

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 health, recovery, 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 Transforming Clinic Site in Plainville to Full Community Health Center



Site at 91 Northwest Drive, Plainville

Wheeler has added a fifth community health center to its roster, transforming the services at its original behavioral health clinic location at 91 Northwest Drive, Plainville, to offer fully integrated primary and behavioral health care in one location.

The federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) recently approved Wheeler's application to bring the behavioral health clinic into its federally qualified health center scope and expand the services offered at the location.

The new Plainville Family Health & Wellness Center joins Wheeler's four other community health centers in Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury—and more than 1,300 other federally qualified health centers across the country. Services will soon include patient-centered and fully integrated health care, coordinated referrals to specialty care, and services to meet patient needs and advance individual and population health outcomes crucial to the Plainville community.

"At the Plainville Family Health & Wellness Center, we will address barriers in access to health care, reduce health disparities, and build health equity in our community, vital for a healthier, better future for us all," said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, Wheeler's president and chief executive officer. "We have seen such wide chasms in inequity in 2020 across our state and country. Community health centers like Wheeler are the leading voice in ensuring America is healthier tomorrow."

Wheeler will continue to provide behavioral health services for children, adolescents, and adults at the Plainville site, with plans to expand services to include primary care for the whole family, as well as medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for alcohol and opioid addiction, which is fully aligned with Wheeler's integrated model of care.

"It's hard to overstate how important this move is," Trocchi said. "When a group of visionaries broke ground at Northwest Drive in 1972, in what had been a cow pasture, they were looking to change the model for how behavioral health care was delivered in Central Connecticut. They did, and today we are taking that vision and making it so far beyond their wildest dreams."

Wheeler Named Top Workplace for Seventh Year

President & CEO named "Top Leader" in Large Employer Category

Wheeler is a 2020 Top Workplaces award winner from *The Hartford Courant*. It is the seventh year that Wheeler has received the award.

In addition, Wheeler President and CEO Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, received "Top Leader" in the Large Employer category of the same survey.

Wheeler has won Top Workplace recognition seven times since 2013 and has been recognized in the past for its training opportunities for staff, as well as for its mid-level managers. *(Story continued on Page 2.)*



a message of
change
from the president

WheelerClinic.org



Amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic injustice, Wheeler continues to adhere to its unwavering commitment to deliver accessible, whole-person health care to our most vulnerable populations, while expanding services to meet the dynamic needs of our communities. We also have strengthened our resolve to promote equality and

eliminate racial injustice and disparities of all kinds, which interfere with health, recovery, and growth. The stories in this issue highlight the positive changes we're making on these fronts and how our innovative service delivery is helping individuals and families to grow and thrive.

Our cover story highlights the launch of our fifth community health center at 91 Northwest Drive in Plainville, the site of our first behavioral health center location, joining other centers in Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury. Our community health centers, and integrated care teams working side-by-side, are continuing to make strides in meeting essential community need, while addressing health disparities. In fact, a story on Page 4 highlights our recent federal recognition as one of only two community health

centers in Connecticut that met or exceeded goals for reducing health disparities across different racial and ethnic groups between 2018 and 2019.

We are deeply committed to focusing on our organizational diversity. We welcomed a new role, Diversity Officer, to our team, and we have expanded engagement of our employees in related multi-faceted priorities and projects. As this publication goes to print, we are unfolding a campaign to showcase and celebrate the rich diversity of our staff, a talented, dedicated team that has made us a *Hartford Courant* Top Workplace for the seventh year.

Despite the uncertainty in the world right now, we have reasons to be thankful. Our ability to continue our work is made possible through your support. We are deeply appreciative of your interest, generosity, and friendship. You truly make a measurable difference to Wheeler and to the people we serve.

Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA
President and Chief Executive Officer

Top Workplace (cont.)

The winners are based solely on employee feedback gathered through a third-party survey administered by employee engagement technology partner Energage, LLC. The anonymous survey uniquely measures 15 drivers of engaged cultures that are critical to the success of any organization: including alignment, execution, and connection, to name a few.

“No one could have foreseen the challenges that 2020 would throw at us, and the entire team at Wheeler rose to meet them,” said Trocchi. “From chipping in to help our coworkers affected by COVID, to transforming our entire system of care, to opening new locations and programs to meet community needs in the pandemic, everyone dedicated their work to making sure we were there when our patients and students needed us most.”

James Moylan of Bristol, Wheeler’s chairman of the Board of Trustees, cited Trocchi’s leadership for its success.

Sabrina approaches her work with earnestness, the highest degree of integrity, and purpose. She ‘walks the talk’ by being accessible, calm under pressure, and thoughtful in decision-making,” said Moylan. “Her demeanor is very enthusiastic when approaching new challenges and opportunities. As the pandemic progressed, Sabrina did an outstanding job with communications to the entire Wheeler community by issuing frequent, timely, relevant and compassionate communications that described Wheeler’s response to the pandemic. Sabrina and her staff kept operations running smoothly and transitioned to a remote working environment and telehealth for as many types of services as possible for the important services provided to the communities and individuals we serve.”



Individual boxes of Munson's Chocolates were shared with employees across Wheeler, helping to further sweeten this already happy occasion.

Celebrating Diversity

Monique Daley, MS, Joins Wheeler as Diversity Officer

Monique Daley, MS, has joined Wheeler as the first diversity officer. In her new role, she will promote and monitor equity, diversity, and inclusion for the Wheeler workforce and patients; lead the Wheeler Diversity and Inclusion Committee; monitor and review the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion efforts; promote full integration of National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (The National CLAS Standards) and health equity throughout Wheeler; and much more, including training and education, as well as ensuring Wheeler is working with minority- and women-owned businesses.



Monique Daley, MS, Diversity Officer

“2020 has shown such wide chasms in our state and country, and organizations must do better,” said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, Wheeler president and chief executive officer. “My 1,000 colleagues are diverse, talented, and represent all backgrounds, identities, genders, and ethnicities. Monique will help guide us to ensure our practices are grounded and culturally responsive, our culture and services represent the communities we serve, our external and internal messaging is culturally appropriate, and that we are doing everything we can to make a more just, equitable tomorrow for the state.”

“We are at a critical point in addressing systemic disparities, particularly towards historically marginalized groups,” said Daley. “Therefore, we can no longer speak about diversity, equity, or inclusion without the commitment of becoming what we speak. I look forward to working with the leadership at Wheeler to ensure that practices and policies continue to be a just representation of who we are and those we serve.”

Before Wheeler, Daley served as the training and program coordinator at the Women and Gender Resource Action Center at Trinity College under the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. In her role, she worked closely with constituents across campus to address campus culture and climate as it relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion; coordinated speakers on trending and intersecting issues to the greater community; implemented Title IX-related programming; and more.

Before Trinity College, she spent nearly a decade at Central Connecticut State University and worked at the Court of Common Council of the City of Hartford. She is a Fulbright Scholar with experience in Ghana, West Africa, holds a master’s in communication from Central Connecticut State University, and is pursuing her doctorate in educational leadership at the University of Hartford.

A Celebration of LGBT History Month



Wheeler celebrated LGBT History Month in October with a series of events and initiatives that acknowledged, affirmed, and celebrated LGBTQ+ clients, patients, students, and staff. Among these activities:

Wheeler’s first “Visibility Campaign,” highlighting the diversity of staff, as well as a “Creativity in Therapy” project through which clients, students, and employees created/will create artwork that reflects their own personal transitions.

“The values celebrated this month are values we celebrate every day, Wheeler’s core values,” said Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and chief executive officer, Wheeler. “The many connections between these values and providing equitable and affirming care to all are obvious, and it’s important to reflect on what we’re doing every day to make them a reality for the LGBTQ+ community.”

Learn more about Wheeler’s core values and the month’s activities at WheelerClinic.org/LGBTQ.

New Progress Pride Flag stickers are posted at various locations across Wheeler. In 2018, the Pride Flag was redesigned by graphic designer Daniel Quasar. The redesign added a five-colored chevron (see image to the left) to the rainbow Pride Flag to “place a greater emphasis on inclusion and progression.” The black and brown in the chevron represent both marginalized LGBT communities of color, and those living with AIDS and those no longer living, and the pink, light blue, and white colors in the chevron represent Transgender Pride. The flag itself represents the continued need for forward movement and progress around LGBTQ+ rights. In the spirit of solidarity with and acknowledgment of the LGBTQ+ community, we have created a special-edition Wheeler logo (below), which incorporates the Progress Pride Flag colors.



Tackling Disparities

Wheeler Recognized for Reducing Disparities in Health Care, Improving Quality and Access



Wheeler has received \$108,000 in federal awards for quality care, including special recognition as one of only two community health centers in Connecticut that met or exceeded goals for reducing health disparities across different racial and ethnic groups between 2018 and 2019.

In September 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced more than \$117 million in Quality Improvement Awards to 1,318 health centers across the United States. Funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), community health centers like Wheeler use these awards to improve the quality, efficiency, and value of the health care they provide.

The awards recognized centers that improved quality of care across a range of categories. Wheeler received awards in five of the eight categories possible, the largest percentage achieved by Connecticut health center providers.



Of note was the “Health Disparities Reducer” Award.

The awards received by Wheeler include:

- **Clinical Quality Improvers** demonstrated at least 15% improvement for each CQM from 2018 to 2019.
- **Access Enhancer Awards** recognized health centers that increased the total number of patients served and the number of patients receiving comprehensive services between 2018 and 2019.
- **Health Disparities Reducer Awards** recognized health centers that met or exceeded the Healthy People 2020 goals, or made at least a 10% improvement across different racial/ethnic groups between 2018 and 2019.
- **Advancing Health Information Technology (HIT) for Quality Awards** recognized health centers that optimized HIT services for advancing telehealth, patient engagement, interoperability, and collection of social determinants of health to increase access to care and advance quality of care between 2018 and 2019.
- **Patient-Centered Medical Home Recognition** recognized health centers with patient-centered medical home (PCMH) recognition in one or more delivery sites.

Federal Grant Supports Care for Pregnant, Postpartum Women With Histories of Substance Use Disorders

Wheeler to Serve New Britain, Bristol, and Surrounding Communities

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) will facilitate



and expand family-based addiction treatment and other services for pregnant and postpartum women with histories of substance use disorders. Wheeler will receive \$337,500 annually for three years, and is partnering with DMHAS on this pilot program entitled, “PROUD: Parents Recovering from Opioid Use Disorders.”

Wheeler will serve individuals in New Britain, Bristol, and surrounding communities. Connecticut is one of five PROUD grantees nationally.

COVID-19 Testing Offered for Patients and the Public

During the summer and fall, Wheeler's Family Health & Wellness Center teams launched and expanded COVID-19 virus testing, offering drive-through and walk-up services for the public at 43 Woodland Street, Hartford, and 855 Lakewood Road, Waterbury. Virus and antibody testing also is available for patients at Wheeler's community health centers in Bristol, Hartford, New Britain, and Waterbury. Partnerships with Hartford Public Schools and Bristol Public Schools have expanded testing through various schools in both cities, and a collaboration with Bristol Housing Authority provides on-site testing to resident communities in Bristol.

For information about our testing services, visit WheelerClinic.org/Covid-Testing.



Our team takes a short break from testing while at the Dr. James H. Naylor/CCSU Leadership Academy in Hartford, one of several schools in Hartford where testing was offered.



Pictured: Our team at Bristol Central High School, where testing was offered weekly in October and November, alternating between Bristol Central and Bristol Eastern High School.

Backpacks, Farm-fresh Produce, and More

Our community health centers are helping to meet immediate, seasonal needs of individuals and families. Many thanks to our donors, partners, and friends who make this work possible!

Wheeler's Waterbury and Bristol community health centers offered free backpacks filled with school supplies, including face masks and hand sanitizer, for every child receiving a back-to-school physical, including immunizations. In Hartford, children receiving pediatric immunization and well-child visits at the Susan Walkama Family Health & Wellness Center received a backpack full of school supplies, plus games, books, and toys, courtesy of United Way of Central and Northeastern Connecticut and Wheeler's donors.



Thanks to an expanded partnership with West Granby-based Holcomb Farm, fresh produce was distributed at no cost to Wheeler patients through November at our four community health centers. This distribution was made possible through a \$12,000 commitment from Wheeler through private donations and a \$12,000 matching gift from The Friends of Holcomb Farm through their Fresh Access Program. Read more about this partnership by visiting our website, WheelerClinic.org/Holcomb-Farm.



Raising Awareness

Greeting the School Year With Hope, Kindness



Teachers and staff at Northwest Village School welcomed students back to the classroom using a hybrid model that combines in-classroom and remote learning, with themes centered on kindness, bullying prevention, and self-esteem. Students are engaged in an array of activities with a focus on awareness and action around Change for Social Justice and Equality, and the celebration of differences.

“Our school year opened with an environment of hope and openness, where all students feel welcome and valued,” said Jon N. Oddo, MS, CAGS, vice president and principal. “During this school year, we look forward to unlocking many worlds of discovery and learning, while strengthening our school community.”

Addiction Resources, NARCAN®, Offered at Outreach Events in Waterbury

Wheeler’s Waterbury Family Health & Wellness Center and on-site pharmacy partner Genoa Healthcare recently hosted two outreach events to provide information about naloxone (NARCAN®), a life-saving medication used to reverse overdoses, and medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for addiction. A limited supply of naloxone kits were available, at no charge, for eligible individuals without access to this medication, made possible by a grant from the American Savings Foundation.



From left, Waterbury team members Amanda Albrecht, site director, and Kim Holyst, LCSW, director of Adult Services.



Mike Lewis, PharmD, site manager, Genoa Pharmacy, 855 Lakewood Rd., Waterbury.

Raising Awareness of Wheeler’s Programs, Mission

Discussing the Foster Parent Journey



Allison Casinghino, Wheeler foster care specialist, recently talked virtually with members of the Avon Chamber of Commerce about the path to becoming a foster parent. Learn more about Wheeler’s Foster Care programs at: WheelerClinic.org/Foster.

Suicide Prevention Interview, WTIC AM 1080



In September, Sarah Becker, LCSW, director, Children’s Outpatient and Community-based Services, was a featured guest on the “Saturdays with Steve Parker” show on WTIC News Talk 1080 AM radio and discussed suicide prevention, strategies for managing bullying, depression, anxiety, and more.

Interviews, WATR 1320 AM Radio



Amanda Albrecht, site director, and Kim Holyst, LCSW, director of Adult Services for Wheeler’s Waterbury community health center, recently spoke with Steve Noxon, host of WATR 1320 AM Radio’s “Talk of the Town”



program, about outreach events at Wheeler’s community health center in Waterbury. (See story above.)

Talking Health, Prevention, with Hot 93.7 FM

Dr. Rebecca Eleck, medical director, Wheeler, recently was interviewed by Hot 93.7 FM radio, and highlighted the value of flu shots, COVID-19 testing, and how individuals and families can stay healthy this season and beyond. Learn more about the array of integrated health, prevention, and other services offered through our community health centers by visiting this page: WheelerClinic.org/health-wellness.



Dollars and Change

35th Annual Golf Classic Raises \$45,000

Wheeler's 35th Annual Golf Classic, presented by Mutual of America Financial Group at the Country Club of Farmington, looked a little bit different this year with safety



precautions, but the near-capacity commitment of more than 75 golfers, as well as supporters, volunteers, and friends to Wheeler's mission and vision, remained as steadfast as ever. The September 16th in-person event raised \$45,000 to support Wheeler's Basic Needs Fund and patients at its community health centers, bringing the total amount raised to more than \$1.2 million since the event's inception in 1986.

Wheeler's 35th Annual Golf Classic was made possible by a number of local businesses, including Presenting Sponsor, Mutual of America Financial Group; Platinum Dinner Sponsor, People's United Bank; Platinum Logo Sponsor, The Manafort Family Foundation; Golf Cart Sponsor, Loureiro; Lunch Sponsor, Gibbs; Beverage Cart Sponsor, GO, and Golf Ball Sponsor, OneDigital. Additionally, the event was supported by Karl Krapek, Putting Contest Sponsor, and Practice Range Sponsor, Whittlesey, as well as members of the 2020 Champion's Circle, Barnes Group, Inc., Brown & Brown, Inc., and Laurie and Bill Torres. Land Rover of Hartford was the event Hole in One Sponsor, and Sanditz Travel Management was the Grand Prize Sponsor. Numerous additional sponsors also provided support. A full list can be found at WheelerClinic.org/GolfClassic.



Sanditz Travel Management was the Grand Prize Sponsor. Numerous additional sponsors also provided support. A full list can be found at WheelerClinic.org/GolfClassic.



Will You Help?

Basic Needs Fund \$ _____

Your donation provides supports for patients at our Family Health & Wellness Centers that other funding doesn't.

Basic Needs Fund, Northwest Village School \$ _____

Your donation provides supports for students at Northwest Village School.

Pediatric Services in New Britain \$ _____

Your contribution supports an expanded New Britain facility and broadened services for children, including pediatrics and behavioral health.

General Support \$ _____

Support the care of individuals, families, and communities across our state each year, through Wheeler's continuum of more than 100 services and programs.

Name (as you wish to see it printed)

Address

City State Postal Code

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Email

Enclosed is my total gift of \$ _____

Check enclosed **or** Charge my credit card
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Account Number

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Signature

My employer will match my contribution. I have enclosed a matching gift form.
 Please send info about Planned Giving.

Mail to:

Wheeler Clinic
Office of Philanthropic Giving
91 Northwest Drive, Plainville, CT 06062



Thank you, Delta Dental!



Although our partners, Delta Dental of New Jersey and Connecticut, were unable to help us in-person during their annual Community Impact Week in October, their associates made hundreds of fun oral health bags for our community health centers and programs, and mailed them to us. Thank you, Delta Dental, for all you do for our communities.



Wheeler's Basic Needs Fund

Now, more than ever, individuals and families are struggling to meet basic needs. YOU can help by contributing to our Basic Needs Fund, which addresses environmental and social factors that interfere with a patient's health and well-being, but which are not addressed by other means of funding. This fund addresses conditions in homes and communities of Family Health & Wellness Center patients, which might lead to poor health outcomes, and provides resources for basic needs such as food, transportation, clothing, shelter, medications, and more. Details at WheelerClinic.org/BasicNeeds.





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