

what's happening

Maine Medical Center
Portland, Maine 04102

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October 9, 1985

'86 budget includes net rate decreases

Maine Medical Center has announced a net decrease in its room rates and charges for Fiscal Year 1986, which began October 1. There is a small increase in the semiprivate room rate; all other room rates remain the same or have been decreased.

The 1986 operating expense budget -- \$120,490,999 -- approved by the hospital's Board of Trustees at its September 26 meeting, was developed within the revenue cap set by the Maine Health Care Finance Commission. According to MMC Executive Vice President and Treasurer Don McDowell, the hospital was able to avoid large across-the-board rate increases primarily because the Commission sharply reduced the discounts that must be allowed to two of the major third-party payors, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Medicaid.

"As a result of those reductions and the continued stable financial condition of the hospital," McDowell says, "we were able to limit rate increases in some areas, hold the line or reduce charges in others. Overall, our rates and charges for Fiscal Year 1986 are very close to what they were in 1984."

The semiprivate room rate has been increased 2%, from \$225 per day to \$229 per day. Rates for the Burn, Special Care, and Neonatal Intensive Care units have been reduced by 14%, 11%, and 15% respectively. McDowell notes the reductions were applied to the most expensive room rates, which will ease their impact and also bring MMC's charges for these services more into line with those in the region. All other room rates remain unchanged, and charges for ancillary services have decreased 3% overall.

The Health Care Finance Commission

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New '86 pay package starting this week

Maine Medical Center's Compensation Study and Pay for Performance Program was implemented with the start of Fiscal Year 1986, and this is the week that we start working and earning according to the results of the study. Monday, October 7 marked the start of the first "new" work week, and Thursday, October 17 will be the first time changes show in our pay checks.

It's been a long, complex, and demanding process for all involved in the Compensation Study which began in October 1984, but now, in October 1985, we are moving along the implementation schedule and are in the period (September 30 - October 17) during which supervisors are informing employees of their performance levels and new pay rates.

This implementation period is at the end of a process that involved the evaluation of every job in the institution. It began last fall with department heads, managers, and supervisors writing up-to-date, comprehensive job descriptions for

every job performed in the hospital; it proceeded into the winter with employees reviewing those descriptions. It went on to include the ranking of each job in relation to every other job at Maine Medical Center to assure that the jobs and the people doing them would be treated equitably within the institution, and then the surveying of salaries at other institutions, organizations and businesses in appropriate labor markets to assure that MMC salaries would be competitive in the job market. The process was moving toward its goal, as described by MMC President Edward C. Andrews, Jr., M.D., when he announced the compensation study last October:

"The Medical Center's reputation for excellence in patient care and in service has been built by its employees. One of the keys to maintaining this reputation is our ability to recruit and keep highly qualified people. To do this, we must have a wage and salary program that is internally equitable and externally competitive."

MMC's Compensation Manager Margaret-Boulos now says: "The total

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IT'S WORKING AT WORK AND AT HOME



United Way

All of us working together to preserve our neighborhoods, house our families, provide job placement and counseling, and assist our youth.

BUDGET, from page one _____

establishes overall revenue limits for Maine hospitals, by adjusting a base year figure each year for such variables as inflation, wage increases, and volume. The Commission determines the percentages to be applied for each of these values, and it is up to each hospital to develop its own budget accordingly.

High on MMC's agenda for this fiscal year was the implementation of the new compensation program that had been developed over the past year. This required funds in excess of those provided for by the Commission in the salary inflation percentage it used to calculate the hospital's revenue limit. "We're not bound by the percentages used by the Commission," McDowell says, "but increasing the salary portion of our budget more than the percentage they used meant we had to find the extra funds in other areas. We were able to do that, so we were able to implement the compensation program."

The Commission in July established a Gross Patient Service Revenue Limit of \$127,685,507 for Maine Medical Center. The federal government issued its final Medicare regulations on September 3, and they will result in a significant decrease in revenues for the care of Medicare patients. This action requires the shifting of costs to other payors. Hospital officials anticipate the state will recalculate its revenue limits accordingly, and the MMC budget implemented last week is based on an estimated revenue limit of \$134,171,747.

McDowell notes that while the Health Care Finance Commission has been able to help bring about low rate increases by lowering payor discounts, its ability to do that is over. "The Commission has lowered the discounts about as much as it can," he explains. "Next year, it may take double-digit rate increases to keep up with expenses, especially if Medicare -- the only payor not under the Commission's purview -- continues its freeze."

Since 1980, Maine Medical Center's rate increases have been below the increase in operating expenses, reflecting tight internal budgeting and a high operating efficiency. Operating expenses have increased 79% since 1980, and rates have increased only 40.7% in the same period.

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package is very competitive in relationship with other area employers." She notes that:

- last year's salary budget increased approximately \$2.6 million, for an average increase of five percent.
- the Maine Health Care Finance Commission salary guidelines for FY '86 suggested a salary increase of 5.3%.
- MMC's FY '86 non-physician salary increase budget is \$4.3 million, well above the increase recommended by the Commission.
- most nonhealthcare employers appear to be offering pay increases between five and six percent.
- most healthcare employers appear to be awarding pay increases of five percent.

But the study has not been conducted on a purely percentages-and-dollars basis, Ms. Boulos says:

"A great deal of time went into weighing and balancing the results of the study as it applied to this institution and its people," she says. "If we had applied the study in its purest form there would have been a lot of imbalance, most of it effecting people at the higher ends of their pay ranges.

"We noticed the higher ends of most of our pay ranges were reasonably competitive but the lower ends were not. The key then was to balance that, because there was a tremendous amount of concern about the impact upon our long-term employees. A lot of thought went into balancing the results of the study and the pay for performance program to insure that all employees were treated fairly."

With over 3,400 people in MMC working in more than 460 types of jobs, there is no broad-brush statement to describe what each employee will experience with the pay package. Supervisors are providing that information during these two weeks. Every employee's new rate of pay, however, has been determined by the same factors: 1) job performance during the past twelve months; 2) how far the new pay range is above the old pay range; and 3) position in the current pay range. It is true, across the board, that no employee's rate of pay will be reduced as a result of the study, and it was decided that all employees working at a competent/proficient level would receive at least a 6% increase, with exceptions for employees who have proven

outstanding and those who have been found to need substantial improvement.

SOME POLICIES CHANGE

The overall Compensation Study will continue with a review of policies related to cash compensation. Four changes in policy will be implemented now with the FY '86 program. A revised compensation manual will be available after the start of the calendar year. The following changes have been implemented this week:

- Effective October 6, the differential policy, which covers evening, night, weekend, and holiday differentials, will be expanded to include: all employees in service/maintenance jobs; all employees in professional/technical/administrative support jobs; and all employees in pay grades 301 through 304 of the supervisory/managerial pay plan.
- All employees hired after October 5, whose scheduled hours are less than 20 hours per week will not be eligible to accrue sick, vacation, or holiday time. Employees hired prior to October 6, whose scheduled hours are less than 20 hours per week will be "grandfathered" under the existing policy.
- After October 5, employees who reduce their scheduled hours below 20 hours per week will no longer accrue sick, vacation, or holiday time. Employees who change their scheduled hours to below 20 hours per week will be paid for all accrued vacation and holiday time when their hours are reduced.
- The benefits for our employees whose pay status has been changed from salaries (exempt) to hourly (nonexempt) because of the compensation study will be "grandfathered" until they leave that position.

WHAT ABOUT BENEFITS?

The benefits feature of MMC's FY '86 package will include --- for the second year in a row --- enhancements at no increased cost to the employee. (Blue Cross/Blue Shield, for example, will provide heart transplant coverage among its enhancements.)

(In next week's What's Happening: A description of the Benefits Package, and details of a study on flex-benefits for possible inclusion in the FY '87 package.)

Critical care is the topic for MMC Friends

The care of the critically ill has been the subject of much interest in the United States in recent years. This issue has a direct bearing on the practice of medicine at Maine Medical Center. Who decides when to end treatment for the terminally ill, and do our state laws protect them?

John P. Tooker, M.D., Assistant Chief of the Department of Critical Care Medicine and Associate in the Division of Pulmonary Medicine, Department of Internal Medicine at Maine Medical Center, will be the featured speaker at the Fall Membership Meeting of the Friends of Maine Medical Center. Dr. Tooker has held numerous teaching positions and has been medical advisor to the Outreach Education Program at MMC since 1981.

Dr. Tooker's presentation will include the application of Maine law to the appropriate diagnosis and treatment of critically ill patients. Included will be the issues of informed consent by the patient or his representative, who makes decisions on the patient's behalf when the patient is unable, and what are reasonable limits of treatment for patients in the Special Care Unit.

The presentation will allow time for

discussion of these topics. The public as well as all hospital employees are invited. Learn what you can do to protect a critically ill family member or friend, at the October 18 meeting of the Friends of Maine Medical Center. Coffee will be served at 9:30 AM, and the program begins at 10 AM in the auditorium of the Dana Health Education Center.

Flower Box trying Saturday openings

The Flower Box has begun opening on Saturdays. Its hours are from 11 AM to 3 PM.

It's on a trial basis, according to manager Peg Wohltjen, and based on a demand which seems to be there. "The switchboard operators, the staff in Admitting, and others have told us of many people asking about Saturday hours for the Flower Box, and expressing disappointment that we were not open," she says.

The Flower Box, operated by the Visiting Board of Children's Hospital for the benefit of MMC's Pediatric Unit, will be needing volunteer help on Saturdays, Mrs. Wohltjen says, first to give the Saturday openings a fair trial and then to keep them going if the need is proven. People interested in volunteering should call the Volunteer Office at ext. 2205.

Parent/child series open to employees

A series of presentations and discussions on issues of concern to parents is underway for the benefit of MMC employees. The free lunchtime series explores such topics as the working parent, stress, step-families, and preventive health. Pre-registration is requested for each program; call Training and Development at x2824.

The World of the Working Parent *Wednesday, October 16, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM, Classroom 3.* Time management for busy parents, stresses common to the working parent, and the availability of child care for all ages, including infant and after-school care. Presented by Kathryn Stead, a Board member of the Coalition for Maine's Children, past President of the Southern Maine Association for the Education of Young Children, and a Program Director and Teacher in a Montessori school in Portland.

Parenting Without Guilt *Wednesday, October 30, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM, Classroom 7.* The supermother and superfather syndrome, quality vs. quantity time, and organizational skills and priority setting. Presented by Dean Paterson, a pediatric nurse and health educator.

The Blended Family: The Dynamics of Step-Family Life *Wednesday, November 13, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM, Classroom 3* The dynamics of step-family life, and the challenges and opportunities of a blended family. Attitudes and approaches that make living in a step family as productive and happy as possible. Presented by David Sanborn, Marriage and Family Counselor, Southern Maine Counseling Center.

Two Films on Parents and Infants *Wednesday, November 27, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM, Classroom 3* "In the Beginning: The Process of Infant Development," showing the unfolding that takes place during the first year of life. "On Their Own/With Our Help," an examination of adult intervention when a baby needs help.

Preventive Health Issues *Wednesday, December 11, 12 Noon - 1:00 PM, Classroom 3.* The effects of nutrition on health, wintertime health, and the new HIB vaccine for meningitis. Presented by John F. Goodrich, M.D., a pediatrician and former Chief of Pediatrics at Mercy Hospital.



MMC's NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE CENTER was featured during Shop 'n Save Family Food Festival in the Civic Center September 20-22. Staff from the unit attended the NICC booth over the weekend, greeted the public, and answered questions---and NICC shared in the proceeds from the third annual Hannaford Bros. Co. event. Shown here are Joleen Isom, RN, left, and Carole Messenger, RNC. (A/V Photo)

Sleep is critical care meeting topic

"The Dynamics of Sleep and Sleep Deprivation" will be the program for this Wednesday, October 9, meeting of the Southern Maine Chapter of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses. Ellen Murphy, RN, CCRN, will be the speaker at the 7:00 PM meeting, which is preceded by registration at 6:30 PM and followed by a business meeting at 8:00 PM.

The meeting is in Classroom 7 in the Dana Center. A \$3.00 fee will be charged to guests.

EAC News

Plan ahead: The EAC Christmas Shopping Trip to Boston is set for Saturday, December 7. The cost per person will be \$15. Check with Bev Cookson in the Cafeteria for details.

Marketplace

PLEASE NOTE

A combination of production problems conspired against the publication of the October 2, 1985 issue of What's Happening. This issue contains ads submitted for October 9 specifically. People who submitted ads for the October 2 issue, please call x2196 to re-submit ads that are still timely.

FOR RENT: 2 BR apt. on Turner St. \$375/mo. plus utils. No pets. Call 772-4385 before 4 PM.

FOR RENT: Avail. Nov. 1. 2 BR condo, 1 mile from MMC, on busline. Full cellar, appliances, W/D hook-up, 1½ baths, newly carpeted, off-street parking for 2 cars. No pets. \$525/mo. plus utils. and sec. dep. of 1 mo. rent. Call 772-5566 or 774-6962.

FOR RENT: 2 BR furnished apt. Avail. now through June 15. \$225/mo. plus utils. Call 934-2102 after 5 PM.

FOR RENT: Apt. in country 20 miles from Portland. 4 rooms, lake view, heated, utils. Adults; refs. Call 926-3396 eves. and weekends.

FOR RENT: 1 BR apt. on Carlton St. near MMC. \$275/mo. with all utils. included. Call 773-6601 days or 774-6986 eves. and ask for Kate.

FOR RENT: New 2 BR apt. at Bramhall Square near MMC. W/w carpet, new appliances, LR with cathedral ceiling and giant skylight. Immediate occupancy. \$500/mo. Call 775-2230 or 775-1223.

FOR RENT: Corner of Pine and Thomas St. in West End. 5 rooms and bath with heat, hot water, parking and closets. \$585/mo. Call 774-5317.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Cape Elizabeth. Share house on ocean. No pets. Non-smoker preferred. \$275/mo. plus utils. Call 799-4748.

ROOMMATE WANTED: To share spacious 2 BR townhouse in Scarborough. Easy access to Portland. \$240/mo. plus utils. Call Margarite at 883-2384 eves.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Large sunny apt. to share. Deck, view, walking distance to hospitals, W/D, remodeled bath. \$260/mo. with sec. dep. and utils. included. Call 774-3438 and leave message.

FOR SALE: 1970 Chevy Stepside pick-up C10, 350, 4-spd., good condition, new sticker, \$1,000. or best offer. Call 774-5031.

FOR SALE: Martha Washington chair with mahogany arms/legs, upholstered back/seat, in good condition, \$250. Call 797-5442 eves.

FOR SALE: Refrigerator. 3 cubic ft. including large freezer compartment. Still warranted; like new, \$125. Call 839-6226 eves.

FOR SALE: Pioneer Centrex stereo system. Includes receiver, turntable, cassette deck and speakers, \$150. Call 799-6896 after 6 PM.

what's happening

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. Barbara Burns, Editor.

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FOR SALE: Woodstove, enamel, Reginald 101 boxstove, \$200. Call 829-3648.

FOR SALE: 30 in. Kenmore gas stove, 4 yrs. old, used very little, needs part for oven to be operational, best offer. 5 hp. Sears outboard motor, good condition, \$275. Call 774-6962 or 772-5566.

FOR SALE: Maytag dryer. Call 892-3694

FOR SALE: Men's Schwinn 10-spd. 26. in. bicycle in good running order, \$60. Dirt bike, fixed up recently, \$35. Call 871-2131.

FOR SALE: Complete Computer system: Apple IIe with two disk drives, extended 80 column card, super serial interface card, parallel interface card, IEEE-488 interface card, Thunderclock Plus card, Numeric Keypad IIe, Joystick IIe, Hand control IIe and Monitor II just for starters. Total \$4,200 worth of hardware plus \$2,100 worth of software and manuals. \$3,200 or best offer. Call 772-1280 after 5:30 PM.

WANTED: Companion for 70 yr. old woman. Minimal care. Needed for Jan., Feb., and March. Must drive. For more info call 799-5473.

FALL CLEANUP AND YARD MAINTENANCE: Reasonably priced. Call Jim at 767-2794 after 4:30 PM.

DAY CARE: 2 fulltime day care openings in licensed Cape Elizabeth home. Infants - 5 yr. olds. Open 6 AM - 6 PM Mon. - Fri. Call 767-4482.

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