

Positive Change

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message	2
Change Makers	4
Serving Our Communities	5
Wheeler Celebrates 50!	6
Dollars and Change	7

A publication of
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Wheeler provides comprehensive solutions that address complex health issues, providing individuals, families and communities with accessible, innovative care that encourages recovery, health and growth at all stages of life. Our integrated approach to primary and behavioral health, education and recovery creates measurable results, positive outcomes and hopeful tomorrows for more than 30,000 individuals across Connecticut each year.



Addressing Opioid Misuse Among Adolescent Girls

In a continuing effort to address the complex facets of the opioid epidemic, Wheeler implemented a new program to address prescription and illegal opioid use by adolescent girls, a population at high risk for opioid addiction.

The program is made possible through a three-year, \$300,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office on Women's Health (OWH). The grant will support the Connecticut Opioid Misuse Prevention (COMP) Initiative and will expand in-person and online training in Adolescent Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (A-SBIRT) for up to 4,500 prevention professionals, pediatric care primary providers and professionals who work or volunteer with adolescent girls. Wheeler was among 16 grantees nationally to receive this funding.

The COMP Initiative builds on an ongoing and successful collaboration between Wheeler and the Connecticut Departments of Children and Families, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the Connecticut Prevention Network to



promote early identification and intervention of mental health and substance abuse disorders. The COMP Initiative will employ the A-SBIRT approach recommended by SAMHSA and the American Academy of Pediatrics because of its flexibility in working with adolescents across the substance misuse spectrum, from abstinence to severe substance use. A-SBIRT provides a very brief screening, intervention, and referral to treatment tailored to the specific needs of the given adolescent.

[Continued on Page 3.](#)

Serving the Needs of the Hartford Community



Family Health & Wellness Center

Wheeler will open a new Family Health & Wellness Center at 43 Woodland Street in Hartford to meet the diverse health care needs of individuals and families in Greater Hartford. Services for adults are currently provided at Wheeler's 999 Asylum Avenue location in Hartford and will be moved to the new expanded health center location when renovations are completed. The new center will feature pediatric and adult primary care services,

dental care and behavioral health services delivered in an integrated, trauma-informed setting.

The historic home located at 49 Woodland Street, known as the Perkins-Clark Estate, will have a new life as the hub of the Family Health & Wellness Center's community support programs.

[Continued on Page 2.](#)



a message of change from the president

www.wheelerclinic.org



Wheeler's priorities are ensuring access to high-quality, effective integrated health care and addressing the opioid epidemic devastating families nationwide.

As we complete an extensive renovation of our Woodland Street campus to support our

new and expanded Family Health & Wellness Center in Hartford over the coming months, we are advancing our whole-person approach to health. This flagship facility will serve the needs of individuals of all ages throughout the greater Hartford community and particularly historically underserved areas and populations. A comprehensive continuum of integrated primary and pediatric care, behavioral health care, substance use treatment (including medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction), oral health care, women's health, and complementary medical approaches and integrative medicine under one roof, across the entire lifespan, will bring our vision to life and will increase access to critical health services in our capital city.

Preventing poor health outcomes, identifying problems early, and intervening effectively can improve lives and reduce costs in our health care system. Our Connecticut Center for Prevention, Wellness and Recovery is leading the way with a new federal grant to expand training to help professionals working with adolescent girls identify mental health and substance use issues early.

All of this comes at a pivotal moment in our history, Wheeler's 50th anniversary. Our commitment to effective, accessible care for the individuals, families and communities we serve has been constant for five decades. Join us in 2018 to honor everyone who made it possible, and be sure to send us your own story! This is a celebratory moment, where we take stock of all we've accomplished and recommit ourselves for all that is to come.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Susan
Susan Walkama, LCSW
President and Chief Executive Officer

Family Health & Wellness Center (cont.)

"Our continued expansion in Hartford allows us to more effectively meet the needs of the Greater Hartford community and to deliver comprehensive primary, oral health and behavioral health care services for our most vulnerable and underserved citizens," said Susan Walkama, LCSW, president and chief executive officer of Wheeler Clinic. "The Family Health & Wellness Center will house many critical services in one convenient location to address the whole-health needs of individuals and families."



Wheeler is the only provider in Connecticut to be accredited by the Joint Commission (TJC) for behavioral health and as a behavioral health home (BHH). Wheeler is the only Connecticut provider that has attained the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of

Approval® for four (4) distinct Accreditations and/or Certifications, including Behavioral Health Accreditation, Behavioral Health Home Certification, Ambulatory Health Care Accreditation, and Primary Care Medical Home Certification.

Funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Improvements to the Family Health & Wellness Center are supported in part by the State of Connecticut Nonprofit Grant Program, the Maximillian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation, and the Ensworth Charitable Foundation. Visit WheelerClinic.org/FamilyHealth for more information.

Services offered:

- **Primary care for all ages**, by a team that focuses on consumers' total health.
- **Comprehensive well-child care and pediatrics** for newborns, children and adolescents.
- **Women's health care**
- **Behavioral health services** for depression, anxiety, grief, child and adolescent issues, and more.
- **Dental care**
- **Treatment for addiction**, including medication-assisted treatment for alcohol and opioid use, tobacco cessation, outpatient services and recovery supports.
- **Geriatric services** for care across the lifespan.
- **Care management services** for adults with complex health care needs and mental health concerns.
- **Medical case management** through Wheeler's Ryan White Medical Case Management program for individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.
- **Complementary medical approaches** and integrative medicine.

Senator Richard Blumenthal Visits Wheeler Health & Wellness Center Kicks off National Health Center Week, Highlights New Federal Opioid Grant

U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) visited Wheeler's Health & Wellness Center in Bristol on August 14 as part of National Health Center Week (August 13-19) and to highlight the new three-year, \$300,000 federal grant to Wheeler to address and prevent prescription and illegal opioid misuse by adolescent girls.

In his remarks, Senator Blumenthal addressed the severity of opioid crisis and its unique impact on women and girls. "Opioid addiction among adolescent girls is rising at profoundly alarming rates," said Senator Blumenthal. "It's essential that we continue to raise awareness about the risks associated with this opioid use, especially among professionals and volunteers who work with this population. What Wheeler is doing today will help save lives and futures tomorrow," he added.



From l to r, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal; Wheeler President and Chief Executive Officer, Susan Walkama, LCSW; and Judith A. Stonger, MA, CPS, CARC, Wheeler's vice president of Prevention, Wellness and Recovery.

Eleck Named Primary Care Medical Director



Rebecca Eleck, MD, has been named primary care medical director of Wheeler. In this role, Dr. Eleck oversees the delivery of primary care services for adults, children, and families through Wheeler's Health and Wellness Centers in Bristol, New Britain, and Hartford. She also provides clinical oversight and management of clinical performance outcomes and direct clinical supervision to providers, and provides direct primary medical care to patients across the lifespan. Dr. Eleck joined Wheeler in 2016 as a family practice physician for the Wheeler Health & Wellness Center in Bristol.

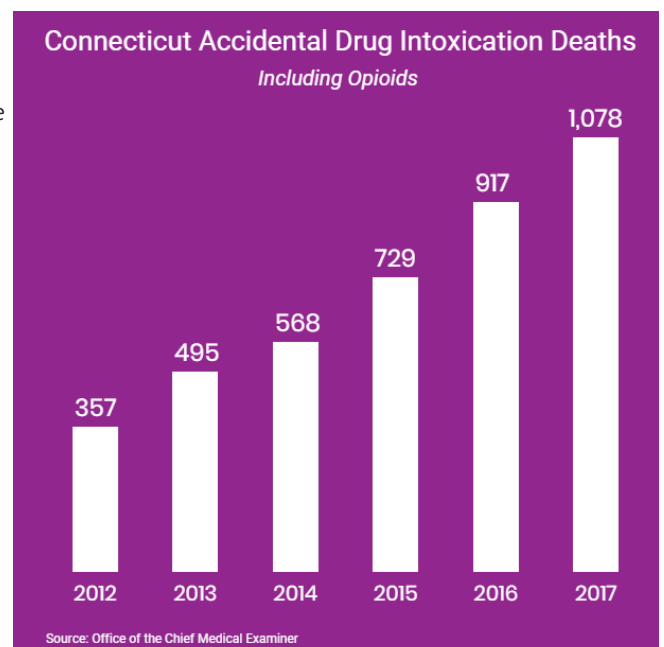
Dr. Eleck is a board-certified family physician with a special interest in medication-assisted treatment for alcohol and opioid addiction. She attended the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and completed her family medicine residency at Middlesex Hospital. Dr. Eleck also has a special interest in global health and has worked in Haiti, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Federal Opioid Grant (cont.)

"Research shows that women are especially vulnerable to opioid addiction," said Judith A. Stonger, MA, CPS, CARC, Wheeler's vice president of Prevention, Wellness and Recovery. "This grant will provide professionals and volunteers with additional knowledge and tools to address mental health and substance use issues at a critical stage in a young woman's life."

During the three-year grant period, 1,500 professionals and volunteers will receive the in-person A-SBIRT training, and 3,000 professionals and volunteers will be trained in A-SBIRT online.

The United States has seen an alarming rise in overdose deaths from prescription painkillers and nonprescription opioids among women, driven by a unique combination of biological, health, and social factors. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, between 1999 and 2015, overdose deaths from prescription pain killers increased 218 percent in men, while for women it increased over 471 percent. Between 2002 and 2013, heroin use among men increased 50 percent, compared to 100 percent in women. In 2016, the State of Connecticut reported that 917 people died as a result of an overdose. In 2017, 1,078 deaths from overdose are projected.



Connecticut Clearinghouse Hosts International Drug Overdose Awareness Day Trainings

Members of the community attended free opioid and drug prevention community trainings at Connecticut Clearinghouse in Plainville as part of an observance of International Overdose Awareness Day on August 31. The event, presented by Wheeler in collaboration with the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), provided members of the community with practical information, tools and resources for addressing the opioid crisis, including information about opioid use, misuse, and addiction, options for Narcan administration, and tips to better understand the types of products available to youth to hide drugs and paraphernalia “in plain sight.”



DMHAS Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., offers opening remarks before the “Hidden in Plain Sight” demonstration.

DMHAS Commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D., offered opening remarks, and throughout the day, attendees had the opportunity to make their own Remembrance Quilt square in honor of a loved one lost to addiction. The statewide Remembrance Quilt initiative was launched by the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services earlier this year to honor loved ones who have died from substance use disorders or addiction. The first quilt is now complete and has been displayed at a number of venues including the Legislative Office Building. A second quilt is in process.

Award Recognizes Improved Access, Quality of Care



Wheeler received a 2017 Quality Improvement Award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in the amount of \$66,449. The award—given to more than 1,300 health centers across the country for achievements in 2016—supports continued improvement at health centers based on high levels of performance in key areas. Wheeler was recognized for exceptional performance in electronic health reporting; notable improvement in clinical quality outcomes; increases in the number of total patients served and number of patients receiving comprehensive services between 2014 and 2015; and for achieving Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) recognition.

Wheeler EAP’s Dan Fallon Serves as Panelist at Hartford Business Journal Opioid Forum



Wheeler’s Dan Fallon, LPC, CEAP, program manager, Wheeler EAP, will serve as a panelist for a September 27 forum on the impact of opioids in workplace. Presented by the *Hartford Business Journal* at Infinity Hall, Hartford from 8 a.m.–10 a.m., the forum will feature a leading panel of experts who will address the impact of the opioid epidemic on the workforce and the workplace and where employers can turn for help. Connecticut Governor Dannel Malloy will make opening remarks.

“This topic is both timely and critical, as so many individuals in the workforce are affected by the issue of opioid misuse,” said Judith Stonger, MA, CPS, CARC, Wheeler’s vice president of Prevention, Wellness and Recovery. “Meaningful community dialog and education are important systemic approaches to dealing with this problem and its impact in the workplace and other settings.” For information, visit www.hartfordbusiness.com, and click on “Events.”

Serving Our Communities

Commemorating Lives Lost to Violence



Earlier this summer, staff from several of Wheeler's Hartford programs joined in a moving community dedication ceremony for the "Sacred Geometry," a monument for lives lost to violence in Hartford. The memorial is on a formerly vacant lot at 85 Barbour Street, which has been repurposed as a Memorial Garden by Community Solutions through the efforts of the Youth Leadership Corps.

Wheeler Sponsors, Participates in Rockwell Park Summer Festival



Members of the Wheeler team and Mott Corporation volunteer Health Ambassadors took part in the annual Rockwell Park Summer Festival in Rockwell Park, Bristol on August 19. Presented by the West End Association of Bristol, the event attracted 10,000 people

from Bristol and the surrounding towns. Wheeler sponsored this event and provided free blood pressure screenings, giveaways and information about its many programs and services in the Bristol community.



Wheeler health outreach worker, Lisbeth Barreto, shared information about Wheeler's Bristol and New Britain programs with the many local residents who attended the festival.



Jenny Bryan-DePaul and Allison Cashinghino from Wheeler's Foster Care Team invited visitors to learn more about Wheeler.

An Innovative Partnership to Promote Health and Wellness

mott

MISSION CRITICAL PRECISION

Last year, Wheeler and Mott Corporation entered into an innovative partnership to improve the health and wellness of our community. With

Mott's support, Wheeler added a full-time community health outreach worker, Bristol resident Lisbeth Barreto, and Mott employees are volunteering as Health ambassadors for Wheeler, engaging families at various community events in living healthier, happier lives.



Mott volunteers walked to raise awareness for mental illness and reduce stigma as part of the Wheeler team at NAMI Walks 2017 in Bushnell Park, Hartford on May 20.



Mott volunteers and Wheeler's Health & Wellness staff participated in the Bristol Housing Authority's Cambridge Park Family Day on August 11, entertaining youth by working on arts and crafts. While the children were active, parents visited a nearby tent to learn more about health and wellness services in their community.



The Mott team was an integral part of the Rockwell Park Summer Festival in Bristol on August 19, helping some of the smallest festival goers with arts and crafts and more.

Wheeler Celebrates 50!

COMING
IN 2018



Wheeler was established in 1968 through a generous bequest from prominent Plainville resident Bertha Wheeler, vital construction and staffing grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the support of many local and statewide community and business leaders, and clinical professionals. Fifty years later, Wheeler has grown and expanded significantly to respond to the changing needs of individuals, families and communities and to facilitate continued access to high-quality, patient-centered care.

50 Years, 50 Stories

Throughout our anniversary year, we'll share stories about the many organizations and individuals—from board members and donors, to stakeholders and community partners—who have made a difference in Wheeler's history, evolution and care. We'll also share stories about consumers whose health, recovery and growth were made possible through their connection with Wheeler.

Why Does Wheeler Matter to You? Share Your Story!

How has Wheeler made your family, your community or the state healthier or better? What does Wheeler mean to you? We want to hear your story. Visit our website at WheelerClinic.org/50, to submit your story or idea.

Celebrating Catalysts Who Make Health, Recovery and Growth Possible

We know there are thousands of people in the community who support Wheeler or work hand-in-hand with us: the small business owner who helps our students gain valuable on-the-job training; the community activist who understands that recovery is always possible; the pastor who regularly tells families how to get help; the tireless advocate for foster families. They are all catalysts—forces for change and good—and our families, towns, state and nation are better because of them.



We would like to ask your help in identifying these *unsung heroes*. *Do you know someone who:*

- Demonstrably helps people Wheeler serves through their time, advocacy, support or work
- Works or partners with Wheeler
- Has improved Wheeler as an organization, or improved Wheeler's capacity to positively impact the lives of individuals we serve

*As part of the planning for Wheeler's celebration of our 50th year, we want to also celebrate the individuals and organizations who made it possible, in any one of a thousand ways. **Nominate a "Community Catalyst" today at WheelerClinic.org/50.***

Golf Classic Expands Access to Health Care



On June 12, more than 130 golfers supported Wheeler's expanded access to primary and behavioral health care for vulnerable individuals and families. Learn more about our 32nd Annual Golf Classic, which has now raised more than \$1.1 million over its lifetime! Learn more, visit: wheelerclinic.org/golfclassic

Reasons to Smile



Wheeler received two foundation grants to support the enhancement and delivery of dental services at the Wheeler Family Health & Wellness Center at 43 Woodland Street in Hartford. A \$50,000 grant from the **Maximillian E. and Marion O. Hoffman Foundation** and a \$10,000 grant from the **Ensworth Charitable Foundation** will help Wheeler equip a full dental program that includes on-site preventive and basic dental care provided by a dentist and hygienist.

We are extremely grateful to both foundations for their support of our mission and for helping us to reduce health disparities in underserved communities.

Your Support Makes a Difference

Your support for Wheeler programs and services is needed now more than ever to ensure the delivery of critical programs and services to children and families in our communities. Visit www.wheelerclinic.org/give or fill out the adjacent form.



Wheeler

Innovative Care. Positive Change.

Please accept this contribution to help Wheeler Clinic continue encourage health, recovery and growth at all stages of life in the years ahead.

- \$0-99 Friend
- \$100-249 Sponsor
- \$250-499 Sustainer
- \$500-999 Leader
- \$1,000-4,999 Champion
- \$5,000-9,999 Hero
- \$10,000+ Visionary

Name (as you wish to see it printed)

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Donation Amount

- Check enclosed **or** Charge my credit card
- Visa Mastercard Discover AmEx

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- I have enclosed a matching gift form from my employer.
- Please send me information about planned giving opportunities.

Mail to: Wheeler Clinic, Development Office
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**COMING
IN 2018!**

Celebrating 50 Years of Health, Recovery and Growth!



Have a story to share? Tell us at WheelerClinic.org/50