

A Message from Our CEO

Dear Friends of Down East Community,

Years ago my friend, mentor and boss, Jim Murphy, retired after 29 years at the helm of the hospital in Batavia, New York. As he walked out of the office he said I'm retiring just-in-time because Medicare is going to be reimbursing us at a fixed rate for each diagnosis - called diagnosis related groups or DRG's. That meant that every appendectomy, for example, was paid at the same amount regardless of how long the patient stayed in the hospital. So this was pretty radical stuff in terms of hospital reimbursement.

Now over 25 years later there is a whole lot of change coming all at once and if Jim were here today it would take me most of an afternoon to describe all that is happening. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA or ACA for short) or "ObamaCare" is coming into being - maybe. Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) are rapidly developing and, if you are involved in such a thing, the state of Maine might consider you a "Tier 1" hospital; whereas before, Tier 1 designation depended on a hospital's compliance with "core measures" and information from HCAHPS (patient satisfaction) scores.



So while all this complexity is going on, we need to think about what is best for the individual patient.

To add to that politicians are taking stands on certain medical procedures and who can marry whom. None of this was even discussed when Jim and I were in graduate school. But I like to distill the issues down to what really makes a difference for individuals. So while all this complexity is going on, we need to think about what is best for the individual patient. That is why I can find peace with ACOs and most of what is happening to healthcare right now. ACOs are essentially about controlling health care costs but, a big however, the ACOs are controlling costs by managing chronic disease and making sure that each patient is educated about their chronic illness and how to most effectively manage it. The patient becomes a partner in their care and accepts responsibility with the goal of reducing dependence on emergency departments, expensive treatments and long hospital stays. Care managers will look at individual care and also the overall performance of physician practices in managing chronic disease and in partnering with physicians and patients, care managers, looking at predetermined goals for health, will have an enormous impact on our healthcare experience.

Most of the distraction is just about dollars and who pays for what. Within hospitals and healthcare systems change is happening very rapidly even though ACOs are in their infancy and ObamaCare is mostly still in the future. If we stay focused on what patients really need and ignore the divisive rhetoric from our state and national capitals, there is good, real and fundamental change that creates incentives to keep each of us as healthy as we can be. How great is that!

With best regards always,

Douglas T. Jones, FACHE
President & CEO

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Header photo: Monica Elliot is the owner of Monica's Chocolates in Lubec.

Advancements in Coordinating Your Care

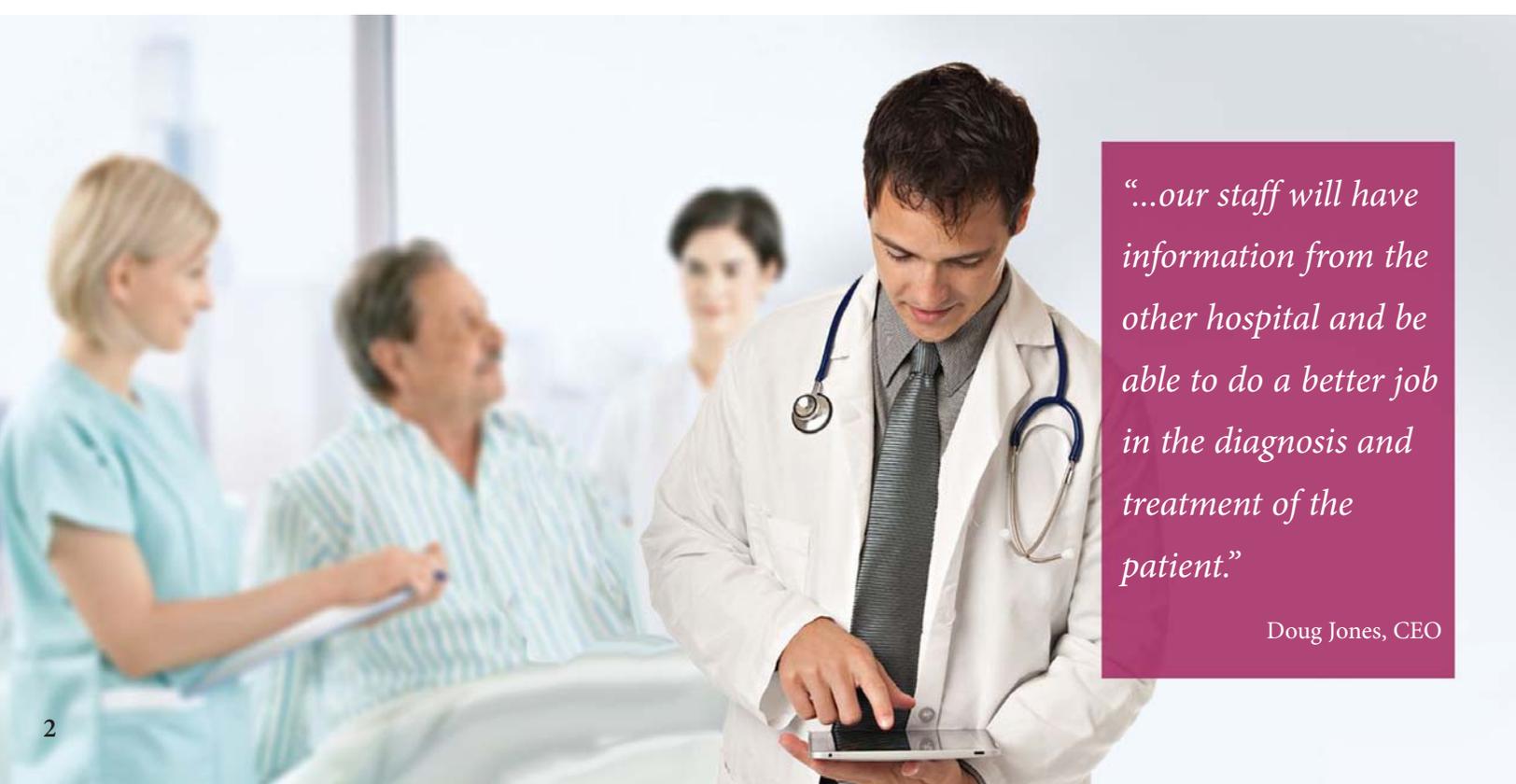
Down East Community went live with HealthInfoNet, a statewide health information exchange, on September 4, 2012, in a "View Only" mode. This exchange is an independent, Maine-based, nonprofit organization operating a secure computer system that will help us share important patient information like drug allergies, prescriptions, diagnoses, and lab and test results with other healthcare providers across the state. View Only means that we will be able to access information from other providers only. We will be uploading our health information in the fall.

"Linking information from separate healthcare sites to a single, electronic patient health record will give clinical staff the information they need to make the best decisions possible when treating our patients. For example, if a patient is treated at another hospital and later that day they arrive in our emergency department, our staff will have information from the other hospital and be able to do a better job in the diagnosis and treatment of the patient." stated CEO Doug Jones.

Providers have always shared information with other providers when necessary to support your care; this system makes it easier, faster, and more secure. Although we believe this program is very beneficial to patients, some may not want to participate. Participation is voluntary and if a patient wishes to not participate or "opt-out" they can do this online, by calling HealthInfoNet or by completing an opt-out form at any registration/Patient Access location.

BENEFITS TO YOU

- Having this access helps us work more closely with your other providers, make better decisions about your care, and reduces the chance of medical errors.
- Research has shown that using a system like this will help improve care, quality, and safety.
- HealthInfoNet helps prevent the spread of disease through faster reporting of health threats to the Maine CDC.
- Fewer medical errors
- Improved patient safety
- Better patient health outcomes
- Fewer repeat tests and procedures
- Less paperwork for you and your caregivers
- Makes managing your care easier
- Reduces healthcare costs

A photograph of a male doctor in a white lab coat and stethoscope, looking down at a tablet computer. In the background, a nurse in blue scrubs is talking to a patient in a hospital bed, and another person is visible in the distance. The scene is set in a bright, clinical environment.

"...our staff will have information from the other hospital and be able to do a better job in the diagnosis and treatment of the patient."

Doug Jones, CEO

HealthInfoNet follows the highest information security standards available.

- Information is always encrypted and sent over a private network, not connected to the Internet, when shared between HealthInfoNet and caregivers participating in the system.
- Only authorized caregivers with correct identification and passwords see your information in the system. Employers, insurance companies, and the government cannot.
- Information that identifies you won't be sold, and your name won't be added to any mailing list.
- The system keeps track of everyone who views your record, including what parts they look at and when they look at it. You can request a report of this information by filling out the form at www.hinfo.net.org/audit or by calling 866-592-4352.
- Before a caregiver can view your record, they have to confirm they are involved in your care and have a need to see your information. This is recorded in the system.

Included in your HealthInfoNet record:

- Medicines (prescriptions), allergies, lab and test results, image reports, conditions, diagnoses, or health problems from your participating caregivers.
- Your name, birth date, address, sex, phone number, and social security number (if provided to your caregiver) to make sure your health information is entered into the correct record.

Not Included in HealthInfoNet:

- Information created by a substance abuse facility or a licensed mental health provider.
- HIV diagnoses and results of HIV tests.



Down East Community Welcomes ENT Specialist Dr. Thomas Holzen

Down East Community is 100% committed to delivering the healthcare services that match the needs of Washington County.

The physician practice and surgery departments are pleased to welcome board certified Otolaryngologist Dr. Thomas Holzen who serves our community as an extended locum Ear, Nose and Throat physician. Before coming to the area, he had his own full-time practice in Nashville, Tennessee for 32 years. His undergraduate studies were completed at Yale University and his medical degree obtained from Tufts University in Boston. Further residency training was completed at the University of Texas and Vanderbilt. Dr. Holzen also finished a fellowship in facial plastics while in Alabama.

Down East Community is grateful to have Dr. Holzen join the team in his specialized service. He offers exceptional skills and knowledge from many years of being in private full-time ENT practice. He appreciates the atmosphere at Down East Community Hospital and looks forward to serving the community. Dr. Holzen enjoys playing bluegrass guitar as well as listening to bluegrass and blues music.

To make an appointment with Dr. Holzen, call 255-5600.

Otolaryngologists, commonly referred to as Ear Nose & Throat doctors, are physicians trained in the medical and surgical treatment of diseases and disorders of the ear, nose, & throat.

Wellness Incentive Saves Lives

Earlier this year our hospital and upper management decided to institute a wellness incentive program. I joined because of the cost factor, because it had been a long time since I had a good thorough checkup, and because my husband and I wanted to quit smoking. I thought it would be a great initiative for me and would give me a good incentive to do those things.

In mid-March, I began the wellness program by having a thorough physical. Because of my family history, my doctor went ahead and ordered an EKG and that EKG found a lot of abnormalities. That is when I found out there was something wrong.....and there was plenty wrong. The diagnosis was cardiomyopathy and congestive heart failure. Cardiomyopathy, is a disease of the heart muscle, primarily affects the left ventricle, which is the main pumping chamber of the heart. The disease is often associated with inadequate heart pumping and other heart function abnormalities. Cardiomyopathy is not common (affecting about 50,000 persons in the United States) but it can be severely disabling or fatal. Congestive Heart Failure, means your heart can't pump enough blood to meet your body's needs.

My ejection fraction was only 10%. With normal range being 60 to 75%, I feel there was a lot of divine intervention because I was still alive and breathing at 10%! If this condition had not been found through my health screening for the wellness program, I would have died. I still get emotional about this even though I try very hard not to. I've never been sick. I had no symptoms at all except GERD.

The day I ended up in the hospital I had GERD so bad. I first called my doctor and told her that I was going to the ER and she said please do. Of course I went to our emergency room first. During my acute stage, I came in contact with almost every department. Everyone here is so incredible!

When I returned home from the hospital where I had my surgery, I thought I was going home to die until I received a telephone call from Richard Yensan, the Respiratory Therapist in the Cardiac Rehabilitation Department at Down East Community Hospital. Richard told me that you need to get in here and start cardiac rehabilitation. He gave me so much hope that I got on the phone and told my whole family "I can go to Rehab". I did the whole program and finished in September and I have improved 20%. I highly recommend this program and just cannot put into words how important it was for me. It is as much an emotional healing as a physical one. I'm signing up for the next stage so I can continue with that program and continue to improve.

I am so thankful to the people who got our wellness program started because I truly do feel like it saved my life. I hope that the majority of the Down East Community employees took advantage of the added opportunity to take care of themselves.

I give our senior management team all the credit for starting this program for our hospital....for us.



"I am so thankful to the people who got our wellness program started. I truly do feel like it saved my life."

Pets Keep Me Well

Greetings, my name is Ann Alley and I work in Physician Billing. I sit at a desk for 8 hours a day. Also, I am 7 months pregnant. I have a family history for diabetes and have worked hard to keep my weight down and blood sugar under control. Since 2003, I have been very successful and haven't had to be on any medications.

Since I became pregnant, my risk for gestational diabetes has been a concern of mine and of my OB physician. So far I have maintained a healthy pregnancy weight and have gained normally without any signs of gestational diabetes. My glucose has been tested at normal levels all through my pregnancy.

Having a desk job makes it hard to stay active during the day so I contribute my healthy weight and being medication free to my home life. I have quite the ark at my house with 2 dogs, 3 cats, and 5 horses. They keep me moving and don't give me the chance to become

TREK

*Doing the Trek was like
doing my own personal
Tour de France!*



I used to race triathlons as a way to diffuse the stressors I encountered as I moved through my professional and private life. The endorphins released are magnificent! I moved to Maine almost two years ago and realized I had no desire whatsoever to swim with a wetsuit! So, I found myself looking for a new outlet. Voila! The Trek Across Maine. The Trek is a 3-day, 180-mile bicycle ride across the western part of Maine from Sunday River to Belfast. It is the primary fundraising effort to benefit the American Lung Association of Maine. *Perfect!* I especially love the idea of combining the personal benefits of riding with community service. So, I signed up in February and began my slow trudge into fitness in the basement – riding the “road to nowhere” on my trainer. A few good weather days and it wasn’t long before I daydreamed of riding outside.

On my first venture outdoors, I took a “digger” (a comical result of trying to sing and peddle at the same time) and ended up with lots of scrapes, bruises and blood. *I was not deterred!* After a few weeks of healing and weather related issues, I was back out on the road building myself up to the daily ride length of ~60 miles/day.

In the meantime, I needed to fundraise. Participants pay an entry fee of \$55, but are also required to raise a minimum of \$500 for the cause. I talked it over with Janet Monaghan, Nutrition Service Director, and she agreed to help me sponsor a ‘Celebrity Chef’ event at the Skylight Café. I would cook a meal for those interested with suggested donations and all the proceeds (minus expenses) would be for the event. We planned a ham dinner with apple crisp for desert. *Yum!* It was a huge success. Lots of folks came to eat and show their support. It is so wonderful to work with such great people.

Before the luncheon event, the laboratory group came together during National Laboratory Week and raised money to support my Trek as a way to say thanks. Again, such great support! All combined, I was able to raise over \$800! All that remained was to concentrate on my training!

Doing the Trek was like doing my own personal Tour de France! Where else could you find yourself cruising down a hill going 35 mph followed almost immediately by going up the other side at 4 mph! Or, where else could you hear ‘On your left’ about a million times!

We rode 70 miles on Friday, 58 miles on Saturday and 47 miles on Sunday.

I had my own personal support vehicle who followed along and made sure I ate and drank sufficiently so I wouldn’t bonk!

Amazingly, when it came to the end, I found myself wanting to start all over again! Who cares about the ever increasing chaffing or the aching legs, or the sunburn. I am ready! Care to join me next year?

a lazy, pregnant, couch potato. I know that my pets are waiting for my attention when I get home from work (there have been a few days that my husband had to tend to them for me while I rested and put my feet up).

In the evenings, my pets keep me physical for 2-3 hours. I do ground work exercises with my horses and play fetch with my dogs. Mentally, I can rest and release stress through brushing and caring for them. Seeing them healthy, makes me happy! It is what I enjoy and it keeps me well.

*Seeing them healthy,
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New Patient Menu at Down East Community Hospital

Just over one year ago Denise Harris MS RD LD, Wendy Candelmo CDM Director of Nutrition Services at the MVH and Janet Monaghan DTR/L, CDM Nutrition Services Manager of Down East Community Hospital, began work on developing a new patient menu for Down East Community Hospital patients.

They took on this enormous project because Patient Satisfaction scores had not been favorable and they were hearing from patients (as well as employees) that the patient population was generally unhappy with the choices and quality of the food. In May of 2011 Joanne Flemming RN headed up a Patient Shadowing initiative that was intended to follow a patient through his/her entire experience at our hospital. Realizing that would be a huge undertaking, it was decided to begin with the meal service. The *shadow's* job was to ask to enter the patient room just prior to meal service and explain their presence and purpose of the experience, then begin the process with pre-meal questions and follow through the entire meal with additional questions. These questions ranged from asking if they were offered to wash up prior to the meal to specific questions about the food and food staff. (*The shadows were from our Volunteer Department*).

"Patients have been very positive about the menu changes. It is very rewarding to know that patients are enjoying their meals"
 ~DEC Nutrition Manager Janet Monaghan

l to r: Wendy Candelmo, Denise Harris, Janet Monaghan

In June of 2011 a team comprised of folks from both Down East Community Hospital and Maine Veteran's Home met to determine the areas of improvement necessary to increase patient satisfaction and found that many were related to the menu/meal system. Shortly after, the team began meeting to start the menu developing process. Many of the items used on the new menu were from suggestions made by both patients and DEC and MVH employees. The menu was developed to meet criteria recommended by the American Heart Association and is suitable for the Regular, No Added Salt, 2 gram Sodium, Heart Healthy and Diabetic Diets. Each item was analyzed and approved by, Consulting Dietitian, Denise Harris. Patients will find heart and salt shaker symbols used to identify the healthiest food choices for reducing sodium and promoting heart health. Also, trailing each food choice there is a number which indicates the number of carbohydrates per food choice for use in Insulin dosing and controlling blood sugars for our Diabetic patients.

"Patients have been very positive about the menu changes. It is very rewarding to know that patients are enjoying their meals", stated DEC Nutrition Manager Janet Monaghan. Any change is a work in progress and we appreciate any feedback we may receive. **Your feedback is welcome by emailing jmonaghan@dech.org.**



Breast Cancer Awareness (Take Care of You)

The key to mammography screening is that it be done routinely.

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Women's Center and Imaging Department at Down East Community wishes to remind all women that early detection is the best defense against breast cancer. The key to mammography screening is that it be done routinely – once is not enough.

The American Cancer Society recommends that all women receive a baseline mammogram between the ages of 35 and 39 and annually after the age of 40. Men, especially those with a family history of male breast cancer, should consider regularly scheduled exams.

If you haven't had a mammogram during the past year, why not take this opportunity to schedule an appointment during Breast Cancer Awareness Month by calling the outpatient scheduler at 255-0474.

in the Community

Baby Reunion

The third annual Down East Community Hospital Baby reunion was held on July 21 for the babies born from January 2009 through June 2012. Twenty one babies came to the reunion and enjoyed the festivities with parents, siblings, and grandparents. OB/GYN Kara Dwight, DO and Alf Wakeman, PA-C (with lambs) were on hand to visit with the families. A good time was had by all and many received fun door prizes.



Blueberry Festival

First Aid Not Just for People
Down East Community Hospital sponsored the First Aid Station at the Machias Wild Blueberry Festival again this year. Nurses and staff were on hand for any emergency care needs. A special cantina was available for any hot and thirsty canine friends who attended the festival.



Pleasant Point Health Fair

RN's Rob Janssen and Desiree Bassett attended the Pleasant Point Health Fair to provide free blood pressure screenings and share information on the many services offered at Down East Community.



Annual Health Fair

Down East Community Hospital's 6th Annual Health Fair will be held on October 16 at the Lee Pellon Center in Machias located across the street from Helen's Restaurant. Free flu shots and blood pressure screenings will be available. Various agencies in the area will be invited to provide information on the services they provide to the community and their will be informational tables on the many services offered by Down East Community. Please check our website at www.dech.org or call Julie Hixson at 255-0244 for more information.



Dental Clinic

The Washington County Children's Program (WCCP) is thrilled to announce the return of the New York University College of Dentistry (NYUCD) Dental Outreach Program to Machias, offering dental care to families who live in Washington County. The NYUCD team will provide dental services at the Lee Pellon Event Center in Machias on November 5 -10, 2012. Children will receive complete care. Adults will be offered emergency dental care on a walk-in basis. For more information contact Teresa Alley at WCCP at 255-3426, www.wccp.net.

November 2012 will be NYUCD's fifth trip to Maine. During the past four programs, more than 3,032 dental visits were offered. Over 90% of children completed all the dental care they needed. Hundreds of adults with serious dental emergencies received compassionate care.

"Thanks to all those who make this possible - Henry Schein Cares, Delta Dental Plans of Maine, Caring Hands of Maine, Washington Hancock Community Agency, and Down East Community Hospital with special thanks to Gloria Woodward for the hours spent sterilizing our equipment."
Teresa Alley, WCCP.



Calendar of Events



Support Groups & Classes

Maine Families Playgroup

October 17 11am
November 7 and 21 11am
December 5 and 19 11am

The Maine Families Playgroup is held at Community of Christ Church in Jonesport; this free parent/child playgroup meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month. It is for children ages 0 – 3 (siblings welcome!). **For more information, call Anneke Waag at 255-0481.**

Childbirth Classes

Nov 10
Jan 12, 2013
Mar 9, 2013

Held at 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. **For more information or to register, call Anneke Waag at 255-0481.**

Events



Light A Life - December 10 at 5pm

Join us at Down East Community Hospital on December 10 for the annual *Light A Life* celebration. This celebration, that has been a tradition at Down East Community for well over 20 years, gives us the opportunity to remember loved ones and celebrate life. 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.

Come enjoy a down home holiday celebration and join in the *Sing A Long* with hospital staff and guests, have a visit with Santa and his elf, and enjoy homemade holiday treats made by the Hospital Auxiliary.

Auxiliary Book Fair

October 19 - 20

Please save the date for the Down East Community Hospital Auxiliary's Annual Book Fair at Centre Street Church. Book donations are now being accepted at the registration desk at Down East Community Hospital.

Auxiliary Holiday Craft Fair

December 1

The annual DECH Auxiliary Holiday Craft Fair will be held on Saturday, December 1st at the Rose M. Gaffney School in Machias. Vendors from last year's craft fair will receive applications for this year's event. New vendors interested in this year's craft fair should contact Bessie Schoppee at 434-2591. *Why fight the crowds in Bangor or Ellsworth when you can find unique and creative gifts at the Holiday Craft Fair?*



Good Medicine™

Good Medicine is published quarterly for Down East Community Hospital. We welcome comments and suggestions from readers. The information contained herein is intended to educate the community about subjects pertinent to their health, not as a substitute for consultation with a physician.

Douglas T. Jones, Chief Executive Officer
Julie Hixson, Executive Assistant and Public Relations Manager

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For more information: call **Down East Community Hospital** at 207-255-3356, FAX 207-255-0427 or write 11 Hospital Drive, Machias, Maine 04654, Attn: Julie Hixson. www.dech.org

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