



Weeks Medical Center

Community

HealthLink

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Community HealthLink is published four times a year by Weeks Medical Center. For more information, visit www.weeksmedical.org or call 603-788-4911.



Seated: (L to R) Mary Beth Kenison, ARNP, Brenda Stewart, CPNP, Glenn Adams, DO
Standing: (L to R) Pancras van der Lann, MD, Sonya Gilbert, PA-C, Christopher Laurent, FNP-BC, John Ford, MD, Dianne Ryan, ARNP, Wendy Muello, MD (Not pictured: Lars Nielson, MD, Angelo Vozzella, PA-C)

Primary Care Comes First!

Having a **primary care provider** who knows you and your family well is the first step in good preventive healthcare. Familiarity with a patient's physical, psychological and lifestyle issues can be critical for a healthcare provider when monitoring or treating a sick patient. Unlike a specialist, the role of a primary care provider (PCP), which includes physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants, is to treat non-critical medical issues and to help improve their patients' health by educating them about developing a personal health improvement program. They can also refer patients to a specialist who will keep them informed about the patient's care and treatment.

Primary care providers are an integral part of Weeks Medical Center's medical team and are the first defense in treating non-emergency healthcare. Weeks has a large team of PCP's in three convenient locations—Lancaster, Whitefield and Groveton. All of these practices are accepting new patients and offer same day primary care services. Our PCP's include:

- **General Internists** specialize in internal medicine and generally provide services to adult patients.
- **Family Practitioners** specialize in general family care and are trained in a number of medical disciplines.
- **Obstetricians and Gynecologists** specialize in women's reproductive and maternal health.

Why It's Important to Have a Primary Care Provider

Knows your family and medical history, lifestyle and habits.

Prevents and detects a health problem before it becomes a crisis.

Determines when you need to see a specialist and coordinates your care.

Helps you develop and carry out a personal health maintenance and improvement program.

Primary Care comes first! (continued from page 1)

As the first healthcare provider for most medical problems, PCP's treat a broad spectrum of healthcare issues. Some of the more common services include:

- Allergy treatment and relief
- Chronic illness treatment
- Diabetes education and treatment
- Diet counseling
- Digestive disorders
- Flu shots
- Immunizations
- Physical exams
- Preventive medicine
- Reproductive health and counseling screenings
- Skin disorder treatments

One of the hospital's missions is to provide quality healthcare

for everyone in the community regardless of their ability to pay. For Weeks patients who meet the criteria, financial assistance is available for primary care services. Health Access is a local financial assistance program to help patients with their medical bills. Patients who have a Weeks' provider as their regular doctor and live in the hospital's service area may qualify for financial assistance. Additionally, if patients further qualify, they can enroll in the Pharmaceutical Assistance Program which can provide needed medications at greatly reduced prices.

Don't wait for an illness to force you into finding a primary care provider. At Weeks, we make it easy and convenient for you to find a healthcare provider, so you can develop a history and rapport. For a complete list of Weeks' primary care practices, see page 8.

Weeks Health Access Program Provides Financial Assistance to Qualified Patients

Each year Weeks Medical Center seeks to make the North Country a healthier place to live by identifying new and changing health care needs and providing innovative solutions. In 2010, Weeks provided over \$2,100,000 in financial assistance to approximately 380 families and individuals in the Greater Lancaster area through its Health Access program. This program is designed to help low-income and senior citizens with needed medical services through the hospital's financial assistance program.

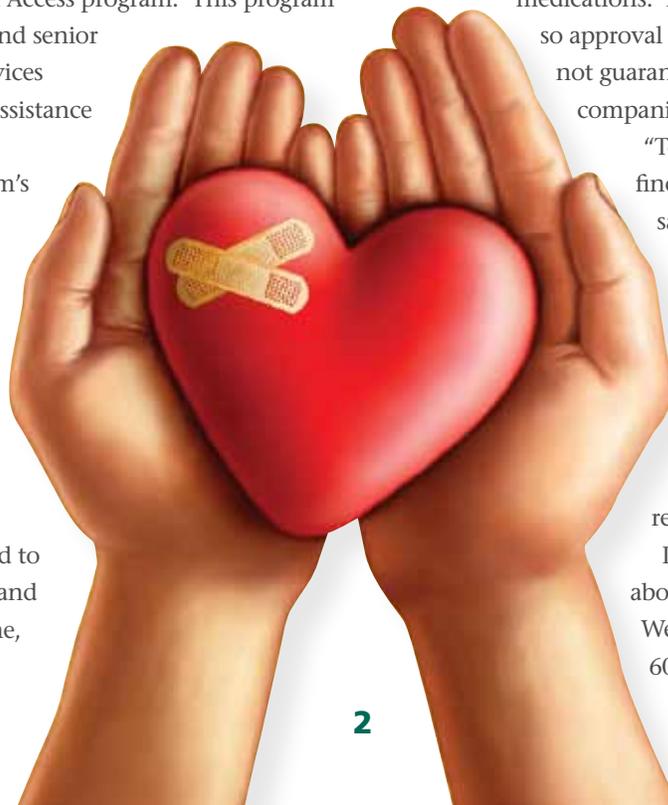
Patients who meet the program's financial criteria and live in the hospital's service area can receive help with their medical and doctor bills for non-elective services. Additionally, qualification can extend to patients who receive emergency treatment for a life-threatening illness or disease. In order to qualify, patients are asked to complete a financial application and provide documentation of income, assets, and a tax return. In some

cases, there may be a co-pay for medical services depending on a patient's income and assets.

The Health Access program also offers financial assistance for medications. A representative from Weeks applies to pharmaceutical companies on the patient's behalf for help with medications. Each company has its own criteria, so approval for participation in the program does not guarantee approval by the pharmaceutical companies.

"Today more than ever before, families find themselves without insurance," says Celeste Pitts, Weeks CFO. "It's a health care reality that we constantly hear about in the news and our community faces these very same challenges. From day one it's been part of the Weeks mission to provide the health services needed by all people in our community, regardless of ability to pay."

If you would like further information about Health Access, please contact Weeks Patient Financial Counselor at 603-788-5093.



Diabetes Prevention and Care

With a family history of diabetes and being overweight, Sandy's primary care physician at Weeks diagnosed her with type 2 diabetes, the most common type of diabetes. He recommended that she make an appointment with nurse practitioner Mary Beth Kenison, a Certified Diabetes Educator at Weeks. Sandy learned that diabetes is a disease in which blood glucose levels are above normal and people with the disease have problems converting food to energy.

Food is broken down into a simple sugar called glucose and is carried by the blood to cells throughout the body. Insulin is a hormone made in the pancreas and used by the cells to help regulate blood glucose levels. People develop type 2 diabetes because the cells in the muscles, liver, and fat initially are resistant to the effects of insulin and then eventually become insulin deficient. After having diabetes for ten years, most diabetics require insulin.

Kenison urges everyone over forty to be tested using a simple blood test. This is particularly important for patients who:

- **Have a family history of diabetes**
- **Are overweight**
- **Urinate frequently**
- **Have vision changes**
- **Experience fatigue**

Type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed by making lifestyle changes such as eating less fat and fewer calories and exercising for a total of 150 minutes a week. "The goal is to encourage the pancreas to make more insulin," says Kenison.

7 Tips to help prevent Diabetes



- 1 Exercise is extremely important** for preventing diabetes. You need at least ½ hour of exercise per day. That means vigorous walking to get your heart rate up or any other type of exercise that helps you work up a sweat. One hour a day is even better. New clinical trials showed that when participants walked vigorously for 30 minutes a day, five days a week and also lost weight in the amount of 5 – 7% of their total body weight, they cut their risk of developing diabetes by 50%.
- 2 Lose weight:** Weight loss is also extremely important in preventing diabetes. About 80% of diabetics are overweight and excess weight has been shown to contribute to the development of diabetes. In fact, just losing weight and exercising can often completely control all symptoms of diabetes.
- 3 Do not eat trans fats** (hydrogenated vegetable oils) of any kind. They have been shown to contribute to heart disease and may also contribute to type 2 diabetes.
- 4 Avoid eating foods** made with sugar, bleached (white) flour and other refined carbohydrates such as white rice and dry cereals in order to help in preventing diabetes. Processed and fried foods are particularly unhealthy and the fats and carbohydrates found in them undermine your health.
- 5 Eat lots of fiber,** which is found in raw fruits and vegetables, beans, whole grains and oatmeal. Fiber will go a long way in preventing diabetes because it helps to buffer high amounts of sugar or carbohydrates in your diet, keeping your blood sugar even rather than having it gyrate wildly up and down.
- 6 Don't smoke.** Smoking is not only associated with the development of diabetes, but it also contributes to heart disease and causes lung cancer.
- 7 Don't drink alcohol.** Preventing diabetes means cutting way back on alcoholic beverages which contain quickly absorbed carbohydrates. This can contribute to the development of type 2 diabetes by quickly raising blood sugar to unhealthy levels.

Volunteers Make the Difference

Family Support Team Offers Support for Loved Ones in Time of Crisis



The Weeks Family Support Team

Center Chaplain and current Family Support Team Coordinator, heads-up this dedicated group who are the essence of community care at Weeks.

“It works so well because of the dedication of the people who are committed to helping their neighbors,” says Scott Howe, CEO of Weeks Medical Center.

Going into its thirteenth year, the Weeks Family Support Team is a dedicated group of highly trained volunteers who give an incredible amount of time and compassion to their purpose of being a “quiet presence” for families and loved ones in a time of crisis.

This important team facilitates communication between families and the medical team caring for their loved ones. This assistance allows the medical team to keep their focus solely on the patient. The team offers both in-house response and aftercare support. They perform simple tasks to keep the family comfortable while waiting in the hospital and coordinate communication between the medical staff and the family. Their presence and care help families endure what at first seems unendurable. The Aftercare volunteers commit as much as two years of follow-up services.

Rev. Richard Phillips, the Weeks Medical Center Chaplain and current Family Support Team Coordinator, heads-up this dedicated group who

Santa Claus is Coming to Weeks!

The Weeks Medical Center Auxiliary invites you and your children to come and see the Man himself!

Come get your picture taken with Santa, and enjoy a yummy treat at our delicious make-your-own sundae bar!

When: Sunday, December 4th, 1 – 3 p.m.

Where: WMC Cafeteria

Cost: \$2.00 per picture

Sundaes FREE for kids, \$2.00 for adults

We HO-HO-HOPE you'll JOIN US!



New Technology... Better Podiatry Care

Every year Weeks ends the year with its Annual Giving Campaign to raise money for a significant piece of equipment that will improve patient care. At Weeks we have the skilled doctors and nurses, but we want to give our patients the edge with the latest equipment as well.

This year we have selected a Digital Imaging System for our Podiatry Department. The P-DR BD715 Digital Imaging System will provide more definitive imaging for faster diagnosis and improved podiatry care. It is also safer and easier for patient positioning. We are fortunate to have two dedicated professional podiatrists, Drs. W. Kemp Schanlaber and Hal Goolman, here at Weeks and with the addition of this system, they will be able to provide improved care to all their patients.

Our Annual Fund Goal is \$34,000. Your gift, no matter how large or small, will make a tremendous difference to the lives and well-being of residents living in the North Country.

To make a gift (mail to): **Weeks Medical Center, Fund Development, 173 Middle Street, Lancaster, NH 03584.**



Drs. W. Kemp Schanlaber and Hal Goolman and the P-DR BD715 Digital Imaging System



The Giving Tree for The Giving Season

The Weeks Medical Center Auxiliary will once again place "Giving Trees" at the following locations:

- All three physicians offices
- Northwoods Home Health & Hospice
- The Hospital:
 - Outpatient Lobby
 - Central Nurses Station
 - Dining Room
 - Volunteer Office

Donations to the "Giving Trees" provide gift certificates for groceries to people who are having a difficult time making ends meet this winter.

Place your donation in one of the envelopes and send it to Margo Cliche, Volunteer Services Department at the hospital or mail to Weeks Medical Auxiliary at 173 Middle Street, Lancaster. Checks should be payable to: Weeks Medical Center Auxiliary. Donation deadline is Friday, December 17th.

If you care to suggest the name of someone you feel needs a little extra help this year, contact Margo Cliche at 788-5221

Plant the seed of kindness this season with your gift to "The Giving Tree."



Northwoods Home Health & Hospice Receives Top National Honors

The publisher of the leading home health care newsletters, *Home Health Line* and *Complete Home Health*, in the United States and OCS HomeCare, the leading provider of homecare information have named Northwoods Home Health & Hospice to their HomeCare Elite status. This prestigious ranking places Northwoods in the top 25% of all home health agencies in the United States. The strict criteria for this listing are an analysis of performance measures in quality outcomes, care and excellence in financial performance.

Northwoods Home Health & Hospice Director, Gail Tattan-Giampaolo, credits the hard work of each and every staff member who work together to ensure excellence in patient care. "It takes each member of our team to work in unison to meet the needs of our patients and their families and this national ranking is a testament to the dedication of everyone at Northwoods" said Tattan-Giampaolo.



Northwoods Home Health & Hospice

Compassionate Care That Comes to You

Deciding on an in-home health care agency can cause stress and anxiety for a family, but finding the right agency can be a blessing for the patient and family and offer peace of mind to the caregiver. Fortunately for people living in the North Country, Northwoods Home Health & Hospice has been serving the area for over thirty years and is committed to providing each and every client with personalized, individual care. Northwoods provides both medical and non-medical assisted living service and hospice care.

The agency's in-home nurses provide assessments, instructions and help with proper healing, disease and medication management, and pain and symptom control. For those patients needing therapy, Northwoods has a team of physical, occupational and speech therapists who develop a coordinated rehabilitation plan to promote and enhance mobility and daily activities based on the patient's needs.

Home health aides help patients with activities of daily living, such as getting in and out of bed, walking, bathing, toileting and dressing. Homemakers perform light household duties such as laundry, meal preparation, general housekeeping and shopping. They can also provide friendship and emotional support for many people who live alone.

The cost of home health care is typically covered by Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance or private pay. The eligibility and coverage differs for each insurer and many have various plans and benefits for different groups. An individual plan may have deductibles, a co-pay or limits. If a patient does not have home health care coverage, Northwoods will work with them to determine appropriate available services.

So whether it's long or short-term care, Northwoods' professional staff will compassionately assist patients and family members throughout the entire healing process.

Dani Lunn Memorial Endowment Established to Benefit Northwoods Hospice

When Carolyn “Dani” Lunn was diagnosed with a severe form of lung cancer in March of 2010, she underwent chemotherapy treatments, giving her more quality time with her husband, Glenn, and sons Jeff and Bill and daughter-in-law Katie. One of Dani’s favorite vacation spots was the coast of Maine, so in August of that year the family spent a week in Wells, Maine enjoying the ocean and time together.

In late October of that year, Dani took a turn for the worse and Jeff moved back into his parents’ home in Whitefield to help his dad take care of his mom. The family met with a palliative care specialist who recommended hospice. Not knowing anything about hospice or how it worked, both Dani and the family were initially reluctant to have hospice personnel come into their home.

Jeff remembers Dani’s father, Dr. Robert Hinkley, who was a popular doctor at Weeks for many years, dying of the same lung cancer nine years earlier in a nursing home...while his wife, Katherine, was dying in a separate nursing home at the same time. They died only three months apart. “I always felt bad that my grandmother died in one nursing home while my grandfather was in another home,” says Jeff. “It really bothered me that they weren’t together in the end, and I knew even then that I didn’t want the same situation for my mom, dad, or anyone else in the family when the time came. But Mom was already making comments like ‘I don’t think I’d mind being in a nursing home too much,’ which made me sad to think about.”

But after an initial meeting in the Lunn home with Mary Bates, the Patient Care Coordinator at Northwoods Home Health & Hospice, and Lisa Boudle, who became Dani’s primary care nurse, the Lunn family realized that hospice was a viable solution. “Both Mary and Lisa were forthright and compassionate, which helped put Mom’s mind at ease about



Glenn, Dani, Katie, Bill & Jeff Lunn, Wells, ME, August 2010

Thanks to Northwoods, Dani was able to make the decision to stay at home, rather than move to a nursing home.

strangers coming into her home,” says Jeff.

For the next month, Mary and Lisa came to the house once or twice a week to check vital signs, monitor pain medication, and to see how everyone was doing. They arranged for an occupational therapist to visit the home and make recommendations to modify the home to make Dani more comfortable. In late

November, when Dani took another turn for the worse and it became clear that the end was near, Dani and the family met with Mary and Lisa to make a decision about what would happen next. Thanks to the caring professionalism demonstrated by Mary, Lisa, and the other Northwoods personnel over the past month, Dani was able to make the decision to stay at home, rather than move to a nursing home.

Mary immediately had a hospital bed, commode, and wheelchair installed in the house to make Dani more comfortable.

During Thanksgiving week Dani was only semi-conscious, but she was still able to interact with her entire family, including her brother, Dr. William Hinkley, and her niece, Katy Hinkley, who had flown in from Missouri to spend Thanksgiving with her. Dani died the day after Thanksgiving, in her home, literally surrounded by her family and friends. “I know she was comfortable and at peace,” says Jeff. “She knew we were there

Dani Lunn Memorial *(continued from page 7)*

with her, and she said goodbye in her own way, on her own terms.”

“I can’t say enough about how much hospice helped my family during that difficult time,” says Jeff. “Without their help, Mom’s final days would have been much more difficult and most likely spent in a nursing home or hospital. Northwoods Hospice is truly an amazing organization with truly amazing people.”

“It was a privilege to be invited into the Lunn home to offer our support and services to Dani and her family,” said Gail Tattan-Giampaolo, Director, Northwoods Home Health & Hospice. “We are grateful that we were able to help Dani live out her life in her home surrounded by her family and friends.”

Dani had a zest for life and a life-long passion for children. According to Jeff, children were the most important part of Dani’s life. For 25 years she worked at the Whitefield Elementary School, eventually running the student support center where she acted as disciplinarian, tutor, and someone that the students could feel comfortable with discussing just about anything. She was strict, which earned her the nickname “Warden,” but she was also a compassionate listener, and the kids loved her. One of her former students sent her condolences to the Lunn family and said: “Mrs. Lunn was a wonderful person and perhaps the most important person in my life. I will never forget her and I



thank God every day for sending her to me. I do not know where I would be without her. She was one of only a few people who believed in me and made me feel loved.”

To honor Dani’s memory and to carry on her spirit, and to say “thank you” to the organization that helped them so much during such a difficult time, the family has generously donated \$50,000 to establish the Dani Lunn Memorial Endowment to be used at the discretion of the Weeks’ Board of Directors to help other families who need financial assistance with hospice care. Only the interest from the fund will be used, so that the principal will remain intact in perpetuity.

The endowment is also significant because it continues a family legacy. Dani’s father, Dr. Hinkley, was responsible for establishing the first cardiac care unit at Weeks, in honor of his mother, who died at an early age of a heart attack.

“This is a truly outstanding gift,” states Scott Howe, CEO at Weeks Medical Center. “We are honored to establish an endowment for hospice in memory of Dani Lunn. This generous endowment will allow our specially trained staff and volunteers to continue their compassionate work in the many communities in which we serve. The permanent endowment will provide us with additional funds in the future to provide other hospice services throughout our community. We are truly grateful for this gift.”

Weeks Medical Center’s Primary Care Offices

Lancaster Physicians Offices

170 Middle Street
Lancaster, NH 03584
603-788-2521
Toll Free 1-888-779-3539

Groveton Physicians Offices

47 Church Street
Groveton, NH 03582
603-636-1101
Toll Free 1-888-880-6371

Whitefield Physicians Offices

8 Clover Lane
Whitefield, NH 03598
603-837-9005
Toll Free 1-888-905-6933

Northwoods Home Health & Hospice

278 Main Street
Lancaster, NH 03584
Toll Free 1-800-750-2366

Northwoods Home Health & Hospice

120 Main Street
Colebrook, NH 03576
Toll Free 1-800-750-2366

