together we can...
Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Brigham and Women’s Hospital has deep and strong roots in our local, national and global communities, with a mission to address and overcome health disparities in underserved areas.

We are particularly committed to working with the residents of Boston’s vibrant and diverse neighborhoods to break through the barriers to health—economic, social, academic and cultural—so often encountered by the vulnerable individuals and families in our community. We strive to increase access to high-quality healthcare services while addressing the social factors that lead to disparities in health and well-being. At the core of our work for and with the city’s most vulnerable populations are our Center for Community Health and Health Equity and our two licensed health centers—Brookside Community Health Center and Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center.

We are pleased to share a sampling of the depth and breadth of our multifaceted initiatives and programs in this report. The Center’s work and our health centers reach more than 29,000 individuals and families every year. Our hope is to relay the power of working together, and of continuing to ask the questions and identify the answers that will improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities.

A common theme will emerge as you explore the following pages: Together, we can accomplish what none of us can achieve alone. Our community engagement efforts routinely bring health professionals from across the Brigham and Women’s Hospital campus into partnerships with community organizations and health centers, schools, and state and local agencies to identify and address factors contributing to health and well-being.

We also partner with the individuals and families we serve—children; young parents; people who want and need health information, preventive screening and treatment services; people experiencing violence in their homes or in their neighborhoods; young people, from pre-kindergarten to college, who hope to advance their education and prepare for careers in health; and many others. Our community health and health equity initiatives are supported with funding from Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Partners HealthCare, and many generous individuals and organizations who share our mission.

It is truly an honor to be part of this great work. We look forward to continuing our partnership with our communities to promote health equity and reduce health disparities in Boston and beyond.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Nabel, MD
President
Brigham and Women’s Hospital

Wanda McClain, MPA
Vice President, Community Health and Health Equity
Brigham and Women’s Hospital
together we are creating healthier communities
HEALTH EQUITY PROGRAMS:
Ensuring a Lifetime of Health

Preventive care, regular health screenings, and early diagnosis and treatment of disease are proven ways to achieve positive health outcomes. Unfortunately, many members of our community lack equal access to the resources required to achieve optimal health for themselves and their families. Brigham and Women’s is committed to breaking down many of the barriers that prevent the residents of our neighborhoods from achieving physical, mental, social and financial health.

Stronger Generations Initiative

The Stronger Generations initiative provides mothers, fathers and infants from some of Boston’s most underserved neighborhoods with critical support and resources, including access to healthcare and support systems before, during and after pregnancy. The initiative has evolved to include specialized programs such as Perinatal Case Management; Centering Pregnancy©; Summit for Teen Empowerment, Progress and Parenting Success; and Peaceful Mama prenatal yoga.

For more than 20 years, the Perinatal Case Management Program has addressed the issues of infant mortality and low birth weight by connecting patients in each of the six Brigham and Women’s Hospital licensed and affiliated health centers with case managers who provide them with education, guidance and support throughout their pregnancies. This vital program serves hundreds of pregnant women and their children each year.

Centering Pregnancy is a group-based prenatal care model that combines pregnancy-related assessment, education and support with health promotion and risk reduction. The program is based in the Brigham and Women’s Adolescent Reproductive Health Service and Codman Square Health Center in Dorchester. It is designed to provide adolescent and young-adult mothers with resources that promote maternal and infant health, and to enable them to build strong social networks.

Each summer, the Center for Community Health and Health Equity leads a consortium of 30 organizations to plan and convene the Summit for Teen Empowerment, Progress and Parenting Success (STEPS). This summit provides pregnant and parenting adolescents and young adults with resources, peer support and education to help them achieve their goals, both for themselves and their children. In addition to interactive workshops, the conference features young parent ambassadors who learn about leadership, advocacy and public health, then educate their peers about similar topics through in-person gatherings, social media and future summits.

These programs, combined with the Peaceful Mama prenatal yoga program, the recent addition of a mental health coach within the Adolescent Reproductive Health Service, and the expanded use of social media, underscores Brigham and Women’s commitment to opening new doors for pregnant and parenting adolescents, young adults and adults in order to ensure healthy birth outcomes and build a foundation for a lifetime of health.

The Center for Community Health and Health Equity offers 18 programs that benefit Boston-area residents across the lifespan.
together we are building healthier futures
Connecting Hope, Assistance and Treatment Program

A diagnosis of breast cancer is often accompanied by a host of challenges that can impact physical, mental, social and economic health. These challenges often are made worse when patients are uninsured, underinsured or lack the financial resources to get what they need while undergoing treatment. The Connecting Hope, Assistance and Treatment Program (CHAT) helps women overcome some of these challenges by providing up to $1,200 to help cover expenses that are associated with breast cancer treatment including food, counseling, therapeutic massage, prostheses and wigs. The CHAT Program assists more than 125 women across Massachusetts communities each year.

Open Doors to Health Colorectal Cancer Patient Navigator Program

Since 2009, patients at Southern Jamaica Plain and Brookside community health centers have benefited from the services of a patient health navigator to direct, guide, educate and support them as they prepare for and undergo a colonoscopy. Following recommended colorectal cancer screening guidelines is critical because early detection of pre-cancerous polyps or early stages of cancer significantly improves patient outcomes. Yet, many who were referred for a colonoscopy, particularly Spanish-speaking patients, were not completing the screening. The patient health navigator, who speaks both English and Spanish, works with health center patients for whom colorectal cancer is recommended to identify barriers, provide education, and assist with transportation and other resources.

The results of the program have been quite remarkable. Since its inception in August of 2009, colonoscopy completion rates have increased from 42 percent to more than 70 percent, and no-show rates have decreased from more than 50 percent to less than 18 percent. Approximately 20 percent of individuals who are helped by the patient navigator are diagnosed with pre-cancerous polyps. These polyps are removed during the procedure to prevent cancer from developing.

Addressing Disparities in Chronic Disease Management

Additional areas of focus for the health equity team include disparities in the management of chronic diseases such as heart failure, hypertension and diabetes. The team’s efforts include collaborating with state and federal agencies to collect quality data and identify and implement best practices.

The Patient Navigator Program has increased compliance to recommended colorectal cancer screening at two community health centers from 42 percent to more than 70 percent.
together we are responding to a need
HEALTH EQUITY RESEARCH AND INTERVENTION:
Eyes on Equity: Focusing on Community Health

The Health Equity Research and Intervention team works with local communities and national partners to provide valuable new information to promote community health. The team brings expertise to understanding social factors that affect healthy aging, and studies the impact of the changing landscape of healthcare access on diverse communities.

Looking at the Numbers: Social Factors

The Health Equity Research and Intervention team has partnered with scientists from Jackson, Mississippi to learn more about the social factors that could affect heart disease for African Americans. This research indicates that healthcare providers may need to be particularly mindful of the ways the body manages sugar in African American men and women living in unsafe neighborhoods. The research is ongoing to help gain additional understanding of how inequities in our society may contribute to preventable chronic illnesses.

Although Massachusetts healthcare reform provided better access to insurance for all, the Health Equity Research and Intervention team showed that Hispanics, African Americans, and those in fair or poor health continue to require additional strategies to improve access to care. The team is now investigating needs for care across the country to understand how different strategies used by different states impact how diverse groups seek care.

Working with Communities: Community Engaged Research

The Brigham and Women’s Hospital Division of Women’s Health partnered with the Health Equity Research and Intervention team and five local community health centers to investigate access to care for diverse, low-income women in Boston. The team learned that many women were successful in obtaining insurance, but required Health Safety Net funds to continue to receive care. This work shows how important safety net programs are to low-income women, even in the era of near universal coverage. The team also partnered with the Boston Public Health Commission to learn how African American women want to get information about the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. The women surveyed emphasized the importance of physicians giving diverse groups the information they need to make healthy choices.

Bringing Scientific Information to the Community

What good is scientific information if it does not reach the communities that need it? The Health Equity Research and Intervention team has partnered with local community organizations to bring clinicians and scientists at Brigham and Women’s Hospital into community settings in Boston to provide scientific information diverse communities can use to make healthy choices. For example, through the Community Learning Network, Brigham and Women’s has partnered with the Roxbury Community Alliance for Health to conduct a session on nutrition and healthy eating, and with the Center for Community Health, Education, Research and Service (CCHERS) to sponsor a session on prostate health for African American men.
together we are putting research into practice
together we are empowered

Do No Harm
VIOLENCE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION:
Safe Homes, Safe Communities

The mission of the Violence Intervention and Prevention programs is to address violence as an emergent social justice issue through a multidisciplinary approach rooted in public health and grassroots mobilization. The goal is to improve health outcomes for our patients and communities by addressing the burden of intentional violence through direct interventions, education, prevention, community building and trauma recovery.

Passageway

At the core of the Violence Intervention and Prevention programs is Passageway. Since 1997, this program has provided essential intervention, prevention, assistance and support services to individuals who are living with domestic partner violence. Passageway advocates are available at multiple sites including Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital, Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center, Whittier Street Health Center and Brookside Community Health Center. In response to a recent community needs assessment, the advocates’ role has been extended to include working with other community-based organizations such as Higher Ground in Roxbury, the Mission Hill Health Movement, the Tobin Community Center and Roxbury Tenants of Harvard.

With a focus on providing strength-based services from an empowerment framework, Passageway advocates provide:

- Direct intervention, connections to services, and follow up for individuals at inpatient, outpatient and community settings
- Ongoing training and education for healthcare providers in areas such as universal screening, risk assessments, safety planning, accessing advocates, documentation and working with abusive partners
- Individual and group consultation services for healthcare providers

The Passageway Health Law Collaborative brings much-needed legal representation and consultation to individuals who have experienced or are experiencing domestic partner violence. Through the collaborative, Passageway works in partnership with attorneys and students from the WilmerHale Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School, who advise and represent clients facing legal issues such as abuse prevention orders, housing matters, and family law concerns including divorce, custody and support.

SHARING THE MESSAGE NATIONALLY
Recognizing violence as a national public health issue, Passageway shares its experience, knowledge and expertise at both the local and national levels. In fact, two Passageway representatives were invited presenters at the National Conference on Health and Domestic Violence.

Passageway assists more than 1,200 individuals annually who are living in abusive relationships.
together we are advocating and promoting safety
Trauma Recovery Program: In the Heart of the Community

The Trauma Recovery Program was launched in 2011 to help stop the cycle of community violence in the lives of patients presenting to Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s trauma service. The initiative was conceptualized by the chief of the trauma department, who noted that many of these patients returned repeatedly to the hospital with gunshot or knife wounds. The program introduces these patients to a patient advocate who has experience in community-based healing and conflict resolution. The advocate not only responds to trauma patients at the hospital, but also works with them after discharge.

The Trauma Recovery Program is unique in that it brings the advocate into the environments and lives of the people he is here to help—the trauma patient, younger siblings, parents and others who want and will benefit from advocacy and support. The advocate’s connections to the community allow him to promote safety and peace-making, and have conversations with clients about choices they face and navigating barriers moving forward. When patients are ready, the advocate connects them to the resources they need and provides ongoing support. He also shares his experience and expertise with Brigham and Women’s Hospital staff to cultivate a deeper level of understanding about violence in the community.

Building Relationships, Awareness and Education

Another key role within the Community Health and Health Equity Violence Intervention and Prevention programs is that of the prevention specialist. With a focus on both abusive relationship and community violence, the prevention specialist has launched a number of initiatives to build relationships, awareness and education. These include:

- **A teen-led and teen-developed program** through which a team of high school students brings violence prevention and healthy-relationship education to other Boston-area students through mixed media and workshops
- **A young men’s collective partnership** that provides space for young men who have witnessed violence to support one another and gain access to the resources that will help them enhance health, wellness and safety
- **A community-based participatory research study funded by a Harvard Catalyst Grant** focusing on the social networks of the communities of Jamaica Plain and Mission Hill, and how they are impacted by trauma caused by violence. The goal is to assess resource allocation and ways to promote consistent service delivery during and after violence, as well as the effects of having resources in place to support community residents

Trauma Affects All of Us

Violence and trauma affect more than the individual who is physically or emotionally harmed. It can also leave a lasting and potentially debilitating impression with the victim’s family members, friends, community members and healthcare workers. The Center for Community Health and Health Equity responded to the needs of these individuals by offering trauma training/psychological first aid. More than 100 people have participated in the training, 60 percent of whom were community members.
together we are working with our community
In essence, the Center for Community Health and Health Equity brings the Brigham to the community and the community to the Brigham. The Center’s Office of Community Relations is Brigham and Women’s Hospital’s finger on the pulse of Boston communities. Its focus runs the gamut of factors that impact community health, including access to healthcare programs and services, housing issues, business development, education and employment.

The Office of Community Relations actively participates in numerous civic organizations and city initiatives, and works closely with neighborhood groups to address the health-related needs of Boston-area residents. For example:

- Staff is working with the Mission Hill Health Movement and the Roxbury Tenants of Harvard to develop a process for determining the issues faced by the residents they serve. As a result, a series of programs and services has been implemented, positively impacting the lives of many residents.

- Dozens of area seniors receive free flu vaccines at the annual flu clinic coordinated with the Mission Park Housing Development and staffed by Brigham and Women’s clinicians.

- Brigham and Women’s partners with the ABCD Parker Hill/Fenway Neighborhood Service Center, which serves more than 500 families and 2,000 individuals each year.

- In collaboration with the Center’s Health Equity Research and Intervention team, Community Relations is working with a group of Mission Hill seniors to address mental health issues.

- BWH provides financial support to the South Street Youth Center (SSYC), which provides a safe, educational and engaging environment for young residents of South Street Development in Jamaica Plain.

- Teachers from the Maurice J. Tobin School, one of our community partners, are using the instructional support and real-time data gained through the Achievement Network to drive and improve instructional practices.

- The Center for Community Health and Health Equity provides grants and program support to area groups and organizations.

The Center for Community Health and Health Equity works with more than 100 community partners in 12 Boston neighborhoods.
together we are shaping our children’s futures
We know that today’s children are tomorrow’s leaders, so we have developed a continuum of programs to help children in Brigham and Women’s priority communities gain the knowledge, skills, passion and confidence that will help them reach their full potential. Each year, more than 300 Brigham volunteers reach more than 500 youth of all ages, from preschoolers to young adults.

**Advancing Literacy and Science: Our Youngest Community Members**

The youngest students in eight classrooms at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Mission Grammar School host a Brigham and Women’s Hospital employee each month through the Brigham Book Buddies Program. The Brigham volunteer reads aloud to the children, and the books purchased by the hospital are donated to the school. Brigham volunteers also read one-on-one weekly with a student at the Maurice J. Tobin K-8 School through the Read to a Child Program. More than 100 second and third graders at both schools participate in the Pen Pal Program. The students and their Brigham pen pals write to each other regularly and meet face-to-face twice a year. The program supports emerging literacy skills, creates excitement about learning, and establishes new relationships between the children and the Brigham volunteers.

Brigham and Women’s employee volunteers—researchers, physicians, nurses and others—also head to the classrooms of fourth and fifth graders to lead the children in interactive science projects through the Center’s Health and Science Club. In addition to creating hands-on, skill-building learning experiences in the classroom, the program includes occasional field trips and introduces the students to careers in the healthcare field.

**Learning Through Experience: The Journey to Adulthood**

Through the Center’s Summer Science Academy, graduating eighth graders from Mission Hill neighborhood schools and organizations, as well as others who have participated in the elementary school programs, can become full-fledged Brigham and Women’s Hospital employees for six weeks. They participate in interactive science class, education and career-related field trips, and a research project. This program introduces students to the wide variety of careers in healthcare, helps them see how various hospital roles are intertwined, and gives them opportunities to broaden the circle of role models in their lives.

More than 300 Brigham and Women’s Hospital employees volunteer throughout the year in the Center’s youth programs, which serve young people from pre-kindergarten through college.
Project TEACH (Teen Education About Careers in Health) extends the continuum of opportunities at Brigham and Women’s. This is a six-week, summertime paid employment and educational opportunity for 25 students who are about to enter tenth grade at several Boston high schools. The students work in a variety of hospital areas, learning about the responsibilities of the workplace, exploring health careers, and meeting a variety of Brigham employees and staff who are always ready, willing and able to share their knowledge and experience. The program incorporates seminars, field trips and research into the students’ work weeks, as well.

The Student Success Jobs Program (SSJP) is for young people in grades 10, 11 and 12 from seven Boston public high schools, and is designed to expose them to healthcare careers and help them build the skills they need to be accepted to college. Each student is assigned a Brigham and Women’s Hospital mentor from one of the 60 participating departments, and works at the hospital Monday through Friday after school. The program includes monthly seminars focusing on life skills and help with the college application process, preparation for SATs, psycho-social support, and tutoring resources for students who need additional help with science or math. In addition, the Partners HealthCare, Brigham and Women’s, and Massachusetts General Hospital foundations have partnered to create a college scholarship that awards graduating seniors up to $5,000 a year for four years. The Student Success Jobs Program has seen great successes; 96 percent of its past participants are enrolled in or have graduated from college. A recent survey of alumni revealed that approximately 46 percent, most of whom are young people of color, are the first in their families to attend college. All of the most recent graduates completed high school and were accepted into four-year colleges, including Harvard, Wellesley, Tufts and Stanford. Once students are in college, a staff member remains in close contact with them to support their college success.

**SSJP College Internship Opportunity**

Student Success Job Program alumni who are studying for a career in health and/or science are eligible to apply for a 10-week summer employment program at Brigham and Women’s that matches their jobs to their specific interests. The students’ past experience and familiarity with the hospital make this a win-win for Brigham and Women’s and the students. The hope is that these talented young professionals may even choose to pursue their future careers at Brigham and Women’s after completing their education.

The Student Success Jobs Program’s successes are remarkable, with all of the most recent graduates completing high school and being accepted into four-year colleges.
together we are building tomorrow’s workforce
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS:
Bringing High-Quality Healthcare to Local Communities

Brigham and Women’s Hospital operates two licensed community health centers—Brookside Community Health Center and Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center. The centers bring culturally competent, high-quality healthcare services to underserved residents and families of Boston’s diverse neighborhoods. Recognizing the influence of social determinants of health, such as employment, housing and education, the health centers also address the needs of the broader community, often in partnership with Brigham and Women’s Center for Community Health and Health Equity. Key examples include the Stronger Generations initiative, research endeavors, the Open Doors to Health Colorectal Cancer Screening Program, Passageway and numerous community health initiatives.

The vast majority of providers and staff at Brookside Community Health Center and Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center speak both English and Spanish, which enhances comfort and care for the centers’ largely Spanish-speaking patient populations. Many of the people working at the centers also live in the neighborhoods they serve, strengthening their relationships with patients even further. Primary and preventive services are at the core of the centers’ offerings, and a wide variety of specialized programs and services are available to improve the health and well-being of patients. Patients who require specialty care or testing have easy access to all of the resources at Brigham and Women’s Hospital.

Brookside Community Health Center

Brookside Community Health Center was established in 1970 with a five-year funding grant through the Model Cities Program. The grant was awarded in response to a community-driven initiative to address the health-related needs of people living in Jamaica Plain. In 1974, Brookside became part of Brigham and Women’s multi-location Ambulatory and Community Services Department.

Located on Washington Street in Boston’s Egleston Square area, the center has evolved and grown to meet the needs of its patients and improve the overall health status of the community. For more than 40 years, it has remained true to its mission “to provide high-quality, family oriented, comprehensive healthcare, with a focus on serving the low income population of our community, regardless of ability to pay.” More than 11,000 patients from Jamaica Plan and its surrounding neighborhoods come to Brookside for care each year.

The vast majority of providers and staff speak both English and Spanish, which enhances comfort and care for the centers’ largely Spanish-speaking patient populations.
Brookside Community Health Center’s comprehensive services include:

• Adult medicine
• Pediatric medicine
• Obstetrics and gynecology/midwifery
• Family planning counseling
• Dental services, including preventive, restorative and orthodontic services for adults and children
• The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
• Family services
• Mental health services, social services, HIV health education/prevention, substance abuse services
• Parenting education and domestic violence advocacy support services
• Smoking cessation
• Counseling and assistance with health-insurance subsidies and enrollment
• Referrals to additional community resources
Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center

Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center was founded in 1971 as a well-baby clinic operating from two rooms in the Curtis Hall Community Building. In 1974, the center became a part of Brigham and Women’s multi-location Ambulatory and Community Services Department, and moved to a storefront location on Centre Street. In 1998, Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center moved to its current, state-of-the-art Centre Street facility, where its expert staff provides comprehensive services for more than 12,000 individuals each year in Jamaica Plain and the surrounding areas.

Unique to Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center is its Health Promotion Center, a place where community members young and old can learn about and engage in activities such as Karate, Zumba, yoga and other pursuits designed to address the health of the “whole person” in a supportive, comfortable environment. It is also home to group and program activities for youth and seniors, addressing a wide variety of issues that impact health. The Health Promotion Center compliments the health center’s overall mission to “provide personal, quality healthcare with respect and compassion.”

Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center’s comprehensive services include:
- Adult and pediatric medicine
- Women’s health services
- The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- Counseling and assistance with health-insurance subsidies and enrollment
- Mental health services, social services, HIV health education/prevention, substance abuse services
- Parenting education and domestic violence advocacy support services
- Peer leadership programs for teens
- Smoking cessation
- The Mind/Body Center, offering yoga, meditation, Tai Chi and stress reduction techniques
- Afternoon and summer camps for children
- JP Fit, which connects pediatric patients and their families with a coach who helps them develop healthy food and exercise habits
- Referrals to additional community resources
To learn more about Brigham and Women’s community health and health equity efforts, and how you can support these community initiatives, please call 617-264-8750 or visit

www.brighamandwomens.org/about_bwh/communityprograms

together we can create a brighter future