



A Message from Our CEO

Dear Friends of Down East Community,

I think it is important to know about the many ways that we reach out to centers of excellence in the provision of care to our patients and in the training of our staff. I was thinking about this recently and reflecting on how healthcare is changing because of new technology.

In this edition of Good Medicine we share with you the newly established Emergency Department telemedicine (interactive, real-time audio and visual) linkage with Eastern Maine Medical Center. This connection provides the ability to obtain immediate consultation for neurology, traumatic injuries and complex pediatric emergencies. It is anticipated that such consultations will be valuable second opinions and also provide, for patients who are being transferred, physician orders that might have been postponed until the patient arrives in Bangor. Also, for those patients who are being transferred, this linkage gives the receiving hospital a much better sense of the condition of a patient before their arrival - possibly allowing better preparation for such patients.

Down East Community also utilizes the vRad (formerly Nighthawk) radiologist services when our radiologists are unavailable. Many of these practitioners are in Australia so that their consultations are provided by someone who is awake and active as opposed to awakening a sleepy physician who may have been awakened previously many times during the night.

Our pharmacy is open during regular office hours and a pharmacist is routinely available to consult with our medical staff. When he is not in the hospital, we contract with Rx Remote Solutions to ensure that physician orders are reviewed and verified for accuracy and that a pharmacist is available to provide consultation when needed.

We are currently exploring the possibility of providing tele-ICU for our inpatient unit and tele-psychiatry for our physician practices. These services are all designed to strengthen care provided locally to our patients and to ensure that best practices are routinely followed. Many of our physicians use UpToDate, Inc., which is an evidence-based, comprehensive, fully referenced resource that is accessible on the Internet or through an app on a physician's I-phone. Nursing skills references are available to all of our nurses on the Internet through Mosby's Nursing Skills. Although desk references and texts are readily available, authoritative Internet and telemedicine resources are transforming medical care and ensuring that healthcare workers anywhere have access to the very latest and best information to benefit our patients.

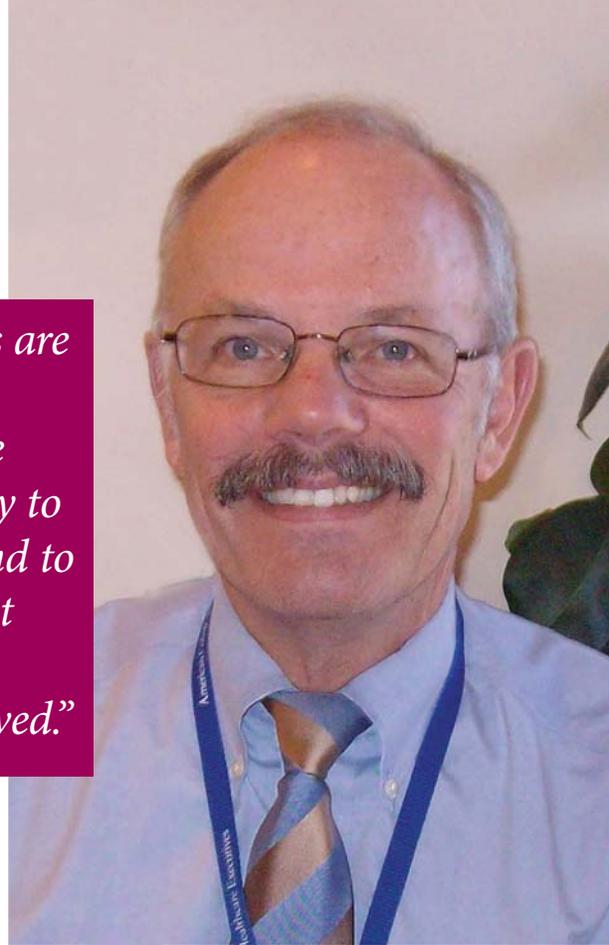
These and other resources help us to ensure that best practices are used on behalf of our patients. Telemedicine is expensive technology but all of these resources are worthwhile to ensure that Washington County medicine is Good Medicine!

With best regards always,



Douglas T. Jones, FACHE
President & CEO

“These services are all designed to strengthen care provided locally to our patients and to ensure that best practices are routinely followed.”



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Orthopedic Surgeon for our Community

Down East Community is pleased to welcome board-certified Orthopedic Surgeon Thomas Crowe, M.D., to our medical staff. Dr. Crowe comes to us from Maine Coast Memorial Hospital in Ellsworth where he has practiced since 1993.

Dr. Crowe completed his Medical Doctorate Degree at the University of Cincinnati in Ohio and completed his residency in 1993 at the same university. Dr. Crowe has been certified with the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery since 1995.

Dr. Crowe treats bone and joint problems of the upper and lower extremities. Common conditions he treats include athletic injuries, fractures, arthritis and cumulative trauma problems such as bursitis, tendonitis, carpal tunnel and other nerve compression syndromes. Commonly performed surgeries are total reconstruction of knee, hip, and shoulder, and many other types of bone and soft tissue procedures. Many orthopedic conditions can be treated non-operatively. Even operative care can be done with less invasive techniques such as arthroscopic surgery. *Since arthroscopic surgery incisions are small, the patient benefits by having a faster healing time and less chance of complications such as infection.*

Dr. Crowe welcomes new patients. His office is located on the Hospital campus beside the Robertson building. For an appointment call 255-0404.

Surgical Procedure a Remarkable “First” for State

Recently, the Down East Community Hospital Surgery Department accomplished a remarkable “first” for the state of Maine. A patient undergoing a left bowel resection had 10 inches of their large intestine removed through a one and a quarter inch incision around their umbilicus (belly button). Under the exceptional surgical skill of Aziz Massaad, MD the patient underwent a single incision laparoscopic left colectomy for a tumor in the portion of their intestine nearest to the spleen. Down East Community Hospital is the first hospital in the state of Maine to perform successfully a single incision laparoscopic bowel resection.



Use of traditional laparoscopy for a colectomy incorporates two to four small incisions on the abdomen and a slightly larger incision in the middle to remove the bowel. Using the newer technology of a specialized port with wound retraction (Applied Medical) gives the patient one small incision the length of a quarter. This leads to decreased risk of wound infection as well as less discomfort. As a result, post-operative recovery time is decreased and with fewer complications, patients can expect to leave the hospital in three to five days.

The combination of an exceptional surgeon, excellent surgical staff, and advanced laparoscopic technology means that eastern Maine residents can continue to expect the best in their health care. At Down East Community Hospital, Dr. Massaad performs single incision laparoscopic surgery to remove the gall bladder, appendix and diseased portions of the colon for patients whose medical history meets the criteria. The department intends to increase the use of this beneficial technology, setting the standard for exceptional surgical care in the state of Maine.

“The combination of an exceptional surgeon, excellent surgical staff, and advanced laparoscopic technology means that eastern Maine residents can continue to expect the best in their health care at Down East Community Hospital.”

Telemedicine Debuts in Our Emergency Department

Equipment made available through a grant awarded to Eastern Maine Medical Center has been installed in Down East Community's Emergency Department and was operational in December. Physicians and nurses were trained to use this valuable technology that provides real-time audio and video communications with sub specialists at Eastern Maine. The technology allows practitioners at Eastern Maine to converse with caregivers and patients in our emergency department with physicians who have been individually credentialed to provide services in this manner.

Currently, neurology (including stroke care), intensive pediatric services, and trauma medicine will be available. In addition, the results of our laboratory work, x-rays and other documentation will all be accessible to Eastern Maine consultants. Whether or not the patient is transferred to another facility, telemedicine ensures that a second opinion is easily obtained and, for those patients who are transferred, the sub specialist's orders are more likely to be implemented prior to transfer instead of waiting for the patient to arrive in Bangor. With this technology the receiving hospital is also more likely to be fully prepared with the resources necessary to provide the very best care. According to Lisa Torraca, MD, Chief of Emergency Medicine at Down East Community, "Telemedicine is becoming common in rural medicine applications and we are privileged to be a partner with Eastern Maine Medical Center when responding to the needs of our friends and neighbors here in Washington County."



Bringing Our Best for Our Patients

The Lab at Down East Community recently had their CLIA inspection. This inspection focused more on outcomes as opposed to processes. CMS's objectives in developing an outcome-oriented survey process was to not only determine a laboratory's regulatory compliance but to assist laboratories in improving patient care by emphasizing those aspects that have a direct impact on the laboratory's overall test performance.



Down East Community's Mammography Department had a successful MQSA inspection. The inspection takes a comprehensive look at personnel qualifications, equipment function, medical outcomes and analysis and reviews policies and quality control. This is the highest level of mandatory State and Federal compliance.

The Imaging and the Laboratory inspections were both extremely successful and neither department were cited for deficiencies! This is a great accomplishment and speaks to the hard work and dedication, not only of the entire staff within these departments, but of all those who support us in the performance of our duties.

Sunrise Care Facility

Sunrise Care Facility received an Excellence in Action award from My InnerView, the nation's leading provider of performance-improvement solutions for the senior care profession. The 2010-2011 award recognizes 593 nursing homes that have made a commitment to continuous quality improvement and have successfully made quality a priority to better serve the needs of their customers and employees.

Sunrise was one out of only 13 facilities chosen in Maine.

Photo l to r: Jackie Peabody, CNA, resident Barbara Meeks, Shona Mitchell, CNA.



What is Nuclear Medicine?



Hello, I am Liz Clark, CNMT at Down East Community Hospital. I've been asked this question many times during the 3+ decades of performing nuclear medicine procedures. Nuclear Medicine is a medical specialty that is used to diagnose, treat diseases, and provide medical information. These procedures often identify abnormalities very early in the progression of disease - long before some medical problems are apparent with other diagnostic tests.

Nuclear Medicine refers to a medicine, the pharmaceutical, which is attached to a small amount of radioactive tag. This radiopharmaceutical, or radiotracer, is specific for each condition to be diagnosed or treated. Basically, I introduce the radiotracer into the patient and track where, when, and how the tracer is utilized within the body. We are so fortunate to have a state of the art gamma camera system, the Infinia Hawkeye, to detect the radiotracer and create images. We also have a skilled radiologist, Dr. Madigan, to interpret the medical information for your physician, and for you.

Let's look at one of many types of nuclear medicine procedures - bone scintigraphy (bone scan). Bone scintigraphy is one of the most frequently performed of all radionuclide procedures. Bone scans are relatively inexpensive, exquisitely sensitive, and invaluable in the diagnostic evaluation of numerous pathologic conditions. The radiotracer (tagged diphosphonates) accumulate rapidly in bone. The degree of radiotracer uptake depends primarily on 2 factors: blood flow and the rate of new bone formation.

Here is one story from our patient archives - let's call him Joe. Joe was wrestling around with some power equipment one weekend then later had pain in his left chest area. The more he moved the worse the pain felt. It even hurt to breathe. His doctor knew that even when radiologic findings are negative, a bone scan can often detect a traumatic process so Joe came in for a bone scan.

Picture 1: The first image is the right side of Joe's chest

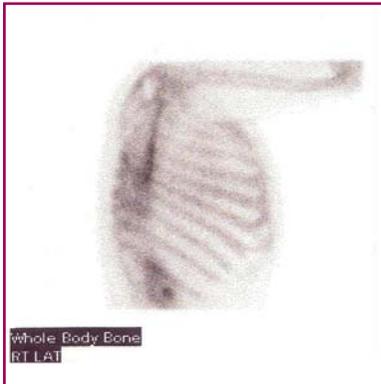
Picture 2: Then the image of the left side of Joe's chest
It seems Joe's wrestling with that power equipment cracked a few ribs! No wonder it hurt to breathe.

Picture 3: Joe's chest is healing well now.

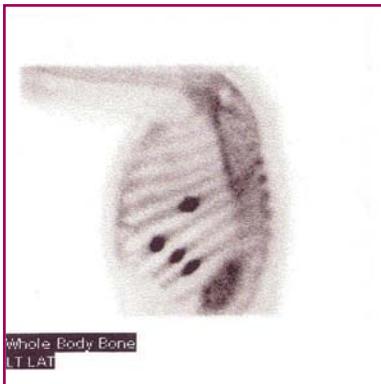
Nuclear Medicine helps to hunt down injuries and disease by tracking a radiotracer within your body. It can discover how long a tagged meal sits in your stomach, whether your heart muscle has adequate blood flow, if your thyroid is actually doing its job, or if your gallbladder is the victim or the perpetrator causing abdominal pain. Many more procedures are available.

I encourage anyone who is having a nuclear medicine procedure and who has questions to give me a call at 255-0415.

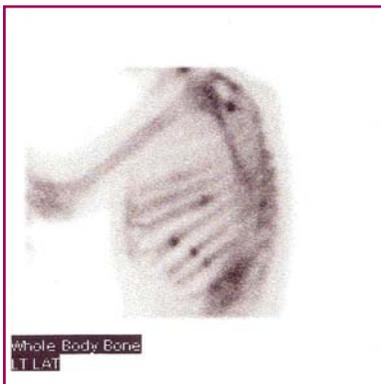
Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Down East Community is committed to keeping our patients and staff safe at all times. To avoid staff injury and to provide a safer more comfortable “move” for patients, our staff is to avoid manually lifting and repositioning patients by using our safety equipment while assisting patients when they walk and while transferring patients from stretcher to stretcher, bed to wheelchair or on and off the commode.

Down East Community, with grant money from our worker compensation company, Synernet, has purchased equipment for personnel to mechanically lift and transfer patients who need help moving. The Ergonomic Committee at Down East Community, which is comprised of staff from nursing, rehabilitation staff and the hospital’s safety officer, worked with departments to decide which equipment was appropriate for our facility.

The equipment that is now at the hospital include several portable total body lifts and a ceiling lift that can safely help staff lift patients out of bed or reposition them in bed if they are unable to assist themselves. In the Emergency Department we now have a Hover Matt which is a type of air mattress that staff can safely move a patient from stretcher to stretcher or from stretcher to an exam table. We also have **One Way Slides**, **Phil-e-slides**, **SLIPP**, and **Smooth Mover**, which help to position patients more comfortably in bed, to move them from a bed to a stretcher or from a bed to a chair.

How can you help your caregiver care for you? Be cooperative when the staff is using this equipment to assist you. Ask questions and know that your health caregiver is concerned about your safety and is well-trained in operating the equipment.

Safety for Patients and Staff



HoverMatt: Used to move patients from stretcher to bed or treatment table such as Imaging tables, CT, MRI or X-ray.

Ceiling lift: Used to reposition patient in bed, lift a patient to change the linen, transfer from bed to stretcher or chair, or position an arm or leg for wound dressing or positioning.



All in One Sit to stand lift: Used with patients who are able to bear weight on their feet for transfers from bed to chair or return to bed.



Liko lift: Used to transfer patient from bed to chair or return to bed.



Special Blankets, Special People

Lisa Evers, pictured right, is a Ward Clerk on our inpatient floor at Down East Community. Lisa took a special interest in our patients with Alzheimer’s and took it upon herself to research what may comfort them during the very stressful time of being in a hospital with many unknown people coming and going.

She found that Alzheimer’s patients, and those with other forms of dementia, benefit greatly from tactile sensory stimulation (sense of touch as one example) as their brains encounter increasing difficulty understanding input from the outer world. Tactile sensory stimulation helps improve Alzheimer’s patients’ concentration and alertness. It also benefits the caregivers of Alzheimer’s patients by allowing the patients to relax and communicate better with their caregivers.

Lisa now had an idea of what she could do to help the patients. She approached the Down East Community Auxiliary and asked if they would make some special blankets with different textures, buttons, and zippers for our patients with Alzheimer’s. As they often do, the Auxiliary rose to the occasion. They made and donated several beautiful blankets for the cause.



Support Group Down East Gluten-Free



l to r: Patti Sansing, Whole Life Market and Angela Fochesato, Down East Community.

Down East Community Hospital is excited to be co-hosting the Down East Area Celiac Sprue Support Group with the Whole Life Market. The Support Group is open to anyone who has been diagnosed with Celiac Sprue Disease, Gluten/Wheat Intolerance or for those who want to learn how to remove gluten from their diet. The group is open to newly diagnosed patients, veterans, children, families, parents, and friends who want to learn more information about gluten-free living.

The support group will meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:15 pm in the Down East Community Hospital Conference Room at 11 Hospital Drive, Machias. Attendees will share experiences, recipes and ideas on living gluten-free. Living gluten-free is not always easy. However with the help and support of each other, it can and will become more manageable.

Each member will receive a packet that provides basic information to help educate and prompt a better understanding on how to live with Celiac Disease and a gluten-free diet. The packet will include information on how and where to shop, tips on eating outside the home, baking delicious gluten-free food, and where to find gluten hidden in many foods.

For more information, please contact Angela Fochesato at 255-0225.

Biggest Loser Returns

Kick off your new year with the Biggest Loser Wellness competition!

On January 6th *Washington County: One Community*, A Healthy Maine Partnership (WC:OC's) Health & Wellness Committee and Down East Community will kick off the 2nd Annual *Biggest Loser Wellness Competition*. Individuals are asked to form teams of 2-10 people, which will be given a number of resources to help them become healthier. Last year over 500 residents signed up in more than 60 teams and lost over 2,000 pounds.

Can't find a team? Don't worry, we'll find one for you! The challenge will include weekly team fitness challenges and individual biggest loser winners. It's free to join and cash prizes will be awarded to the team that loses the largest percentage of weight and to the top 2 male and female individual Biggest Losers! The challenge will run for 12 weeks, all resources will be available on the WC: OC Biggest Loser Facebook page or via email. This competition is using honor system accountability.

Washington County: One Community still needs help with the sponsorship of this event. Businesses, organizations, or individuals can help make this year's competition an even bigger success by donating a monetary gift, salon services, water bottles, tee shirts, flowers, etc.

For more information on The Biggest Loser Wellness Competition please "friend" us on Facebook: WCOC Biggest Loser, email 2010biggestL@gmail.com or contact Angela Fochesato 255-0225, afoch@dech.org or Sara McConnell 255-3741, smcconnell@wc-oc.org.

in the Community

Annual Health Fair and Flu Shot Clinic

The Down East Community annual health fair and flu shot clinic took place on October 13 at the Lee Pellon Center. Over 800 adult flu shots and 180 pediatric flu shots were provided to our community free of charge. Informational booths were provided by 12 Down East Community Departments and by 15 local agencies.



Down East Hospice Volunteers of Washington County

Down East Hospice Volunteers of Washington County facilitated a training for new hospice volunteers using space graciously provided on the campus of Down East Community Hospital. We would like to thank all of the Down East Community staff who were presenters and provided informative, interesting, helpful and fun sessions for many of the sections of the hospice volunteer training. This training course was attended by new trainees and current volunteers.

For information about Down East Hospice - downeathospice@yahoo.com or 255-3356 ext. 324.

The new volunteers who completed this course are left to right: Chris Pierce from Lubec, Colleen McIntire from Wesley, Jennifer Jainer from Jonesboro, and Liz Mercer from Trecott.



Giving



Light A Life

The annual Light A Life celebration took place on December 13. All funds raised through the dedication of luminaria went to support the renovation of our palliative care room. This room is dedicated to the comfort and caring of patients in need of end of life care as well as for the comfort and support of their families. During Light A Life, we paid tribute to Joan Miller, RN. Joan has been a nurse at our facility for 40 years. She was chosen to be the honoree because she embodies the mission and vision of Down East Community. Thank you to all who donated to Light A Life.

For the Children



The employees at Down East Community helped provide a merrier Christmas for 52 area children in need through the Let's Have a Merrier Christmas program by providing presents for the children they picked from the Angel Tree.

Calendar of Events



Support Groups & Classes

Gastric Bypass Support Group

January 16th, February 6th and March 5th & 19th at 5pm at Down East Community Hospital.

Diabetes Support Group

Every 3rd Friday - Jan 20, Feb 17 and in March it will be on the fourth Friday March 23. 12pm to 1pm at the Women's Health Resource Library in Milbridge.

Maine Families Playgroup

1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month from 11am - 12pm at Community of Christ Church in Jonesport. New families are welcome (for babies and toddlers up to 3 years old).

Childbirth Classes

Maine Families is holding free Childbirth Classes for any expecting parent. The class will be held from 9am to 4 pm at Down East Community Hospital on Saturday, January 14 and Saturday, March 10. Call Jane Brissette at 255-0438 to sign up.

Look for more information coming soon about our Early Childhood Fair for families happening in March.

Celiac Support Group

The support group will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:15 pm in the Down East Community Hospital Conference Room. Attendees will share experiences, recipes and ideas on living gluten free. Living gluten-free is not always easy, however with the help and support of each other, it can and will become more manageable.

For more information, please contact Angela Fochesato at 255-0225.

Get Screened

Cervical cancer affects approximately 10,000 women in the United States each year. Cervical cancer is the second most common type of cancer for women worldwide, but because it develops over time, it is also one of the most preventable types of cancer. Deaths from cervical cancer in the United States continue to decline by approximately 2 percent a year. This decline is primarily due to the widespread use of the Pap test to detect cervical abnormalities and allow for early treatment. Most women who have abnormal cervical cell changes that progress to cervical cancer have never had a Pap test or have not had one in the previous three to five years.

Cancer of the cervix tends to occur during midlife. Half of the women diagnosed with the disease are between 35 and 55 years of age. It rarely affects women under age 20, and approximately 20 percent of diagnoses are made in women older than 65. For this reason, it is important for women to continue cervical cancer screening until at least the age of 70.

If you would like to schedule an appointment for a Pap test, please contact Dr. Inegbenijie or Dr. Dwight at the Down East Community Women's Center at 255-0400.



“Cervical cancer...is also one of the most preventable types of cancer.”

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.

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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

All information is intended for your general knowledge only and is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment.