

Positive Change

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A publication of
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Wheeler provides comprehensive solutions that address complex health issues, providing individuals, families and communities with accessible, innovative care that encourages recovery, health and growth at all stages of life. Our integrated approach to primary and behavioral health, education and recovery creates measurable results, positive outcomes and hopeful tomorrows for more than 30,000 individuals across Connecticut each year.



Wheeler's Family Health and Wellness Centers now Part of PCMH+ Program for HUSKY Health Care Enrollees

Wheeler was recently designated as a Person-Centered Medical Home Plus (PCMH+) advanced network provider by upholding advanced standards of primary care. With this designation, Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Centers in Bristol, New Britain, and Hartford, and Community Health and Wellness Center of Greater Torrington, will deliver person-centered, comprehensive, coordinated care, including linkage and access to community supports, to nearly 5,000 Connecticut HUSKY (Medicaid) members in Central Connecticut and Torrington. Wheeler is the lead agency in this effort.



PCMH+ is administered by the Department of Social Services and provides consumers with care coordination activities that improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of care, like access to healthy food, transportation to appointments, assistance with housing, or finding employment.

"This program builds on the success of Connecticut's Medicaid PCMH program, improves the quality of care for members, and meets the specific needs of patients who have complex care needs or gaps in services," said Heidi Joseph, RN, MSN, vice president of Health Center Operations. "Both Wheeler and the Community Health and Wellness Center of Greater Torrington will work closely with members to manage their health, navigate the health care system, and access needed services."

Wheeler Enhancing, Expanding Family Health & Wellness Center



A \$2-million bond will help provide for structural enhancements and improvements at Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center in Hartford.

The bonding was announced by the State Bond Commission on Wednesday, July 25, 2018 and supports physical improvements to the five-story building, such as heating and cooling, drainage, waterproofing, and insulation enhancements, as well as a new patient entrance that will increase safety and flow for drop-off and pick-up. It will allow Wheeler to expand behavioral health services and integrate pharmacy and laboratory services into the care continuum.

"In our first six months of operation, we served thousands of Hartford-area residents, providing a vital community need of accessible health care," said Susan Walkama, LCSW, president and chief executive officer of Wheeler.

"With these renovations, we will make needed improvements to the physical environment and infrastructure at the center and maximize access to care for an additional 8,000 patients over the next three years. When completed, the center will provide many of the services a patient requires, in one location."

A number of jobs will be created as a result of the renovations, including construction workers, support staff, community health workers, pharmacy techs, pharmacists, lab techs, and behavioral health clinicians.

"Both Governor Malloy and Lieutenant Governor Wyman have been consistent and strong voices, saying that residents of Hartford must have access to accessible, effective, patient-centered health care," Walkama said. "We are grateful for their support and vision at every step of the way."

a message of change from the president

WheelerClinic.org




As our 50th anniversary celebration continues, this issue of *Positive Change* highlights new, significant developments that build on the opening of our flagship Family Health & Wellness Center in Hartford at the start of 2018, and expand services across the entire state.

Throughout this anniversary year, we've reflected on how Wheeler began and how we've grown. The progress is almost immeasurable, but challenges are persistent. Thankfully, so are we, as we play a leadership role in preserving our state's safety net, so vital to our most vulnerable citizens.

We can only succeed through the support of visionary donors and funders, who share their vision, support, and commitment every day.

I look forward to celebrating with you on September 29th at our very special 50th anniversary event, *Celebrating 50 Years of Care: Wheeler's Farm to Table Gathering*. Your engagement, participation, and commitment to the 30,000 individuals, families and communities we serve every year matters so much!


Susan Walkama, LCSW
President and Chief Executive Officer

The Wheeler/CHWC Advanced Network's PCMH+ designation means that thousands of individuals in the Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, and Torrington regions will have better access to high-quality, effective health care. In Fairfield County and New Haven, expanded in-home programming means that we can better serve the behavioral health needs of at-risk youth in the community. In Hartford, innovative partnerships expand our services and cement our longstanding ties to the local community.

Wheeler and Hispanic Health Council Launch Collaborative for Community Health



Hartford residents will have increased access to health care and nutrition services, thanks to a new collaboration between the Wheeler Family Health & Wellness Center in Hartford and the Hispanic Health Council.

The Collaborative for Community Health, funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, will increase access to health care services for underserved community members, encourage positive outcomes for high-risk patients, and provide a person-centered approach to care for all patients. A full-time community health outreach worker will be hired by the Hispanic Health Council as part of this effort.

"Close collaboration between Wheeler and the Hispanic Health Council enhances a strong connection in the community," said Susan Walkama, LCSW, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. "Patients in this program will be more engaged in care, better able to manage their chronic care conditions, have improved health outcomes, and reduce usage of the emergency department for their health needs."

The Collaborative for Community Health program will include:

- **Community engagement and outreach** to expand access to Wheeler's Hartford Family Health & Wellness Center services, including behavioral health, primary care, dental, and support services, as well as the community health worker program.
- **Home visits by a Community Health Worker** to provide health education, engagement, care coordination, peer support, advocacy, and monitoring for medication adherence for behavioral health patients who have chronic health conditions.
- **Nutrition supports**, provided by a Wheeler nutritionist to enhance patients' knowledge on how to access healthy foods in the community, how to prepare culturally familiar foods in healthier ways, and how to incorporate healthy activity into their daily routine.
- **Weekly multidisciplinary case review team meetings** including Wheeler care providers (physicians, nurses, dentists and hygienists, clinicians, care coordinators, nurse care managers, and medical assistants) and the Hispanic Health Council community health worker.



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Gambling Awareness

Raising Awareness about Problem Gambling

The issue of problem gambling is closer to the forefront this summer with the pending opening of new, nearby casinos and recent developments affecting the status of sports betting in Connecticut. With support from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Wheeler recently launched an outdoor bus and billboard and online public awareness campaign to raise awareness of this issue and how individuals and families can access Wheeler's Bettor Choice Gambling Treatment Program.

"The timing for this effort is especially appropriate as we anticipate a spike in new consumers this year and next," said Kimberly M. Nelson, LCSW, senior vice president, Services. "People from all walks of life and every community are affected by problem gambling."

Wheeler's Bettor Choice Gambling Treatment Program helps individuals and families cope and recover from this challenging problem. Treatment may include individual, group, marital, and/or family therapy. Financial and peer counseling are also available. Individualized treatment plans are developed for all clients to meet their specific needs.

Wheeler's program serves individuals in cities and towns in DMHAS Region 4, North Central Connecticut, including Avon, Berlin, Bristol, Burlington, Farmington, New Britain, Plainville, Plymouth, Southington, Glastonbury, East Hartford, Hartford, Manchester, Rockville, South Windsor, and Vernon.

"Gambling addiction affects every part of a person's life, emotional and financial security, and relationships with family, friends, and loved ones," added Nelson. "But with the right intervention and treatment, health, recovery, and growth are possible."

If you or a loved one are struggling with a gambling addiction, call **888.793.3500**.



Stop gambling and find hope.
WheelerClinic.org/BettorChoice

FINANCIAL AND PEER COUNSELING GROUP/INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY THERAPY CARE COORDINATION

A Better Future through Wheeler's Bettor Choice Gambling Program: David's Story

The recovery process is often filled with pivotal moments. For David Pogg—a recovering gambler for 20 years and a peer counselor for Wheeler's Bettor Choice Gambling Treatment Program—one of those pivotal moments came during a walk on Hartford's Charter Oak Bridge in a storm. David was on his way to treatment at the very same program where he works today. Read more about David's story at WheelerClinic.org/Hope.



Health & Wellness Center Updates

Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center Hosting Free Weekly Opioid Education and Family Support Groups

Free opioid education and family support groups are now being held at Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center, Bristol, for family members and other loved ones of individuals who are misusing opioids (including heroin) or have an opioid use disorder. These supportive group meetings are open to adults and young adults (ages 16 and older) and include an educational component, discussion, and mutual support. Trained group facilitators will provide information and lead discussion on topics such as basic information about opioid use and addiction, overdose prevention, Medication Assisted Treatment, co-occurring mental health disorders, self-help groups for addiction and co-occurring disorders, family dynamics, multiple pathways to recovery, and self-care, as well as other topics suggested by group members.



"Providing education and support to individuals and loved ones concerned about opioid misuse is a powerful way to respond to the ongoing opioid crisis," said Judith A. Stonger, MA, CPS, CARC, vice president of Prevention, Wellness and Recovery, Wheeler Clinic/Connecticut Clearinghouse. "We hope that individuals and families will turn to Wheeler as an important local community resource."

The meetings are open to the public and held on Wednesdays from 6:00–7:00 pm at Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center, 10 North Main, Bristol.



Alternative, Complementary Medicine at Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center, Hartford

Patients with chronic pain will soon have access to new alternative and complementary medicine approaches at Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center in Hartford, including mindfulness and meditation, yoga, chiropractic services, and exercise, as well as acupuncture for treating addiction.

Wheeler expanded the scope of its federally qualified health center in July to address the rising need for alternative strategies to opioid-based prescription medications.

"Finding new ways to treat pain requires an innovative approach that is part of a whole-person model of care and wellness," said Susan Walkama, LCSW, Wheeler president and chief executive officer. "In light of the ongoing opioid crisis in this state, and what we've heard from our own patients, people want alternatives today, and we can now provide those alternatives in one location, as part of a fully integrated plan of treatment."

The addition of complementary and alternative medicine services will include on-site providers such as chiropractors, exercise instructors, and specially trained behavioral health clinicians, using methods like cognitive behavioral therapy for mindfulness and meditation. The Family Health & Wellness Center opened in January 2018 after a \$5-million renovation, and dedicated space for complementary and alternative medicine was purposely included in the renovation plans.

Once established, the alternative and complementary medicine program will have the capacity to treat more than 300 patients annually.

Helping Youth Across Connecticut

In-District Services Help Students in Southbury and Middlebury



A new in-district Collaborative Learning Program for Region 15 (Southbury/Middlebury) begins in August. Located at Pomperaug High School, the program serves high school-aged students with mental health and behavioral challenges and embeds a highly skilled Wheeler-trained and -supervised clinician to provide immediate access to intensive mental health and support throughout the school day. The program utilizes a relationally-based, trans-disciplinary, and trauma-informed approach to provide individual, group, and family therapies, in addition to working with the students within a therapeutic classroom environment. Wheeler's Collaborative Learning Programs offer a cost-effective, innovative in-district program model that assists school districts in providing therapeutic-education programming for students with challenging special education needs.

Students benefit from a therapeutic classroom environment and can attend mainstream classes, per their individualized plan. A trans-disciplinary team from Wheeler and Region 15 provides direct clinical and academic services. Wheeler also provides consultation and training focused on issues pertaining to students served. The goals are to enhance the district's capacity to meet the needs of students with significant mental health challenges and reduce the need for outplacement services.

Wheeler's CLP model allows students to remain in the district and connected to their home school program, while addressing social-emotional, behavioral, developmental, and/or educational needs. Wheeler is currently partnering with districts throughout Connecticut and has consistently demonstrated positive outcomes for students, including over 94 percent remaining in district with improved attendance, improved grades, and reduced disciplinary referrals.

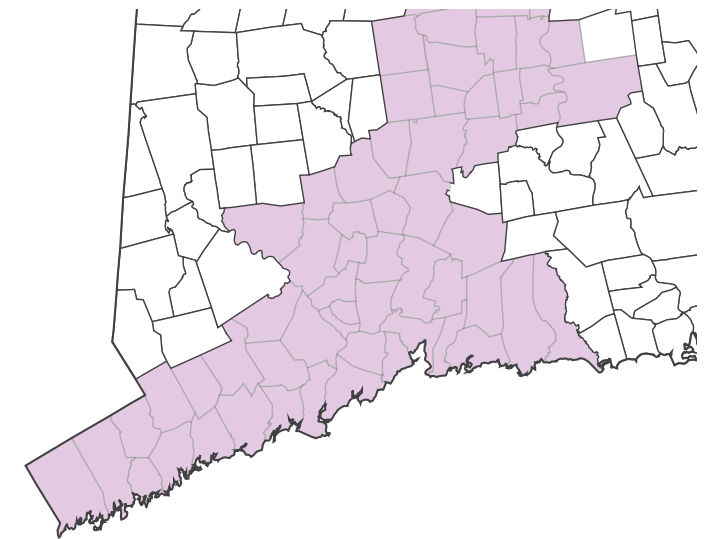
For information about Collaborative Learning Programs, call **Dr. Mike Russo, vice president, Wheeler Education Services, at 860.793.3552.**

Wheeler Expands MST Program in New Haven and Fairfield County

Wheeler has launched three new Multisystemic Therapy (MST) teams to better serve the behavioral health needs of youth in Connecticut. Two teams will serve the Norwalk/Bridgeport/Stamford area, and one team will serve individuals and families in New Haven. These programs are funded by the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division (CSSD).

"We are pleased to expand this family-focused, community-based treatment program to further meet the needs of youth in our communities," said Kim Nelson, LCSW, senior vice president, Services.

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is a unique treatment program designed to serve youth ages 12–18 in their community. The program serves youth with complex emotional, social and academic needs, including chronic, violent, delinquent behavior and serious emotional issues; truancy; disrespect and disobedience; aggressive and criminal behavior; drug and alcohol problems; and running away.



Highlights

Business Leaders, Nonprofit Organizations, and Individuals Recognized at Hands & Hearts Reception

Five organizations and individuals received awards at Wheeler's eighth-annual Hands & Hearts reception on May 17 at The Country Club of Farmington. The event honored individuals, families, corporations, and foundations for their outstanding support of Wheeler's mission to provide equitable access to innovative care that improves health, recovery, and growth at all stages of life. More than 45 philanthropists have been recognized by Wheeler since the inception of this event.



Wheeler's 2018 Hands & Hearts honorees include the Corsini Family, Holcomb Farm, Delta Dental of New Jersey Foundation, Lois Aaron, in memory of David Berkowitz, and Courtney Bourns, in memory of Jane Bourns.

Foster Care Around Town



Wheeler's Foster Care team hosted an event at Norton Park, Plainville to celebrate and thank our foster families.



Our recruiters supported the Chip's Family Restaurant 5K/Walk, benefiting the Petit Family Foundation.



Senior Recruiter Chris Popilowski shared foster care information at the Collinsville Hot event.

Thank You for Caring!



Thanks to the volunteer employees from Farmington Bank for beautifying our 91 Northwest Drive location on May 18 as part of the United Way of West Central Connecticut's 27th Annual Day of Caring.

Fox61 and Wheeler Focus on Recovery



Wheeler partnered with Fox 61 to spread the message that recovery from addiction is always possible. Stephanie Almada, Wheeler peer counselor, and several consumers shared their stories of recovery. Listen to their stories online at WheelerClinic.org/recovery.

Dollars and Change

Wheeler Celebrates 50th Anniversary with Chef-to-Farm Dinner



Join us on Saturday, September 29, 2018 at Rosedale Farms and Vineyards in Simsbury as Wheeler celebrates its 50th anniversary with a Max Restaurant Group Chef-to-Farm Dinner, Celebrating 50 Years of Care. Governor Nancy Wyman is the honorary chair for this historic dinner in a classic New England fall setting that honors five decades of innovation and growth.

"This very special event pays tribute to Wheeler, as well as the vision and generosity of local residents and community leaders," said Susan Walkama, LCSW, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. "We look forward to honoring the many people and organizations that have made a difference in our evolution and delivery of care."

Top sponsors for this event include Hope-level sponsors, the Wheeler Leadership Team, and Health-level sponsors Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Barnes Group, Inc.

Wine and craft beer for this gathering are provided by Rosedale Farms & Vineyards and Hanging Hills Brewing Company. Music for this event is provided by The Meadows Brothers. Tickets are \$200.

For event, sponsorship, and ticket information, contact [Sue O'Connell](mailto:SueOConnell@wheelerclinic.org) at 860.793.4214, or soconnell@wheelerclinic.org, or visit WheelerClinic.org/celebrate50.

33rd Annual Golf Classic Supports Access to Primary and Behavioral Health Care

On June 11, more than 130 golfers supported Wheeler's expanded access to primary and behavioral health care for vulnerable individuals and families. Learn more about our 33rd Annual Golf Classic, an event which has now raised more than \$1.1 million over its lifetime! Visit WheelerClinic.org/golfclassic.



No Better Time to Give



We need your support now more than ever to ensure the delivery of critical programs and services to children and families in our communities. Contributions can be made online at give.wheelerclinic.org, or by returning the adjacent pledge card. We appreciate all that you do to encourage health, recovery, and growth in the lives of the people we serve.

2018–2019 Annual Fund

Please accept this contribution to help Wheeler Clinic continue to encourage health, recovery and growth at all stages of life in the years ahead.

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- ☐ \$100-249 Sponsor
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- ☐ \$500-999 Leader
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FARM TO TABLE

Gathering



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF CARE

Celebrating 50 Years of Health, Recovery, and Growth!

Farm to Table Gathering

Join us at Rosedale Farms and Vineyards
in Simsbury on Saturday, September 29
as Wheeler celebrates its
50th anniversary with a Max Restaurant
Group Chef-to-Farm Dinner!

Tickets: \$200

Have a story to share?

Share why Wheeler matters to you and
nominate a Community Catalyst!

Visit WheelerClinic.org/50