

IMPACT

The difference we make
in our communities



Support for Safe, Affirming, and Inclusive Services

*Historic Gift for
LGBTQIA+ Services*

COMMUNITY

Promoting Wellness
Through Fitness

HEALTH

Expanded Health Center
in New Britain

CARE

Serving Children
With Autism

ALSO IN THIS *NEW* ISSUE...

- COVID Vaccine Update •
- Wheeler Golf Classic •
- Patient Advisory Panels •
- “Time to Thrive” Outpatient Program •

Historic Gift Creates New Transgender Services

A \$100,000 gift is funding the creation of “Walk With Me,” a specialized service to provide transgender individuals ages 10-25 with peer support, medical care, and gender-responsive therapy in Plainville and Hartford.

Designed to create a safe, affirming, and inclusive array of services, “Walk With Me” aims to meet individuals where they are on their journey, and walk the path beside them and their loved ones to provide validation and a supportive environment for identity exploration.

The anonymous donor says the issue of care for transgender individuals hits particularly close to home in their family, and they chose to invest in Wheeler because of its history of integrated behavioral and primary health care and staff expertise to provide the services well. The donation is the second-largest gift from a living donor in Wheeler’s history.

FACT: Transgender and gender non-binary (GNB) or gender-expansive youth report significantly increased rates of depression, suicidality, and victimization compared to their cisgender peers, and are at higher risk for homelessness or housing insecurity.



Join us at

**Southington PRIDE’s first-ever
LGBTQIA+ Celebration**

from May 21–June 6, 2021

More at:

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthingtonPRIDE>

To access an expanded version of this story and other stories in this issue, visit: [WheelerHealth.org/Impact](https://www.wheelerhealth.org/impact) or access the page using this QR code.



COMMUNITY

Getting in Shape

A \$10,000 gift from an anonymous donor—and an additional pledge match of up to \$8,000—has spurred nearly \$8,000 from other donors, raising a total of nearly \$26,000 to help patients achieve increased wellness through fitness in 2021. The donor, who originally pledged a \$5,000 match, raised this amount after seeing the success of the effort.

With the support, Wheeler staff created an innovative program that incentivizes patients to create and reach their own wellness goals, with separate tracks for adults and adolescents.

Hypertension, diabetes, and obesity are widespread in the patients Wheeler serves. Patients often have unmet health care needs and are affected by the social determinants of health, among them, poor nutrition, lack of exercise, and social and environmental factors.

FACT: More than 16% of patients of Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Centers have hypertension, and almost 8% have diabetes.

COMMUNITY ROUNDUP

- Through the **Community Health Center Association of Connecticut**, with funding from the **Connecticut Health & Educational Facilities Authority**, our Family Health & Wellness



Center patients have access to **care kits** to help monitor health vitals from home. This is particularly important if they are struggling with the **effects of COVID-19**.

- An initiative funded by the **City of Hartford** and coordinated by the **United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut**, helped to deliver flu and **COVID-19 vaccinations** in Hartford through providers like Wheeler, along with public awareness of the benefits of vaccines.
- Our **36th Annual Golf Classic**, presented by **Mutual of America Financial Group**, is happening **September 15, 2021**, at The Country Club of Farmington. Join us for another great year of golf, food, and an opportunity to support the Basic Needs Fund.



HEALTH

New, Expanded Health Center in New Britain and More

Wheeler's New Britain community health center at 75 North Mountain Road is moving on June 21 to 40 Hart Street. With the move comes a significantly enhanced array of services to meet the needs of the community, including primary care for the whole family, behavioral health and addiction services and treatment for all ages, complementary medicine, and more.

"We look forward to a new chapter in our long history of delivering services to residents of Greater New Britain," said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and chief executive officer. "In one location, we'll be able to provide services for all ages, expanding access to care for thousands of individuals and families."

FACT: Under 50% of New Britain's population in lower-income brackets are connected to a health center. That means more than 23,000 people do not have access to care.

HEALTH ROUNDUP

- Since December, Wheeler has **vaccinated** eligible staff, patients, and



the community at its **community health centers** in Bristol, Hartford, Plainville, and Waterbury, and focused on education and outreach into the community to ensure vaccine distribution is **equitable** and **accessible** for all.

- A new, expanded patient advisory board system was launched in March, building off past meetings held to listen to **patient feedback** and guide our care and services. A recent meeting heard a patient's request to move to more **in-person care** for **behavioral health services**, specifically care for **substance use disorders**.
- Our five community health centers have **resumed walk-in** behavioral health care services, which were restricted during the pandemic. **Patient feedback** drove the change, as the **pandemic** revealed significant challenges with **isolation**, particularly for patients struggling with substance use disorders.

CARE

Behavioral Health Outpatient Services and Support for Children and Youth With Autism Spectrum Disorder and Their Families

Wheeler's clinicians have expanded capacity for treating children and youth with behavioral health issues and autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and supporting their families, thanks to an in-depth behavioral health skills training through The Center for Children with Special Needs and support from the Wheeler Innovation Fund.

"To deliver effective care, it's essential to understand how patients with ASD communicate and learn, common co-morbidities and co-occurring disorders, unique stressors and life experiences, and how to support family members," said Katie Singh, LCSW, senior director, Outpatient Services.

FACT: Depression affects an estimated 7% of children and 26% of adults with autism.

CARE ROUNDUP

- **Pregnant and postpartum women** and their family members in Bristol, New Britain, and surrounding communities have access to **substance use disorder treatment**, recovery, and **other services** through Wheeler, thanks to a three-year, **\$2.7 million federal grant**

from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS).

- "Time to Thrive," an innovative, four-week, **intensive outpatient program** for adults, is offered through Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center in **Plainville**.

This **highly individualized** program includes individual, family/couples, and multifamily group therapy, medication management, and **creative therapeutic techniques** like journaling, arts-based therapy, music-enhanced therapy, and more.

- Over the past year, dozens of **prospective foster parents** and families enrolled and completed Wheeler's 10-week virtual TIPS-MAPP course to learn about all aspects of the foster parent **journey**. The class was so popular this past year, the team is offering an **additional course** starting **May 10, 2021**.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



If there's anything we've learned from the past year, it's the power of—and need for—flexibility and community, particularly communities that work together for a better future that is focused on wellness, justice, and peace for all. This new publication and Wheeler's new tagline, **COMMUNITY | HEALTH | CARE**, reflect all of these.

COMMUNITY. Everyone at Wheeler, in every program, builds or supports a community. At our Northwest Village School, we have an amazing community of students, families, and staff.

HEALTH. Every Wheeler program improves Connecticut's health, and health is in our mission, vision, and values. Health is what we do.

CARE. Everyone at Wheeler cares for the people we serve, and caring is an integral part of our values.

Our new, updated logo extends our proud past into a hopeful future for everyone.

Thank you for working with us hand-in-hand each day and supporting our mission and vision. We appreciate your creativity, generosity, and friendship.

Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA

Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA
President and Chief Executive Officer

PLEDGE

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

YOUR support, YOUR commitment, YOUR vision can change, and literally save, lives.

Yes! I want to support:

Basic Needs Fund \$ _____
Basic Needs Fund, Northwest Village School..... \$ _____
Pediatric Services in New Britain..... \$ _____
General Support \$ _____
Enclosed is my total gift of \$ _____

Check Enclosed (Please make payable to Wheeler)

Please charge my donation to: Visa Mastercard Discover AmEx

Name _____

Account Number _____

Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____

Signature _____

My gift is in memory of: _____

My gift is in honor of: _____

Please notify: _____

My employer will match my contribution. I have enclosed a matching gift form.

Please send me information about Planned Giving.

Mail using the enclosed envelope to: Wheeler



Office of Philanthropic Giving
91 Northwest Drive
Plainville, CT 06062