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Dear Friends,

It has been a busy and exciting year and we look forward to our continued work together in 2020! We are thrilled by the unanimous appointment of **Assaad Sayah, MD**, as CHA's new chief executive officer. He is relentless in his pursuit of excellence and the highest quality of care, passionately committed to our mission and is a tremendous supporter of population health. I also want to take a moment to thank you for your sage counsel, input, and feedback on CHA services in all of our communities.

As many of you know, over the past few years we have worked closely with our elected officials, community partners, local stakeholders, patients and staff to match the needs of Somerville to CHA services in the community. Together, we were able to craft a "Partnering for a Healthy Somerville 2022" plan which is a summary for addressing the service gaps in four major areas: mental health and substance use treatment, urgent care and technology, and navigation and education. [View the Healthy Somerville 2022 plan here.](#)

The Plan includes the conversion of the Somerville Hospital Emergency Department (ED) into an urgent care center, increased primary care access at Assembly Row and a new health center in Union Square, renovation of the Central Street Care Center, a new pain management center at the Somerville Hospital campus, a Teen Health Center at the new Somerville High School, and ongoing collaboration with the City of Somerville to support its wellness agenda. The decision to convert the ED into an urgent care center is driven by changes in patient behavior and the utilization of the service, which has steadily dropped over the past decade. Shifting to urgent care fills a gap in care for under-served populations, offering a lower-cost option for patients who use the ED to address urgent health issues. **We will continue to welcome all patients regardless of their ability to pay.**

Construction is underway, and we are on target to open on **April 30**. Staff across CHA are working hard to ensure this transition is as smooth as possible, and communications to the public and external stakeholders are ongoing. Work is also underway to ensure we support patient safety following the conversion and educate our patients and community about the continuum of care at CHA and the benefits of the Urgent Care Center - but first, we must make sure the message of the Somerville Hospital ED closing is widespread. If you have any questions, concerns, or thoughts on this effort please do not hesitate to contact me - I want to hear from. I look forward to continuing to seek your advice and input to ensure a smooth process on this change and other work in the community. Thank you!

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### Staff Recognition

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**Philip Wang, MD, DrPH**, arrived at CHA in the fall as the new chief of psychiatry. Dr.

Wang is a nationally renowned administrator, researcher and educator whose career has been dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental illnesses.



A study published by **Stefanos Kales, MD, MPH**, chief of occupational and

environmental medicine, was the most viewed across the JAMA network of Journals in 2019. According to the study, push-up capacity might provide a quick assessment of future health among middle-aged men of health.



**Miriam Tepper, MD**, and **Michael Chalfin, MD**, from

the Department of Psychiatry, were promoted to assistant professor at Harvard Medical School.

Warm Regards,

Mary



Mary Cassesso  
President, CHA Foundation & Chief Community Officer  
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### Upcoming Events



#### Bike4Books Returns!

We are excited to announce that CHA's 15th annual Bike4Books Spin-A-Thon is Saturday, March 21, 2020. All proceeds from Bike4Books' four 1-hour sessions support Project READ, the CHA Department of Pediatrics literacy program that gives books to children visiting CHA for appointments.

[Click here to register today!](#)  
Contact **David Sternburg** at [dsternburg@challiance.org](mailto:dsternburg@challiance.org) or **Julia Saggese** at [jsaggese@challiance.org](mailto:jsaggese@challiance.org) with any questions.

### CHA in the News

18 CHA physicians were selected for [Boston magazine's](#) annual "Top Doctors" list. The magazine also showcased excellent detective work by **Lou Ann Bruno-Murtha, DO**, division chief of infectious diseases. Dr. Bruno Murtha [recounted an unusual case](#) of a rare bacterial infection.



A [WebMD](#) story on [new autism screening guidelines](#) issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics

included insight from **Greg Hagan, MD**, chief of pediatrics.



CHA dentist and teaching fellow **Alec Eidelman, DMD, MPH**, shared his expertise for a segment on vaping and oral

Somerville Hospital Campus

**EMERGENCY  
CARE  
CLOSING**

**APRIL 30**

**URGENT  
CARE  
OPENING**

Cambridge Health Alliance Care Changes, Caring Doesn't.

## Public Charge Rule Effective February 24



The federal government began implementing the public charge rule for green card and visa applications within the U.S. and at consular offices abroad on February 24.

The U.S. Supreme Court decided that the new policy can take effect nationwide while legal challenges move forward. Though the outcome of the court cases is unknown, the federal courts could ultimately find the public charge rule invalid and strike it down in the future.

In the meantime, implementation of the rule will make it more difficult for low and moderate-income immigrants to get a visa or initial green card. For some applicants, immigration officials look at whether a person is likely to use certain government aid in the future, including certain Medicaid, food stamps, and federal public housing. Most people who are subject to the regulation do not qualify for these benefits.

CHA is educating staff, patients, and the community in understanding and navigating this change. [Click here to see a set of resources available on the CHA website.](#)

## See, Test & Treat Saves Women's Lives

The See, Test & Treat event on **October 26** was a huge success! Over 160 volunteers and clinical staff came together to provide free pap smears, breast exams, mammograms, HPV and STI testing, and more for underserved women. In a single day, CHA saw nearly 80 patients, completed 53 paps, and performed 28 mammograms. Most of the women had no insurance and others had such limited insurance it created a barrier in the past for them to receive care.



## Care to the People!

CHA's new brand launched on October 29 in true CHA style! More than 100 CHA staff and providers braved the cool, misty weather to help clean up neighborhoods in Everett, Malden, Somerville and Cambridge. Celebrations were held across CHA to give everyone a chance to show how they bring Care to the People. Mayors from the cities of Everett, Somerville and Cambridge declared the day "CHA Cares Day" through official proclamations.



*Pictured: Claude Jacob, chief public health officer of the Cambridge Public Health Department, Josh Posner, chair, CHA Board of Trustees, former Cambridge Mayor Marc McGovern, CHA CEO Assaad Sayah, MD, Mary Cassesso, chief community officer and Cambridge City Manager Louis Depasquale.*

## Update on Sharing Learning on Emergency Department Access

Cambridge Health Alliance has taken promising steps to fulfill our commitment to share learning stemming from the tragic loss of Laura Levis. On February 7, CEO **Assaad Sayah, MD**, joined Laura's husband Peter DeMarco at the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association's (MHA) Mid-Winter Leadership Forum to share lessons learned with 350 hospital and healthcare leaders from across the state. A panel featuring **Christian Lanphere**, our director of safety and emergency management, and other hospital leaders then discussed the [statewide recommendations](#) from the MHA Emergency Department Access Working Group. CHA was instrumental in helping to create the MHA guidance, which has the potential for far-reaching impact.

health that aired on Boston's ABC affiliate [Channel 5](#).



Similarly, **Claude Jacob**, chief public health officer at the Cambridge Public Health Dept., was interviewed for a [Cambridge Chronicle](#) story about the risks of vaping.



**Elizabeth Gauferg, MD, MPH**, penned a commentary in

WBUR' [CommonHealth](#) blog discussing the implications of the #MeToo era on medical education.



A [New York Times](#) story exploring the benefits of probiotics featured insight from Somerville Hospital Primary Care physician **Pieter Cohen, MD**.



**Ana Progovac, PhD**, of CHA's Health Equity Research Lab, was featured in [Harvard Medicine](#) for her work focused on LGBTQ health equity.



CHA [won two categories](#) in the *Somerville Times* Readers Choice Awards for 2019! Best Medical Services went to the **CHA Broadway Care Center** and **Mary Hart** was named Best Nurse.



Photo courtesy of the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association.

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## Second Specialty Pharmacy Accreditation

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The Outpatient Pharmacy at CHA Cambridge Hospital has been granted full (3-year) accreditation for Specialty Pharmacy by the Accreditation Commission for Health Care. This accreditation follows initial recognition by the Utilization Review Accreditation Commission in February 2018. Dual accreditation is a major accomplishment for CHA as this makes us **only the second specialty pharmacy in Massachusetts to hold both.**



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## CHA Receives \$125K Grant from NE Patriots, NFL and American Cancer Society to Reduce Lung Cancer Deaths

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On November 21, a big crowd of staff, providers and members of the Board of Trustees gathered at CHA Everett Hospital to celebrate a grant awarded to CHA by the **American Cancer Society**, **National Football League** and the New England Patriots to address lung cancer mortality by increasing screenings and supporting smoking cessation. CHA will receive \$125,000 over a two-year period and the grant is one of eight awarded nationwide.



*Pictured is Kris Kim, executive vice president of the American Cancer Society, Mark Goldberg, MD, member of the Board of Directors of the American Cancer Society, Alexander White, MD, CHA's chief of pulmonary, critical care and sleep medicine, Josh Kraft, president of the Patriots Foundation, and Josh Posner, chair, CHA Board of Trustees.*

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## CHA PACE - New Name, Same Awesome Program!

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The Elder Service Plan (ESP) of Cambridge Health Alliance is now called CHA PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly). Rest assured, the program many of you have come to know and trust is still the same. CHA PACE serves more than 460 participants and their families and is one of eight PACE Centers in Massachusetts.

CHA PACE participants receive care from interdisciplinary teams in Cambridge and Malden. The care we provide is based on maintaining people's independence, dignity and health. Find out more about [CHA PACE](#) or call **617-575-5850**.

**New name. Same awesome program.**

**CHA PACE**

*(formerly CHA Elder Service Plan)*

**617-575-5850**

**CHA PACE**  
Cambridge Health Alliance

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## Photos - CHA in the Community

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### Malden Mayor and Staff Bring #CareToThePeople

Mayor Gary Christenson and Karen Colón Hayes, human service and community outreach director at the City of Malden, shared how they bring #CareToThePeople!



### Dental Services Conversation in Somerville

In January, CHA's Department of Community Health Improvement and Somerville Mayor Joseph Curtatone held a meeting with local dental providers. The conversation focused on ways local dentists can partner with CHA and the City to provide dental care to new immigrant students.



### CHA Advocates to Cover All Kids

Meredith Jones, LICSW, testified with State Representative Dave Rogers, the bill's House sponsor, and colleagues in support of H. 162, An Act to ensure equitable health coverage for children (known as the Cover All Kids bill).



**American Cancer Society's Making Strides Walk**

In September, the CHA "CHampion Team" walked in the American Cancer Society's Making Strides walk.



**New Interfaith Health Council**

CHA's Community Health Improvement department hosted its first Interfaith Health Council meeting with more than 20 faith-based leaders.



**CHA Revere Care Center Honored by Greater Boston Food Bank**

At its annual "Food is Medicine" event, the Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) honored the Revere Care Center with its Community Champion Food is Medicine Award and a \$5,000 grant. The award is given annually to a GBFB partner that is advancing the implementation of food as a health intervention.



### **Out of the Darkness Walk**

Staff from Inpatient Child/Adolescent Psychiatry participated in the Out of the Darkness Overnight Walk, sponsored by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.



### **Healthy Cooking Classes for Patients**

The CHA Clinical Dietitian Team taught free healthy nutrition and cooking classes in Cambridge and Everett.



**Cultural Humility Train-the-Trainer**

CHA staff participated in a Cultural Humility Train-the-Trainer workshop in October, sponsored by the CHNA17.



**Volunteer Health Advisor Celebration**

CHA kicked off the holiday season by celebrating the contributions of the Volunteer Health Advisors.



**Volunteer Knits Hats for Patients**

Mary Piorun, a 98-year-old volunteer in the Department of Community Health Improvement, knit and donated hats for patients.

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**Connect with us!**