something special to cheer up her mom while in the hospital. (A/V Photo)

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tem three years ago, the idea was to recognize the relative values of all the jobs in the hospital. Unfortunately, the marketplace recognizes a different principle: supply and demand."

The marketplace operates on a simple mechanism: if there are more positions in an occupation than there are people to fill them, the market value of the occupation goes up. MMC is competing locally for service/maintenance, clerical/secretarial, and some professional/technical workers, in an economy that boasts a 2% unemployment rate. Higher wages are needed to recruit people into those positions. MMC is competing in the regional and national markets for most professional/technical positions (especially nurses), and the same principle applies.

The result is a compensation package with varying market increases for different job classifications. The variances reflect the need to "catch up" with the marketplace in the different classifications. Balancing that need against the money available, Baril believes "we've developed as fair and generous a pro-

gram as possible. We're pleased that the Board of Trustees approved such an expensive program even in the face of a deficit budget. They recognized that we have to be able to recruit and retain qualified employees despite the pressures of the marketplace and the constraints of state regulation."

Beyond the cash portion of the compensation package, a significant change will be made in the overtime pay policy. After October 3, vacation and sick time will be considered as hours worked for the computation of overtime pay. Also, the employee benefits portion of the package will be enhanced this year by the addition of an Employee Assistance Program, offering help for substance abuse, marital counseling, financial counseling, and a range of similar services.

Plans are also underway to implement a Family Child Care Home Network Program, to enhance the child care referral program. Details on both benefit enhancements will be available later this Fall.

employees. McDowell notes that salary expense in 1989 will be \$12.5 million higher than 1988, reflecting a hotly competitive market regionally and nationally for professional/technical workers (especially nurses) and locally for service workers.

"These problems are not unique to Maine Medical Center," DiMatteo says. "They are symptomatic of a health care system that is coming apart at the seams. The time has come to finally develop a health care payment and regulatory system that works.

"It's not just hospitals that are in trouble," he warns. "Business, which picks up a major portion of the health care tab, is in trouble. Insurers are in trouble—witness the current status of Blue Cross in Maine. Ultimately and most importantly, our patients are in trouble. If insurers can't afford to pay claims, and business can't afford to pay insurance premiums, and we can't afford to pay our employees, the system will fail.

"We cannot solve the problems alone. Nor can business alone, insurers alone, nor government alone. We had hoped that the Blue Ribbon Commission appointed by Governor McKernan would have provided a solution by bringing all the parties together. Our first look at the Commission's recommendations was disappointing, however, because of their continued emphasis on regulation by formula and lack of emphasis on planning. We do not believe that a formula can meet the needs of 43 hospitals in the state of Maine, and more to the point cannot meet the expectations of the people of the state.



ENRAPTURED in an atmosphere of lovely fragrant flowers is volunteer Sally Quirk arranging a bouquet in the Gift Shop. (A/V Photo)



United Way

MMC group leaders and solicitors for the 1988 United Way Campaign should attend one of the two meetings scheduled on Monday, September 19, and Wednesday, September 28, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM in classroom -7 of the Dana Center. The meetings will be conducted to discuss this year's campaign and to distribute campaign materials. Lunch will be provided. Please call X2540 by September 11 to indicate which date you will attend.

Thanks

Dear Patient Caring Personnel,

In the past ten months I have met many of you from the oncology-gynecology, radiology, cardiology and pathology departments as well as day and night caretakers. You are a wonderful team! I felt important, well cared for and also everyone had time to talk *with* me, not *at* me. Indeed, there were times when I almost forgot that I was in a land of large city of other people who needed help and this was because of the special warmth that was directed toward me. I was apprehensive but I never felt neglect or fear.

I wish I could personally thank each and everyone that made me feel special, tenderly cared for and best of all, physically well!

Many, many, thanks
Sincerely,
Deborah Cameron

The family of Mary Hack, RN wish to express their deepest gratitude to the staff at MMC for their care of Mary during her illness. God bless you all.

New Employees

HOUSEKEEPING: Julie Burns, John Dazley, Dawna Michaud, Brian Simoneau, Ralph Taylor, Tina Tucker.

LINEN PROCESSING: Rath Em, Youm Heak, Jeannine Roy.

FOOD SERVICE: Ada Brown, Barbara Libby, Lisa Morgan.

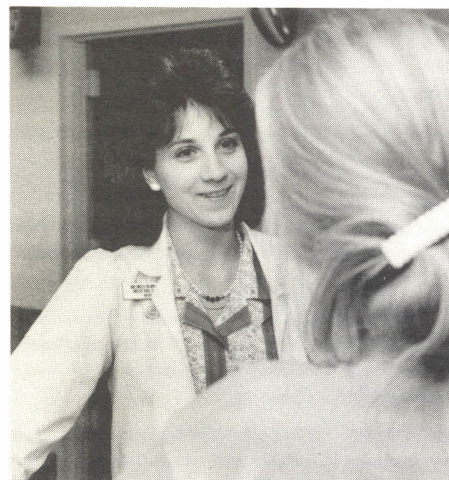
NURSING: Rachel Alfandre, Andrea Belanger, Emily Burns, Susan Kelby, Alison Laeger, Florence Martin, Deborah Regan, Alison Riker.

**10 K Walk for
Maine Children's Cancer Program
Saturday, September 17, 1988**

**pouring rain date
Sunday, September 18
Starting time 9 AM**

**Eastern Promenade
For more information contact
Debbie Churchill or
Teresa Dimatteo x2541**

About People



Mary Mazek-Orlowski has joined the Division of Nursing Resources as Oncology Nurse Specialist. Mazek-Orlowski comes to Maine Medical Center from North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where she worked as an oncology staff nurse, and assisted in the nursing continuing education program. She holds her B.A. degree in Nursing from Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, and is a candidate for a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a member of Sigma Theta Tau, the International Honor Society for Nursing, and the Oncology Nursing Society.

*You are cordially invited to
a farewell coffee for*

Edward C. Andrews, Jr., M.D.
on

Monday, September 12, 1988
9:30-10:30 a.m.-Coffee
10:30-11:00 a.m.-Program

**Dana Education Building Lobby
Maine Medical Center**



The use of loud speakers to alert patients in waiting areas, is inappropriate due to the broadcasting nature of the speaker that transmits the patient's name into areas outside of the immediate waiting area.

Marketplace

FOR SALE: Queen Anne cherry dining set, 9 piece. Oval table, 44" x 66", with 2 leaves, opens to 44" x 98". 4 side chairs, 2 arm chairs. Large china and buffet server, excellent condition. Was \$6,400, moving, must sell, \$3,300. Call 774-2149.

FOR SALE: 1980 Ford Granada, 4 door, full vinyl roof, plush velvet interior. 36,000 original miles, power brakes, power steering, AM/FM stereo. Excellent condition, moving, must sell. Asking \$2,295. Call 774-2149.

FOR SALE: Eureka Space 10 umbrella tent, canvas with rubberized floor. 10x10x7' center. Easy assembly, sleeps 4-5. Excellent condition. \$150. Call 363-3712 after 6 PM.

CHILDCARE: Gorham-Buxton line. Full and part-time openings for infants and toddlers. Before and after school care. Drop in welcome. Call 929-5758.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Male, professional non-smoker to share 4 BR farmhouse in Freeport. Call 865-1307 evenings or early mornings.

FOR SALE: Brand new Fischer x-country skis with poles and boots, women's shoe size 6 1/2 - 7 1/2. Used twice. Call 761-2464 evenings.

FOR RENT: 1 BR ranch in quiet Portland neighborhood. Fully appliances with W/D, oil heat and color TV. Available 10/1/88-2/15/89. Very reasonable rent. Call 761-2464.

FOR RENT: Vacation condo, 1 week, sleeps 4. To use exchange time before 10/30. You pick the spot, will check if available. Price negotiable. Call 797-7505.

FOR SALE: Queen size box spring, 4 years old, \$100. Call 772-6741 after 6 PM.

FOR SALE: LL Bean truck tent. Fits full or compact truck, \$150. Call 6578-2104.

South Portland, 2nd floor, 2 BR apartment. Stove, refrigerator, parking included. \$475/mo. plus utils. Single or couple preferred. Call 772-8099.

CHILDCARE: Mother of 2 will babysit in my Westbrook home. Full or part time. Excellent references. Call 854-4750 or 839-3333, leave message.

Old Orchard Beach, oceanfront condo, tastefully furnished, 1 BR, 1 bath, 2 parking spaces. No pets, 25 minutes from Portland. Available through May. Call 773-7100 days, or 767-4622, or 1934-2773 evenings.

FOR RENT: Ocean Park apartment. Recently renovated ground floor; furnished as needed, bus-line nearby. Call 934-9466 or 508-359-4228.

FOR SALE: 1979 brown VW Rabbit. 1 owner, newly inspected, very good condition. Asking \$1,200. Call 773-3253.

FOR SALE: Payson Park, 3 BR all remodeled new kitchen, new bathroom. 1 car garage, quiet cul de sac neighborhood. \$99,500. Call 773-6400.

FOR RENT: 3 BR house on wooded lot, West Falmouth, 20 minutes to MMC. 1 1/2 baths, large kitchen, dining area with fireplace, family room with wood stove, 2 car garage. Available 9/88 to 6/89. \$900/mo. Call 625-4505 after 6 PM

FOR SALE: 12 string guitar, Sekova, \$75. 2-4' fluorescent shop lights, \$15; 3/8" full wetsuit, large child or ladies size 5; 2-6' wooden porch shades, \$20; Amp/graphic equalizer-auto, \$45. Call 883-4145.

FOR SALE: 1984 Chevy S-10 Blazer 4x4, tahoe package, tilt steering, AM/FM stereo cassette w/equalizer, new tires, recent tune-up, excellent condition, 36,700 miles. \$8,500 firm. Call 883-5527.

CHILDCARE: In my South Portland home. 12 years experience, flexible hours. Call 799-8649.

WANTED: To purchase German nutcrackers. Call 799-8649.

FOR SALE: 1978 Chevy wagon, needs muffler. Some rust, runs well. \$175. Call 799-8649.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Quiet professional M/F to share 3 BR State Street apartment overlooking water. \$183/mo. plus security deposit. Call 772-8162.

FOR SALE: 1980 Honda Civic hatchback, 5 speed, 75,000. \$1,650. Call 775-1904.

FOR RENT: 3 BR house in North Yarmouth, wood and oil heat, garage, 2 1/2 acre 25 minutes from downtown Portland. \$850/mo. plus utils. Call 846-9432.

CHILDCARE: Mother of 2 is willing to babysit full or part time for newborns to toddlers weekdays. Saco area. Call 283-1826.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Professional male seeks non-smoking, responsible roommate to share 3 BR, oceanfront home in South Freeport. September through May. No pets, \$400/mo. plus utils. and security deposit. Call 865-6854 and leave message.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING is published every Wednesday at Maine Medical Center, Portland, Maine for members of the hospital community and for friends of the institution throughout Maine and northern New England. Comments, questions and suggestions may be addressed to Public Information Office, MMC, Portland, ME 04102. Telephone: (207) 871-2196.

Wayne L. Clark, Editor.

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FOR RENT: West End, near MMC and Mercy, large 2 BR townhouse with loft. Living room, kitchen and bath. W/W carpeting and hardwood floors. W/D hook-up in basement. \$625/mo. includes heat. Call 775-3162.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Female non-smoker to share 2 BR, 2nd floor apartment in Yarmouth. \$225/mo., heat included. 15 minutes from Portland. Call 846-6281 or 799-3487.

FOR RENT: 24 Ocean Avenue, Higgins Beach, available now through June. 3 BR, 1 1/2 bath, sun-porch, close to beach, new furnace, insulated, storm windows, parking. Nice spot, no pets, \$600/mo. plus utils. Call 883-5888 evenings.

FOR SALE: Dodge Omni 4 speed, low mileage. Good condition, 30 MPG on highway. Asking \$1,000 or best offer. Please call 879-1613.

CHILDCARE: For children ages 3-7. Call 854-4302, leave message, or 761-1622.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Professional woman to share lovely Victorian home, Baxter Blvd. area. Large yard, W/D, parking. Must be non-smoker, dog lover. \$375/mo. plus 1/2 util. Call 774-9738.

FOR SALE: Smith Corona electric portable typewriter, \$60; exercise bench and weights, \$50. Call 871-4226 or 781-4775.

FOR SALE: GE washer and dryer, good running condition, \$100 each. Call 799-0945.

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Portland, Maine 04102

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Nursing Research Advisory Group
presents
"Registered Nurses
of Diabetes Mellitus"
Rachel Girard, RN, MS, CDE
September 8, 1988
Dana Education Center
Classroom 7
12:30-1:30 PM