Winter/Spring 2008/09, Volume 5, Issue 2

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Community Health News
A Newsletter of the Brownsville Multi-Service Family Health Center

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A Letter from the President
Harvey Lawrence, President and CEO

In history, 2009 will be remembered as a year of tremendous change in our country. Against the inspiring backdrop of the inauguration of President Barack Obama, and its promise of a new opportunity for our country, BMS also embarked upon a new phase of its journey and legacy. BMS’ former President & Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Maurice A. Reid, stepped down on December 31, 2008, after more than 30 years of dedicated service to the communities of Central Brooklyn and East New York. I am honored to be his successor and after 15 years as BMS’ Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, I feel privileged to embark upon this new journey with the Board of Directors, employees, patients, community members and supporters.

Over the past five years Central Brooklyn has seen its primary care capacity systematically depleted with the loss of 3 hospitals and 11 satellite health centers. In an effort to service the growing health care needs of our community, BMS is expanding and enhancing our current scope of services, thereby strengthening the borough-wide coordination of care severely undermined by the closing of local hospitals, community health centers, and vital services.

These new BMS projects include health care services that are absent or deficient in our neighborhoods; for example, we have begun implementation of a new Geriatric Supportive Services Program (GSS), funded in part by the Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation. This program seeks to improve health outcomes among BMS patients (age 60 and older) by instituting geriatric-focused health protocols and senior-friendly service delivery within our adult medicine practice. Additionally we are in the development phase of a major, multi-phased capital project entitled, “Towards a 21st Century Medical Home in Central Brooklyn.” This project includes:

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The Wellness Education for Achieving Lifelong Total Health (W.E.A.L.T.H.) Department Has Been Busy!

Facilitated Health Insurance
Seeking to make it even easier for community residents to access additional services close to home, BMS, in partnership with the Brooklyn Perinatal Network, has added a Facilitated Health Insurance Enroller, Raymond Jean-Baptiste, to its team.

Raymond, who may be reached Monday to Friday at (718) 345-5000 ext. 1161, is available to help Brooklyn residents with either recertification and/or filing new health insurance applications for: Medicaid, Child Health Plus & Family Health Plus.

To streamline the application process, residents need to gather identification such as proof of address, income, etc. for their appointment visit. Please tell a friend. Organizations that would like to schedule a health insurance information event may call us at (718) 345-5000.

BMS Brings Nutrition to Our Seniors
Building on the collaboration with the Rosetta Gaston Senior Center in Brownsville, BMS Family Health Center's outstanding nutritionist began providing free bi-weekly initial screenings to Rosetta Gaston members. The goal of these bi-weekly morning nutrition screenings is to provide early identification of health risks and simple lifestyle modification tips for prevention.

An initial assessment includes: food preparation demonstrations, Body Mass Index screenings, charts. To register for one of these free workshops, please call Mr. Dave Baldwin, Outreach Worker/Van Driver at (718) 345-5000 ext 1127.

BMS Mobile Access Cruiser
Bursting into 2009 with a “Yes we can!” attitude toward bringing health education to the people, outreach team members have established an exciting mobile street calendar of events in both East New York and Brownsville. Early feedback from community residents indicates that this is an effective method to:

A) Encourage people to proactively visit their doctor
B) Increase awareness of new BMS services and sites
C) Provide on-the-spot program enrollment & referrals

BMS Main Client Satisfaction Survey
Since BMS’ mission is to provide our clients with excellent clinical care and service, we conducted the BMS Main Client Satisfaction Survey to identify any opportunities for needed quality improvements or service adjustments. The survey questions were grouped in categories of: Environment, Waiting Time, Clinical Care, Payment and General Service Items.

We are pleased that the survey findings show that our clients continue to enjoy a level of satisfaction with Nurses, Doctors and our Dental Services. However, to ensure that the community consistently receives the highest quality of care, we are utilizing our clients’ feedback to work even harder and smarter to achieve and unsurpassed standard of excellence.

BMS...We’re Good for You...Your Family...Your Community!
THE BMS LIFE & WELLNESS CENTER; JOSEPH K. FRANCOIS PAVILION opened in May of 2006 at its 408 Rockaway Avenue location in Brownsville. It is a monument to the founding CEO, Mr. Francois’ dedication to improving the health status of the community’s residents. The three-story building also symbolizes the Health Center’s mission and campaign to address the numerous chronic illnesses that plague Central Brooklyn through innovative wellness initiatives aimed at addressing chronic illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and asthma.

The BMS Life & Wellness Center; Joseph K. Francois Pavilion currently houses a variety of wellness programs, including our Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) program, nutritional counseling, behavior modification/risk reduction counseling, HIV prevention, and individual case management.

For more information on The BMS Life and Wellness Center call 718-345-6366 or visit our website: www.bmsfhc.org.

President’s Message (continued from page 1)

♦ Opening and operating two newly renovated, state-of-the-art, NYS Article 28, Joint Commission accredited health care centers in East New York: One for comprehensive health care services and the other for general dentistry and oral surgery. The oral surgery center will include a dental assistant training program linked to W.A.T.C.H. High School.

♦ Renovating and modernizing our main clinical site and corporate headquarters in Brownsville, Brooklyn to optimize site capacity, provider productivity, patient care and patient flow, and operational efficiency.

♦ Completion of the transition to a paperless medical practice at all of our medical sites with the full adoption of Electronic Health Record (EHR).

♦ Achieving and maintaining our goal of providing excellent quality and customer service at all sites and across all services.

These projects will take us many steps forward in addressing and reducing health disparities in our communities. Our commitment and challenge is to accept nothing short of success in the pursuit of our goals and to remain relentlessly about our mission, to “provide and promote integrative high quality medical, dental, and social services to enable every individual and family in the communities it serve to achieve total health.”

Sincerely,

Harvey Lawrence,
President and CEO
Every month BMS recognizes outstanding employees through the Employee Recognition Program. Supervisors can nominate an employee for their outstanding services, then based on a point system a committee decides the Employee of the Month. The employee receives a small cash award and certificate. We would like to send out a Congratulations and Thank you for your hard work to the following employees of the month:

September 2008: Philip Henry, Maintenance Worker
October 2008: Petra Cerda, Medical Biller
November 2008: Barbara St. Surin, Patient Care Associate

Employee of the Year 2008!
Rosemarie Regis, MD, Pediatrician
1st runner up: Barbara St. Surin, Patient Care Associate
2nd runner up: Ashley Cornett, Patient Care Coordinator
Congratulations!!!!!!

BMS “Now More Than Ever...” 2009 Gala

On Tuesday, May 19, 2009 the Brownsville Community Development Corporation (BCDC) honored Maurice A. Reid, BCDC’s former President and Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Reid has been a healthcare innovator for more than 30 years, dedicating his life to addressing health and social service disparities in Central Brooklyn and East New York. The BMS “Now More Than Ever” Gala celebration honored his service as a trailblazer in primary and preventative care to the community’s most underserved and under-represented residents.

Apropos of Mr. Reid’s commitment to BCDC and the communities we serve, the event also honored Allen Finkelstein, DDS, Chief Dental Officer of AmeriChoice/UHG, “the nation’s premier provider of high quality, personalized public sector and health care programs” and Steve Kess, Vice President, Global Professional Relations for Henry Schein, Inc., “the largest distributor of healthcare products and services to office-based practitioners in the combined North American and European markets.” These gentlemen, both born and raised in Brooklyn, New York continue to serve their home town in a variety of ways. Their whole-hearted support of the BMS Dental Expansion project, scheduled to open later this year, WATCH High School (The World Academy for Total Community Health), a health-themed High School in which BMS is the lead community partner, and BMS’ upcoming Dental Assistant Training Program, has for the past 3 years been vocal, visible, and tangible. It is due in large part to their support that these programs are now viable projects.

“Now More Than Ever”, in this time of unprecedented, historical change, these three men stand out amongst their peers for the work that they’ve done and continue to do. The BMS “Now More Than Ever” Gala celebration took place on Tuesday, May 19, 2009, 6:30pm-9:30pm, at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, in Brooklyn, New York, over 250 guests were in attendance, including a surprise appearance by the Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz.

Former BMS President and CEO, Maurice A. Reid was presented a Proclamation by the Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz. (from left to right) Harvey Lawrence, Maurice A. Reid, Marty Markowitz, and Paul F. Chandler
WATCH High School receives grant from New Visions to implement a pilot Pre-Nursing Course in Partnership with SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

The proposed pilot is aimed at increasing students’ interest in and preparation for a career in the Nursing field, a rapidly growing employment sector. The program will provide 20 students with clinical exposure at SUNY Downstate in conjunction with a school-based Introduction to Nursing Careers and Workforce and Career skills Development classes. Students who successfully complete the program will be targeted for application to Health and Hospitals’ corporation CEO Nursing program which offers four year scholarships in nursing. Currently, five students from WATCH’s first graduating class are enrolled. WATCH will graduate its second senior class on June 26, 2009.

National Dental Association President Visits WATCH High School!

In December 2008, the President of the National Dental Association paid a visit to WATCH High School to learn more about the programs and newly developing curricula. The visit took place in collaboration with Henry Schein Corporation which has worked with BMS to bring to life the organizations’ shared vision of a Dental Assistance Training (DAT) Program at WATCH High School. The DAT Program will include school based classes with hands on learning at the pending BMS Dental@ Genesis site.

WATCH goes to Harvard!

Students from WATCH High School participated in the prestigious annual Harvard Model UN (HMUN) program held annually. WATCH student delegates joined over 2000 students from across the country and internationally (first year of participation for students represented Mozambique). “At HMUN, student delegates gain insight into the workings of the United Nations and the dynamics of international relations by assuming the roles of UN representatives and members of other international bodies and national cabinets. HMUN is an exciting opportunity for students to debate issues that confront world leaders and to draft resolutions in response to these global issues.”

“A” for Student Progress!

In its first ever report Card, WATCH High School received an A for student progress, a reflection of the school’s success in moving students entering below grade level in Math and English toward graduation in four years. On average WATCH students enter high school with less than 25% of students on grade level in MATH and English. WATCH produced an 80% graduation rate for its first class of graduates.

For information about WATCH High School please contact Renee D. Muir at rmuir@bmsfhc.org

Students attentively listening and take notes.

Students congregate between classes.

BMS...We’re Good for You...Your Family...Your Community!
BMS Highlights

♦ BMS’ own Medical Director, Dr. Adam Aponte (pictured left) was interviewed by Joe Torres on Tiempo regarding common winter illnesses children experience. Dr. Aponte discussed the various viral illnesses seen during the winter months including the common cold and strategies for prevention with emphasis on hand hygiene. Dr. Aponte also shared the importance of getting a yearly Influenza vaccine for all children 6 months and older and particularly for children with chronic health conditions such as Asthma.

♦ Congratulations to Dr. Marcellus Walker for receiving a Distinguished Service Award from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for his leadership and assistance in pioneering new approaches to serving the criminal justice population in Brooklyn.

♦ BMS is currently working with 5 NYU Masters in Global Public Health program students. The students are investigating the prevalence of diabetes in the BMS patient population and the quality of care given. The project titled, Brownsville Multi-Service Family Health Center, Health Disparities and Quality of Care, was completed with recommendations at the end of April 2009. Also, the students have submitted an abstract of the project to the American Public Health Association (APHA).

♦ BMS is also working with NYU’s nursing program to provide their senior students with exposure to community health. We currently have 6 students spread across four sites.