Message from the CEO

Dear Friend of DECH,

I was recently looking at a blog written by CNN Senior Medical Correspondent Elizabeth Cohen about being an empowered patient. I really believe that empowered patients are good for themselves and good for medicine in general. I remember a senior physician in one of my past hospitals walking into my office with about a half ream of paper that a patient gave him. I thought he was going to explode and say, “What does he need me for if he already knows it all?” Well, I was very pleasantly surprised when he said, “This makes my job easier because I get better outcomes and my patients trust what I say and they ask better questions.”

As I read Dr. Cohen’s many wise and interesting posts about how patients are encouraged to advocate for themselves, I was thinking of a relative who is a paramedic. One day while playing golf he wasn’t feeling right. So, he went to the ambulance barn, took his EKG and two days later, he was having bypass surgery. Advocacy doesn’t always mean saving one’s own life as in this extreme example. But it does mean taking as active a role as possible in your own care or in the care of a loved one.

I find all the information on the Internet quite overwhelming at times. Most of the time, I would just rather allow my doctor to be his wise and wonderful self and let me think about running my hospital. Certainly, when I’m in the exam room, I’m not always feeling wise, wonderful, smart or even prepared. When things are tough, I might only be feeling vulnerable. Cohen asserts that visiting the doctor can be likened to going to the garage for service on your car. If you have some knowledge about car repair, then the transaction is likely to result in better service.

While it is certainly not up to every patient to be knowledgeable about medicine, it is important to advocate for your interests and ask questions. Sometimes it’s better to have a spouse or friend with you so that, when you get home, you can confirm that it is indeed grapefruit that you cannot eat when taking Lipitor and not oranges.

Being an empowered patient means that, at the very least, we ask important questions of our healthcare practitioner and expect that the questions will be welcome and promptly answered. This is all a part of that great goal of receiving quality medical care. Communication is so important and medical care is frequently complicated, very personal, expensive and intimidating. These factors become important if it results in a patient, for example, choosing to not take a medicine because of the expense or out of fear that a temporary pain medicine might become addictive.

The goal of great medicine at DECH is everyone’s concern and we are working tirelessly to get to and maintain that goal. And don’t be surprised if you see a sign someday out front proclaiming: “EMPOWERED PATIENTS WELCOME HERE”!

With best regards always,

Douglas T. Jones, FACHE
President & CEO
Down East Community Hospital would like you to join us in welcoming Dr. Stephen Blythe and his family back to Washington County. After 20+ years of practicing medicine across the country, we are delighted that Dr. Blythe has decided to come back to Downeast Maine and join our family practice at DECH Medical Associates.

Dr. Blythe is board certified in family practice with past practice in rural medicine, emergency medicine, and academic medicine. Prior to medical school, he did three years of graduate study in nutrition and public health. He has a Master’s Degree in Health Administration. Dr. Blythe has made numerous trips to underdeveloped countries for short-term medical missions, participated in several fact-finding research trips (most recently to Cuba in January 2010) as well as a human rights delegation with Witness for Peace. He has made several trips to the jungles of Central America and the Amazon to study plant medicines. As a physician in rural Maine, he participated as a provider with the Canadian Medicare System. He has a scientific and technical background but also takes great pride in providing his patients with not just the best possible medical care but the most personalized as well.

To make an appointment with Dr. Blythe, call 255-4567

Down East Community Hospital is pleased to announce that Nikki Shaw has been promoted into the position of Vice President of Physician Practices and Ancillary Services. During her nine years with the organization, Nikki has served as the Imaging Manager, Director of Clinical Services overseeing Imaging, Cardiopulmonary and Lab and most recently Physician Practice Administrator for all the hospital owned physician practices. Nikki’s area of responsibility will continue with oversight of the hospital owned physician practices including Milbridge Medical Center as well as Imaging, Cardiopulmonary, Laboratory, Rehabilitation, and Food Services. Nikki replaces Jaclyn MacIntyre, Vice President of Professional and Support Services who left to return to her hometown of Edmonton, Alberta Canada.

Nikki’s clinical and management experience will provide the organization with the support it needs to enable each ancillary department to provide exemplary service to our patients and community.

Nikki and her husband Trey reside in her hometown of Milbridge, Maine. They have one daughter, Emma and a Chocolate Lab, Mason.

Down East Community Hospital welcomes Terry Leahy as our new Physician Practice Administrator with responsibility for the Milbridge Medical Center and the Hospital Based Physician Practices. Terry comes to us from EMMC where she worked as a leader in various areas, most recently in Physician Practice Management. She has 11 years of healthcare experience and a strong background in patient and staff satisfaction, lean methodology/process improvement and quality improvement.

Terry stated, “I am passionate about creating a positive environment for our staff and our patients. This means that the highest level of trust needs to be earned through honest and transparent communication. That’s what our community deserves.”

Terry and her husband now reside in Trescott and look forward to life in Washington County. They don’t have any children living at home but they do have four dogs that keep them very busy. They include a Shi-tzu (Maxwell), a Yellow Lab (Ellie), a Golden Retriever (Nutmeg) and a Great Dane (Stella).
Here to Serve You

Down East Community Hospital’s Rehabilitation Department is considered one of the most comprehensive programs in Washington County. Offering convenient hours and flexible schedules, skilled clinicians work with each client to meet all their rehabilitation needs. Services available include physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy.

Physical Therapy
In physical therapy, the clinician uses therapeutic exercises, gait training, mobilization of soft tissue and joints, and modalities to help relieve pain and restore overall fitness and health. Our therapists are trained in manual therapy and McKenzie Back/Neck techniques.

Occupational Therapy
Occupational therapy uses purposeful, goal directed activities to help you relearn activities of daily living. These activities are focused on home and work skills you will need to return to your normal lifestyle. A hand rehabilitation program is also offered.

Speech Therapy
Speech therapy involves the diagnosis and treatment of patients who have difficulty swallowing, comprehending, or expressing ideas or needs.

Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics
Christopher Brydges, BPE, CPO, has a clinic twice a month for patients who need assessment and fitting for prosthetics, braces and shoes. Appointments are made directly with his office at 1-866-755-4627.

Special Treatment Programs

Ergonomic Evaluation: Our Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapist are able to evaluate worksite and work stations for ergonomic safety and function.

Incontinence Program: Joyce Patterson is trained in the evaluation and treatment of incontinence issues.

Lymphedema: Gwen Jones, PT, MS is a certified Lymphedema therapist providing Manual Lymphatic Drainage (MLD), of the extremities that interferes with activities of daily living. She is also certified to measure and fit custom supports.

Myofascial Treatment: Joyce Patterson, PT specializes in myofascial release techniques to reduce muscle tension, improve mobility, and decrease pain.

Swallowing Evaluation: Heather Dodsworth, MS, CCC-SLP, along with the Imaging Department at DECH evaluates swallowing problems with the aid of video fluoroscopic imaging.

Vestibular Rehab: Patients with peripheral inner ear problems such as dizziness and unsteady movement are treated with special techniques including the Epley maneuver. They are instructed in home exercises programs to improve function and mobility.

To contact our Rehabilitation Department, please call 207-255-0258.
November is National Hospice Month. Each year Down East Hospice Volunteer Services send out "Celebration of Remembrance" packets to bereaved families all over Washington County who have received volunteer hospice care and to others who have experienced a loss. Each year, Down East Hospice has a display at Down East Community Hospital where anyone can pick up a bookmark and a candle so they too can celebrate their lives.

Down East Hospice is a volunteer program providing free comfort care and emotional support to terminally ill patients and their families and care givers in Washington County since 1981. We do not take the place of nursing care, but work closely with nursing agencies, hospital and nursing home staff. Our volunteers provide emotional support and practical help. There is no time limit to having a Down East Hospice volunteer and anyone can make a referral to us with permission of the patient (if possible) or main care giver.

Down East Hospice also provides workshops - always free of charge - that may be of interest to you. We co-facilitate four monthly cancer support meetings in Lubec (first Friday of month), Machias (second Friday of month), Eastport (third Thursday of month) and fourth at the Harrington Family Health Center (fourth Thursday of month). Help with these support groups is provided by the Beth Wright Cancer Resource Center out of Ellsworth.

Down East Hospice provides bereavement material especially for children and has a part time bereavement coordinator, June Gillespie, who organizes grief support meetings. In March Down East Hospice hosted the annual live teleconference "Living with Grief" at Down East Community Hospital and in Calais. In April of this year they provided two all day workshop/retreats for care givers - one in the Machias area and one in the Calais area which were very well attended and they hope to do similar projects for the community in the near future.

All is done with funding from donations, grants and fund raising events. They do not receive any funding from the state or federal governments. Down East Hospice is always looking for help to find appropriate grants to support their compassionate work. If you have any questions about any of their free services, want to know more about how to become a volunteer or would like to be added to their e-mail list about up-coming events, please contact them at downcasthospice@yahoo.com or 255-3356 ext. 324 or 454-7521 ext. 126.
We Can! Make a Difference in Washington County! In 2009, Washington County: One Community (WC: OC) identified the reduction of obesity as one of the goals to improve quality of life for Washington County residents. The WC: OC Wellness Team is working to reduce the prevalence of obesity by implementing strategies that encourage healthier lifestyles. The Wellness Focus Team is excited to announce We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children’s Activity & Nutrition) initiative. We Can! is a national public education program from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to help prevent overweight and obesity among youth. We Can! reaches parents and caregivers in home and community settings with educational materials and activities to encourage healthy eating, increase physical activity, and reduce sedentary time.

Washington County has been named the first We Can! County in Maine and is supported by the Washington County Commissioners. The Commissioners recognize that obesity is quickly becoming an issue that affects quality of life for Washington County residents:

- From 1976 to 2006 the prevalence of overweight children increased: for those aged 6-11 years, prevalence increased from 6.5% to 18.8%.
- Approximately 80% of children who are overweight at aged 10-15 years will be obese adults.
- Obese children and adolescents are more likely to have risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease (such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, Type 2 diabetes) than are other children and adolescents.

We are still looking for partnerships from all sectors to help implement We Can! activities. To date local partnerships include: Down East Community Hospital, Calais Regional Hospital, Harrington Family Health Center, HealthWays, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Women’s Health Resource Library, Washington County Food and Fuel Alliance, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Machias Savings Bank, St. Croix Valley Healthy Communities, Curves of Calais, Venus and Apollo Fitness Center, Pleasant Point Housing Authority, The Seacoast Mission/The EdGE Program, UMM Center for Lifelong Learning and 5-2-1-0, Let’s Go, a community-based initiative to promote healthy lifestyle choices for children, youth and families.

If you would like to join this effort, the WC:OC Wellness Focus Team meets the first Thursday of each month from 1-3 pm at Down East Community Hospital in the MacBride Building Board Room. Meetings can also be attended via conference call or Polycom. For more information please contact Sara McConnell, Community Health Specialist for Washington County: One Community at 255-3741 or smcconnell@wc-oc.org.
In the Community

Baby Reunion

The first annual Down East Community Hospital baby reunion was held on July 24 for the babies born at DECH from January 2009 through June 2010. Twenty babies came to the reunion. The babies, parents, siblings, and grandparents enjoyed the festivities. Alf Wakeman, PA-C and OB/GYN Kara Dwight, DO were on hand to see the babies who had touched their lives. Attendees also had the opportunity to tour the new pediatric space and the newly renovated Women’s Health Center.

The DECH staff is already looking forward to the 2nd Annual Baby Reunion which is scheduled for July 2011.

Blueberry Festival

Down East Community Hospital sponsored the First Aid Station at the Machias Wild Blueberry Festival again this year. Nurses were available during festival hours to treat bumps and bruises and to help get further attention if something more serious arose. Water was also available free of charge for anyone who found themselves needing hydration. Free blood pressure screenings were also provided.

Blueberry Memories

The Machias Wild Blueberry Festival captured the true meaning of what blueberries mean to Washington County, but so did what happened in Columbia Falls on August 12.

On that day, Sunrise Care Facility’s Activities Director, Lisa Cirone, took residents on an outing to Columbia Falls so they could enjoy the blueberry season first hand.

Marion Smith, 99, couldn’t wait to get a rake in her hand and hit the fields! On the way there, she told many stories of her and her husband, Lawrence, raking every year and how they would finish all the young kid’s rows because the kids couldn’t finish the rows themselves. Doralies Bobryk, 97, also grabbed a rake and enjoyed getting out on the field and raking some berries.

Mark Your Calendars!

The 5th Annual Health Fair will be held on October 14 from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Lee Pellon Center in Machias (located behind Subway). This event became so popular it outgrew the space available at Down East Community Hospital!

This year area agencies will once again be invited to setup booths to show the services they provide to the community. Free flu shots and blood pressure screenings will be available. There will be many booths that will offer information on departments within the hospital and the DECH Human Resources staff will be present to discuss current job openings.
Holiday Events

The DECH Auxiliary Annual Book Fair and Pie or Bread Sale is scheduled for Friday, October 15th from 8 am–4 pm and Saturday, October 16th from 9 am to noon. We have a great selection of books already arriving at the Hospital and the Committee has decided on a pie and bread sale to tempt your palate! What book lover could ask for more?

November is our “It’s the Great Pumpkin… Pie Sale”. Make sure to order your Homemade Pumpkin or Apple Pie from any Auxiliary Board Member or call the DECH Auxiliary Gift Shop at 255-0487. Pies are made fresh for delivery on Wednesday, November 24th at 9 am.

For orders or further questions, call 497-2618 or email us at dechaux@maineline.net

The DECH Auxiliary Holiday Craft Fair is scheduled for Saturday, December 4th 9 am to 1 pm, at the Rose Gaffney School. Why fight the crowds in Bangor or Ellsworth when you can find unique and creative gifts at the fair? Stroll along the booths, enjoy a cup of chowder or chili and don’t forget to buy a chance for our original 12 Days of Christmas Raffle! We hope to see you there.

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I wish to “Light a Life” at Down East Community Hospital

Down East Community Hospital’s Light A Life celebration will take place on December 14 from 3 to 5 pm. This celebration, that has been a tradition at DECH for well over 20 years, gives us the opportunity to remember loved ones with a gift to Light-A-Life and is also a way to support DECH and Sunrise Care Facility. With a minimum donation of $10, you can reserve a luminaria bag and candle in honor of or in memory of a loved one. These luminaria bags will be lit the evening of the celebration.

☐ Please reserve a luminaria bag and candle (with minimum donation of $10)

Number of luminaria bags: _______ Total donation: $ _______

Method of Payment: ☐ Check (Payable to Down East Health Trust) ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover

Credit Card #: ___________________________ Exp. Date: ____________

Signature: ________________________________________________________

Optional: I wish to “Light a Life”...

☐ In honor of (name): ____________________________________________

☐ In memory of (name): __________________________________________

For multiple luminaria with dedications, please enclose an additional sheet indicating your preference and the name(s) to be added.

Your Name: ______________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________ City: ___________ State: _______ Zip: _______

Email: ___________________________________ Phone: ________________

Please mail completed form to the address below, or deliver to the DECH reception desk.

DOWN EAST HEALTH TRUST
11 Hospital Drive
Machias, ME 04654
207-255-0244

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Calendar of Events

Support Groups & Classes

**Gastric Bypass Support Group**
- *October 4, 18 - November 1, 15*
- *December 6, 20*
- *5:00 pm*
- *MacBride Building at DECH*

Provides ongoing support to those who have gone through gastric bypass surgery as well as their family and friends. Topics include healthy eating and nutrition, impulse control, exercise. On-going emotional support is provided around the day-to-day challenges encountered post surgery. For more information, contact Janet Monaghan at 255-0485.

**Diabetes Support Group**
- *October 1, November 5, December 3*
- *12 Noon*
- *Down East Community Hospital*
- *October 15, November 19, December 10*
- *12 Noon*
- *Milbridge Medical Center*

Provides ongoing support to people with diabetes as well as their family and friends. Topics include nutrition, prevention of acute complications, managing high and low blood sugar, disease process, among others. On-going emotional support is provided around the day-to-day challenges faced by persons with diabetes. For more information, contact Jesse Burns, RN at 546-2391 or Julie Hixson, Community Relations & Marketing Coordinator at 255-0244.

**Childbirth Classes:**
- *October 9, December 11*
- *9:00 am - 4:00 pm*
- *Milbridge WHRL*
- *November 13*
- *9:00 am - 4:00 pm*
- *Down East Community Hospital*

This free class provides expectant parents with a tour of the Hospital’s Obstetrics Department, information on what to expect during labor and delivery and tips for taking care of that new bundle of joy. In the afternoon, a special “Boot Camp for Dads” is presented by a seasoned father who helps expectant dads understand what to anticipate. For more information or to register, call Jane Brissette at 255-0438.

**Maine Savvy Caregiver Training**
- *October 13, 20, 27 & November 3, 10, 17*
- *Down East Community Hospital*

If you are caring for a family member with dementia, you may want to attend this 6 week program. Session will be held each Wednesday from October 13 through November 17. The sessions will be held at DECH in the Hospital Conference Room from 10:00am to Noon. This series is presented by the Alzheimer’s Association. **Pre-registration is required.** Please contact the Alzheimer’s Association at 800-272-3900 or 207-772-0115 for more information.

**Business After Hours**
- *October 13*
- *5:30 pm*
- *Lee Pellon Center*

Down East Community Hospital will host the Machias Bay Area Chamber of Commerce’s “Business After Hours” at the Lee Pellon Center in Machias.

**Health Fair & Flu Shot Clinic**
- *October 14*
- *8:00 am to 1:00 pm*
- *Lee Pellon Center*

**Light A Life**
- *December 14*
- *5:00 pm*
- *Down East Community Hospital*

Please visit our calendar of events on our website at www.dech.org for updates.