

what's happening

Maine Medical Center
Portland, Maine 04102

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Gov. Brennan orders statewide cost study

Governor Joseph E. Brennan last week directed Maine's Health Facilities Cost Review Board to begin a study of hospital costs statewide. He ordered the study to begin immediately and requested a report by December 1 which would indicate whether or not some form of mandatory cost containment or rate-setting measure is necessary.

Will such mandatory measures be found necessary?

At Maine Medical Center, administrators feel they will not. Efforts by all hospital employees at voluntary cost containment measures go back many years and have proven effective. Recent evidence of rewards of those efforts can be found in the fact that, while it was necessary to increase room rates at the start of fiscal 1980, the increase was held at 11% in the face of a 15.2% increase in MMC's operating expenses.

Is the study itself necessary?

"In light of all the recent conversation and apparent confusion regarding hospital costs and finances in general, it seems to have become necessary," says Executive Vice President and Treasurer, Donald L. McDowell. "We here at Maine Medical Center will welcome the study."

"The governor has picked a fine group to undertake the study," McDowell adds. "We believe the members of the board are talented, objective and concerned people. And they are already familiar with the health care cost picture."

The Health Facilities Cost Review Board is an independent agency made up of consumers, health care providers and representatives of state agencies and the insurance industry. The board has been in place since 1978 and, by statute, is responsible for reviewing

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MMC EXECUTIVE Vice President and Treasurer Donald L. McDowell tells WCSH-TV news team that the hospital will welcome statewide cost study ordered by the Governor. (A/V Photo)



THE WINNERS in the Employee Activity Committee's Mini-cruise raffle received their round-trip tickets to Nova Scotia last week. EAC President Joyce Decesere, right, presented a cruise package each to Joanne Drost and George Blaisdell, both of Pulmonary Medicine. (A/V Photo)

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hospital budgets and developing standards aimed at helping hospitals with cost containment.

Under the Health Facilities Information Disclosure Act of 1977, all Maine's hospitals must submit their proposed budgets either to the Health Facilities Cost Review Board or to the Voluntary Budget Review Organization. The VBRO is also a statewide organization, and is made up of consumer representatives, and representatives of hospitals and third-party payors.

Maine Medical Center's 1980 budget, for example, was reviewed by the VBRO which approved the hospital's charges and found them reasonable and related to its operating expenses.

Governor Brennan has stressed that he is not interested in regulation for regulation's sake, and is not necessarily predisposed to regulating hospitals. He is ordering the study in response to a request by State Senator Mary Najarian (D-Portland). Sen. Najarian has charged that Maine hospitals have been accumulating large surpluses of unrestricted funds and that they need not pass on certain costs to patients.

She made that charge while the State Legislature was debating a bill that would enable municipalities to levy service fees on hospitals and other non-profit institutions for the municipal services they use. That bill,

MMC's finances: how do they work?

Employees interested in learning about the financial management of Maine Medical Center are invited to an open session of "How the Hospital Supports Itself," a repeat of the March segment of the Supervisory Discussion Series.

Non-supervisory personnel are invited to attend the discussion, with Executive Vice President and Treasurer Donald L. McDowell, Associate Vice President for Finance Michael M. Kilmartin, and Director of Budgets and Reimbursement Gene Joyner.

The open sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, and Tuesday, June 2, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, both in classrooms 3 and 4. They are geared to needs of non-supervisory employees who wish to gain a general understanding of the hospital's income, costs, and budgeting process. Department heads and administrators will help in arranging necessary release time for interested employees.

introduced by State Representative David H. Brenerman (D-Portland), was defeated in the House on May 16 and in the Senate on May 18.



DOUBLE HONORS were shared when representatives of a generous group of people presented a watercolor to MMC's Radiation Therapy Division. They are friends of former patient Gail Harkavy and, because of her, admirers of the Division and its staff. The gift is in her honor. From left: Stuart Gilbert, M.D., Mrs. Harkavy, and presenters Dale Eichorn, Gayle Sawyer and Carol Pappas. (A/V Photo)

If the name changes so should the ID

The MMC Security Department reminds employees that if they change their name, by marriage or otherwise, they should go to the Security Office to have their photo IDs changed. Failure to do this causes problems when the ID is used for identification.

Security is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week, so changes may be made at any time.

Thanks...

I would like to thank Drs. Bennert, Pucka, Churchill, and Aiken (and med student Linda Atherton) and all the wonderful nurses on P4CD who helped my husband and I during the unexpected early birth of our twins. Also, a special thanks to Drs. Dransfield and Fowler and the entire staff in NICC and NBN. The care, support, and words of encouragement from everyone were much appreciated.

Mrs. Maurice (Sylvia) Wesley, RN, P1C

To all my friends at MMC:

During my recent accident I received a lovely floral arrangement from you. I appreciate your thoughtfulness and thank every one of you for thinking of me.

Sincerely,
Eleanor Gee

Packed cells are bright red
and so are deglyced
ASU gals are so nice
they all should be kissed!

-- Wes E.

New Employees

CHEMISTRY: Lynn Albert

CSD: Jay Condon

ENGINEERING: Vicki Sanville, James Starkey

HEMATOLOGY: Eileen Maki

HOUSEKEEPING: Lawrence Dyer, Mary Jane Howard, Clarence Rawding, Shelley Robichaud

MEDICAL RECORDS: Anne-Marie Dulac

NURSING: Jeanne Normandeau, Susan Sparaco, Ann Turbyne

PHARMACY: Daniel Fogg

SWITCHBOARD: Judith Sass

Choking child needs fast, proper help

The second greatest cause of accidental deaths in the home among children under five years of age is choking on food or other objects. For this reason, the American Academy of Pediatrics says it's important that parents and other family members learn first aid for this emergency situation.

Citing figures published by the National Safety Council, the AAP points out that 150 children died in 1978 because they tried to swallow, or inhaled food or objects which blocked their windpipes. After reviewing literature on the subject, an Academy committee has published guidelines on the proper methods of giving first aid to choking children.

First, according to the guidelines, any "foreign body in the upper airway is an immediate threat to life," and should be removed. However, if the child can speak or breathe and is coughing, attempts to remove the foreign object may make first aid action both unnecessary and dangerous. If the child cannot breathe or make a sound, however, first aid must be given immediately.

First, the child's head should be turned. He or she should be placed over the rescuer's knees -- over a forearm if the child is an infant, or over a lap or on the floor if the victim is an older child. Four sharp back blows should be given. If the object is not propelled from the windpipe through this procedure, then four rapid chest thrusts should be given. These actions should be repeated if there is no response.

The AAP points out that a choking child's mouth should be probed only if the object can be seen.

If these methods fail, the child should be rushed to the nearest hospital or clinic.

The American Academy of Pediatrics is an organization of more than 22,000 certified pediatricians in North and South America dedicated.

Upcoming Nursing Educational Programs

- *Critical Care Seminar: "Radiology Update for Critical Care Nurses,"* Robert Isler, M.D.
June 4, 1981 2-3 PM Clrm. #3.
June 5, 1981 8-9 AM R8 Conf. Rm.

For further information, please call Staff Development x2397.

MMC Board approves staff appointments

Turner Bledsoe, M.D., Vice President for Health Affairs, announces the following Medical Staff appointments, as approved by the Maine Medical Center Board of Trustees:

Effective immediately -- Daniel D. Storch to the Courtesy Staff, Department of Psychiatry.

Effective July 1 -- Stephen R. Blattner,

M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Pediatrics; John P. Driscoll, M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Medicine; John F. Goodrich, M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Pediatrics; William E. Herbert, M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Surgery; Anthony J. Horstman, M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Anesthesia; John L. Myers, M.D., to the Associate Staff, Department of Medicine.



COMPARING NOTES prior to the Annual Spring Membership meeting of the Friends of Maine Medical Center are (from left): guest speaker Robert R. Auger, director of the MMC Pharmacy; Mrs. Herbert S. Holmes, Jr., Vice Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of MMC; and Mrs. George W. Foley, President of the Friends. (A/V Photo)

Overtaxed anatomy pays back with pain

The non-medical person might think there's little of humorous interest to be found in the New England Journal of Medicine. However, the letters-to-the editor section of the prestigious journal often contains reports of unusual conditions, syndromes, aches, and pains, often the result of overindulgence in a particular activity. Overdoing it, it seems, can cause a particular part of the body to revolt:

Your money and personal belongings can cause you pain, in the form of *Ponderous Purse Disease*. A too-large shoulder bag can cause a pain in the neck, a fat wallet causes the male species a pain of a different nature, known as *Back Pocket Sciatica*.

That spunky pup that hates his leash can take his toll as well. *Dog Walker's Elbow* is the result of the constant tug-of-war between man and beast.

You may have rhythm, but proving it

by snapping your fingers as you dance can lead to *Disco Digit*. And the mechanical bull of disco fame can land you a case of *Urban Cowboy Rhabdomyolysis*, a minor muscle problem, if it doesn't throw you completely and give you more conventional -- and more permanent -- ills.

Runner's Knee and *Tennis Elbow* are well known ailments, but in Alaska they have their own versions, known as *Musher's Knee* and *Hooker's Elbow*. Mushers are dog team drivers, and the sharp kicking to the rear used by the driver to accelerate the team can produce an equally sharp pain in the knee. "Hooking" is ice fishing with a hand-held line, which is repeatedly jerked up and down. *Hooker's Elbow* results when that motion is carried on too long, such as in one reported case, which occurred after an Eskimo woman had been fishing for several days.

"Moderation in all things," someone said.



MAINE MEDICAL CENTER IS BUILT ON THE HIGHEST parcel of land on the Portland peninsula, and the view from the roof of the Richard's wing, some 118 feet above Charles Street, is magnificent. This photo was taken looking toward the east. Holt Hall is at center left, and Congress Street can be seen in the center of the photo. The Eastland Hotel and State Street Church share the top of the view, backed by Peaks Island and Casco Bay. The roof, incidentally, is about 262 feet above sea level. (A/V Photo)

Morphology

THE ULTIMATE PRINCIPLE

By definition, when you are investigating the unknown you do not know what you will find.

HARTLEY'S FIRST LAW

You can lead a horse to water, but if you can get him to float on his back, you've got something.

JACQUIN'S POSTULATE ON DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

No man's life, liberty or property are safe while the legislature is in session.

Marketplace

FOR RENT: 2nd floor apt., 1009 Congress St., walking distance to MMC. 4 rms., bath, newly decorated and insulated. Working adults, no pets. \$240/mo. plus utils. Come to the above address to see apt.

FOR RENT: Portland townhouse, near MMC, 2 BR plus, working frpl., many extras. \$475/mo. including heat and all utils. Call 774-2007.

FOR RENT: Spruce St., West end. 4 large rooms, new K, new bath, frpl., hardwood floor, bay windows. No dogs, lease. \$300/mo. plus utils. Call 772-1831.

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 the Editor, Public Information Office, MMC, Portland, Me., 04102. Barbara Burns, Editor.

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FOR RENT: 1 room efficiency apt., avail. immediately. Private entrance, Cape Elizabeth. \$50/wk. including utils. Call 799-4462, keep trying.

FOR SALE: Rainbow vacuum, like new, one year old, all attachments and power vac. Reasonable price. Call 799-5183 after 6 PM.

FOR SALE: Steelcase secretary desk (45x30) and stenographer chair, ex. cond. Call 775-3064.

FOR SALE: 15 ft. aluminum Grumman canoe, ex. cond. \$275. Call 883-3608 after 5 PM.

FOR SALE: 2 red 5-speed bikes, 21", good cond. 1 boys with many extras, \$75 and 1 girls, \$50. Call 774-5327 after 3 PM.

FOR SALE: Sofa and chair, \$230. Double-size mattress and box spring, \$95. 19" Color TV, \$125. Coleman camp lantern, \$20. Call 774-1065.

FOR SALE: 1973 Plymouth Fury, PS/PB, AC, no rust, runs great. \$650. Call 773-6833.

ROOMMATE WANTED: Female to share furnished Brackett St. apt., 5 min. from MMC. Heat and utils. incl. \$35/wk. plus sec. dep. Call 773-9045, keep trying.

WANTED: Washing machine in good cond. Call 797-9312 after 4 PM.

WANTED: Experienced painter for indoor/outdoor jobs. Call 774-1562.

WANTED: Person to mow lawn on Western Prom. Must have own mower. Call 774-1562.

WANTED: 4-5 BR home, July thru Aug., Portland area. Call 985-7428 after 5 PM.

BABYSITTING: Will sit in my home, experienced, flexible hours. Call 799-8649.

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