



DotHouse Health

*We keep you well*

# Connecting You.

2017 Annual Report

The mission of DotHouse Health is to provide **affordable, accessible, and exceptional** health care and other essential services in an environment that respects our consumers, staff and diverse community, to be a **leading force for change** in the health, economic and social well-being of our community, and to be an **essential resource for our community** in its efforts to **achieve the highest levels of health, well-being and quality of life for residents.**

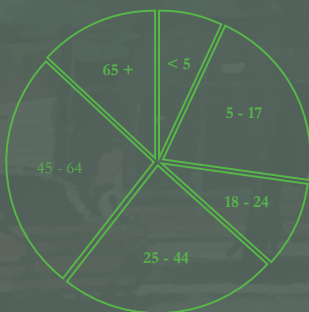
## Who We Serve:

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**+** 21,390

patients in 2017

### Ages:



**+** 92%

of patients live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level

(from those who reported income)



**61%**

of patients live in areas that immediately surround the health center

**+** 49%

of patients are best served in a language other than English

# From the Chief Executive Officer

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Fulfilling the mission of DotHouse Health requires us to be nimble and inventive, as our community, tools and the very field of public health evolves each day. This landscape brings with it tremendous opportunity to further realize our vision of caring for the whole person, the individual and the community.

I am consistently inspired by the work of our staff that unites DotHouse Health's leading, comprehensive care with our foundational understanding of community well-being, and this past year was no different. I am thrilled to share our progress from 2017, a year that highlights the power of connection, from cutting-edge, integrated programs built around community need to our partnerships within and beyond healthcare to best support patients.

The dedication of our staff is immeasurable in helping us to be a patient-centered medical home for so many individuals and families – offering quality care and services in a warm and welcoming environment. A member of our staff who was a true role model for patient-centered care was Dr. Lorraine Stanfield, whose passing in September 2017 was felt deeply by her patients and all of DotHouse Health. Lorraine was a treasured member of our staff for 26 years. She was a kind, compassionate provider to her patients, a supportive colleague and a wonderful mentor.

Lorraine's devotion to patients was relentless - she is fondly remembered for her constant prompt, "Am I really listening to what the patient is saying?" Her commitment to ensuring that our patients' voices and priorities are always in focus lives on in all of us.

My appreciation goes out to all the staff, Governing Board members, supporters, and friends who made 2017 such a success and continue to share their time and talents with us this year. In particular I would like to acknowledge the dedicated service of three Board members who are stepping away after many years of commitment to DotHouse – Kevin McDermott, Rosemary Gallagher and Judi Smith. It is through the power of such partnership that we are able to deliver upon our mission.

Sincerely,

**Michelle Nadow**  
President & CEO





# Transformations in Care

Improving the health of our patients and our community has always been the heart of our mission at DotHouse Health. This focus positions us for success in an era of healthcare payment reform which emphasizes better patient outcomes at a lower cost through integration and coordination of care.

DotHouse Health joined the Boston Accountable Care Organization (BACO) in 2013, and this past March, BACO was one of 18 ACOs to begin MassHealth's transition from a fee-for-service-based to a value-based healthcare system. Our participation in BACO and Massachusetts' Medicaid's ACO innovation is yet another way DotHouse Health is deepening our partnerships with other healthcare and community-based providers so that patients get the care they need.

While meeting the social needs of our community has been a part of DotHouse Health's mission since our inception as a settlement house, Massachusetts' ACO system – and our participation in it – presents new opportunities for us to improve social factors in the lives of our patients that significantly impact their health. Also known as the “social determinants of health,” social factors like homelessness or having unsafe or unstable housing are daily obstacles to better health for many patients. In 2017, DotHouse Health was awarded a Harvard Medical School Center for Primary Care Advancing Teams in Community Health Program (ATP) grant to develop new ways to systematically address housing status for all of our primary care patients. Since January 2018, nearly 3,000 primary care patients have been screened for homelessness and connected to housing resources when needed.

## Building a Quality Improvement Culture

Our annual report card from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) reflects our performance against national clinical quality measures. In 2017, DotHouse Health was recognized as a **Health Center Quality Leader**, a distinction awarded to the top 30% of all HRSA-supported health centers. We also received an EHR Reporters award and scored above the national average in 12 out of 16 clinical quality areas. These successes notably came amidst our transition to a new electronic health record and practice management system. In particular, the efforts of DotHouse providers to strengthen clinical and social services for families contributed to a reduction in the number of low birth weight babies from 15% to 6% among the families in our care. Attention to screening for clinical depression resulted in an increase from 52% to 59% of patients receiving screening and a follow up plan when needed.

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve quality and efficiency of care, DHH operates a **Performance Improvement Committee (PIC)**, a multi-disciplinary group with participation across our clinical and social services programs.

### DotHouse Health's Performance Improvement Committee

(from top left)

*Sinowey James, Ed Steen, Dianne Picard, Lisa Broderick, Don Duger, Huy Nguyen, Debbie Robinson, Uyen Tran, Katelyn Wilson, Brian Oates, Bethel Aklilu, Curtis Nordgaard, Holly Goodale, La'Keya Solomon, Do Quyen Pham*





Each year, the Performance Improvement Committee sets priorities and goals for center-wide improvement in specific areas. The 2017 project slate tackled twelve areas for improvement across growth and development, quality of care, infrastructure, and community well-being. A joint project between our nursing and lab teams targeting laboratory specimen mislabeling successfully eliminated all mislabeling of irretrievable specimens (pap smears and biopsies), and overall labeling errors were significantly reduced. In response to data showing

that providers were screening children for risk of developmental delay but often not billing for the screen, our pediatrics team focused on engaging providers and simplifying our processes. We successfully narrowed the gap in lost revenue from 13% to 3%, and the percentage of qualifying visits with both developmental screening and billing completed jumped from 57% to 73% in the first three months of the project and efforts to sustain provider engagement have continued.

Dr. Michelle Vo, DMD, and Dr. Jonathan Kuang, DMD







(Top) Huy Nguyen, MD, with a Pediatrics patient  
(Bottom) DotHouse Health Farmer's Market, August 2017

# Leadership & Operations

DotHouse Health is committed to fostering the professional growth of our employees, and 2017 was a particularly rewarding year as several staff members proved well suited to take on greater responsibility in our dedicated team. We also welcomed key additions to the DHH family.

**Don Duger**, a Dorchester resident of thirty years, became our new Chief Operating Officer in early 2018 after 25 years as an operations leader and Physician Assistant at Harvard Vanguard/Atrius Health. He has already played a key role in our entry into the Boston Accountable Care Organization (BACO). **John Cooney** stepped into the role of Chief Financial Officer this January after joining DotHouse Health as our Director of Finance in 2016. With over twenty years' experience around fiscal sustainability in non-profit healthcare organizations, John is a strong addition to our leadership team.

The year also saw long-standing staff take on leadership roles. **Do Quyen Pham** was selected as DotHouse Health's new Director of Population Health, where she is playing a key role in driving the health center's population health goals and our partnerships with Boston Medical Center and BACO. **Sandra Depina** was promoted to Financial Counselor Manager and now oversees the day to day functions of the Financial Counseling Department and supports our team of Financial Counselors, who help our patients stay connected to health insurance coverage.

DotHouse Health's commitment to professional development goes hand in hand with our mission to be a stable source of health and wellness. In 2017, **La'Keya Solomon**, Manager of Revenue Integrity, joined the ranks of several other health center staff who have participated in the Community Health and Community Health Center Management program of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers and Suffolk University. Since 2001, this graduate level certificate program has supported emerging health center staff with a curriculum tailored to community health center needs.

## Board Effectiveness

The stewardship of our Governing Board is a key way DotHouse Health ensures we are capturing the voice of our patients - a majority of our board members are patients of the health center and all have a personal and/or professional connection to the community. As we have emphasized performance improvement throughout the health center, so too has our Governing Board. In 2017, we built on the success of our annual board retreat in January to set the stage for an impactful year, which included team building, strategizing for an annual fundraising event, and an increased focus on Board leadership in key areas, including the formation of committees on priorities such as patient care and quality.

## Streamlined Service for Greater Access

When it comes to access, our communication systems are critical to supporting patients at all hours. To improve phone wait times, in 2017 we began a partnership with Call4Health, a vendor to support with our call volume. If a patient's call has not been answered in 30 seconds by our Call Center staff, the call is directed to Call4Health, who are trained to assist our patients' just as our own staff would. This collaboration has resulted in a 31 percent drop in our call abandonment rate as patient wait time decreased from 15 minutes to 5.5 seconds



# Your Care, Connected

At DotHouse Health we are constantly assessing and testing new ideas to support our patients and our community in all areas of health and well-being. By bringing together the strengths of our clinical and social services in integrated programs, we tackle critical needs with a holistic approach that improves both access and outcomes.

## Collaborative Care for Children with ADHD

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common behavioral problems of childhood, and can impact every aspect of a child's home and school life. While our pediatric and family practice staff are well trained in recognizing the disorder, the follow up for diagnosis and treatment is often inconsistent. DHH's **Dana Rubin**, a board certified pediatrician and child psychiatrist received a Special Projects Grant from the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers to bring an interdisciplinary team approach to supporting families of children struggling with symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity. Our care team includes Primary Care providers, an Integrated Behavioral Clinician (**Digna Mejia-Tejeda LCSW**) and Case Management (**Maria Ortiz**), to assure that families have the information they need to support their children at home and at school. By improving diagnosis and treatment follow up, we can enable earlier intervention to maximize children's abilities. The team has focused on creating a system of care to support families in the process of providing evidence based care to their children as well as educating staff and family about ADHD.

**“This project will allow us to provide our patients with better care. As a parent of a child with ADHD I know how important it is to have a resourceful and supportive team of professionals to help with outreach and care coordination.**

Ivelina Cherry, Nursing Administrative Assistant at DHH

## Healthy Habits Become Healthy Lives

Since 2005, DotHouse Health has offered Dorchester teens a free, year-round, drop-in center we call Generation Next Academy (GNA). At GNA, young people ages 12-18 participate in youth leadership development programs, mentorship, healthy lifestyles education, and recreation opportunities in the DotHouse Health gym, swimming pool, and home-grown music studio. In 2017, we began a three-year grant from Tufts Medical Center to expand programming for GNA. **Sonia Erlich**, one of our Behavioral Health clinicians, has partnered with our Youth Development Specialists and Teen Center staff to implement a weekly wellness group, which incorporates mindfulness, yoga and other emotional and physical self-regulating tools into each workshop. Participants learn and practice skills that help them manage stress, strong emotions and interpersonal distress.



Sinowey James, Youth Development Specialist, with GNA participants in the DotHouse Health Gym

## Increasing Access to Pediatric Oral Health

Good dental care and hygiene is critical to the overall health of children, but accessing dental care can be difficult for hard-pressed families in our community. At DHH, we've been integrating dental services within our pediatric clinic to help identify children in need of oral health services.

In 2017 we made significant strides with this project, supported in part with a grant from HRSA, including hiring a public health dental hygienist and co-locating a dental suite in our pediatrics practice. With the appropriate space and staffing in place, we are able to connect children with dental care during their well-child visit and ensure that children receive treatment in familiar surroundings in their medical home, overcoming the anxiety that may accompany a child's visit to the dentist. **Dr. Michelle Vo, DMD** and **Dr. Holly Goodale, MD** (Pediatrics) and the hygienist, **Siobhan Brooks**, have worked together to educate providers on the importance of oral health in youth and adolescents and provide guidance on how to triage for dental needs and utilize the hygienist for their patients.

As we've educated providers within DHH, so has our outreach about oral health care with pediatric patients' family members, resulting in entire families engaging in dental services at DHH. Since this program began in June of 2016, 327 children and 111 adults have established a dental home receiving oral exams, cleanings and other dental care services at DHH through this particular project.



Generation Next Academy participant joins GNA's Wellness Group for afternoon yoga

## Partnership in Substance Abuse Intervention and Outreach

The dramatic increase in opioid-related overdoses has focused new attention and increased urgency on substance use disorder (SUD). Our office-based addiction treatment (OBAT) team, led by **Dr. Rachel King, MD**, currently treats around 60 patients, and has been developing new ways to coordinate DotHouse Health services to support patient recovery. In 2017, we participated in the General Electric Foundation and the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers Substance Use Support & Technical Assistance in Communities (SUSTAIN) program to strengthen our team and implement best practices of care. We also partnered with Boston Medical Center's new opioid urgent care center, which starts patients on medication-assisted treatment and then refers them to DHH for ongoing treatment.

Alongside this clinical progress, we have also expanded our community outreach work. In the community, we distributed lifesaving Narcan (naloxone) nasal spray devices to interested individuals and groups at open training sessions. To make sure people in need know we are ready to help, we have highlighted our treatment services in local newspapers and on our website.

“**DotHouse Health continues to be a game changer in the community due to the variety of timely programming and crucial trainings they provide to non-profits and residents throughout the year. At ADSL, we welcome hundreds of our neighbors into the Field House every year, and our location in the middle of a nearby park has caused us to witness frequent opioid abuse. It became an imperative for our staff to be trained in the use of Narcan. DotHouse Health responded rapidly to our need. We are so grateful to have DotHouse Health as a trusted partner.**

Candice Gartley, Executive Director of All Dorchester Sports and Leadership



(Top)  
Siobhan Brooks sees a patient in DotHouse Health's Pediatric Dental Suite

(Bottom)  
DotHouse Health Nurses and Medical Assistants

## Building Tomorrow's Primary Care Workforce

We invest in our long-standing pediatric and internal medicine residency and medical student training programs to ensure that Boston's doctors-to-be experience the singular lessons and the extraordinary rewards of caring for patients where they live, work, play, and pray. We know that successfully engaging tomorrow's healthcare leaders in our mission of building a healthier community is key to addressing the persisting primary care workforce shortage and ensures that our newest physicians are ready to meet the

needs of our community's residents. For over 20 years, DotHouse Health's Adult Medicine, Pediatrics, Urgent Care, Dental, Vision and Behavioral Health teams have hosted medical residents, students, fellows, externs, and other healthcare professionals-in-training from many of Boston's best academic healthcare institutions including Boston Medical Center, Boston Children's Hospital, Tufts Medical School, the New England College of Optometry, Boston University, Northeastern University and Harvard Medical School. Our close relationship with our local academic medical community brings the latest medical and scientific innovations right to patients in our community.



# Driving Medical Discovery & Community Health Leadership

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Achieving our mission of providing the highest levels of health, well-being and quality of life for our patients means connecting them to the future of community health. By designing better healthcare with the needs of our patients in mind, by giving our patients access to some of the newest developments in medicine, by actively participating in research networks like the Boston Health Equity Research Network (BHERN), and by partnering with academic medical centers to train the next generation of physicians, dentists, clinical pharmacists, and optometrists, we ensure that the community health of tomorrow – as well as tomorrow’s healthcare leadership – will understand and will meet the needs of our patients and our community. We believe that our community’s prospects for excellent health are bright because we are helping to lead the way.

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## Shaping Community Health Research

Finding creative ways to share information with our patients and caregivers and motivate action to improve health is an ongoing area of focus at DHH and throughout the healthcare field. We’re currently participating in two important efforts that employ novel approaches to health communication as a means for improving outcomes.

The **iSMILE research program**, led by Boston University and supported by Pediatrics provider **Holly Goodale, MD** at DotHouse Health, tests the use of text messages as a health information tool to reduce Early Childhood Caries (ECC) among low income families visiting community pediatric clinics. The program began by involving a focus group of parents to understand needs and gaps in knowledge and develop targeted text messages to prevent cavities

in children. The results of a pilot trial were promising, with participants giving the program 4.6 out of 5 stars, and many participants sharing texts with friends, helping to spread important information about brushing and regular dental checkups. We are now participating in a larger study, including 300 DotHouse Health patients and their families.

**Emily Feinberg, ScD CPNP**, draws directly from her experience with patients in our Pediatrics practice in shaping her public health research. **Project EARLY**, a rigorous multi-city (Boston, Philadelphia, New Haven) trial funded by the National Institutes of Health, is one such example. Project EARLY aims to improve early identification and linkage to services among very young children at risk of autism by testing whether patient navigation services can improve timeliness of evaluation and treatment. The study has successfully recruited 310 participants to date across all sites, and we look forward to reviewing the complete trial results in November 2018.

# Connecting with Our Community

Since our founding as a settlement house in 1887, we've known that the health of the individual, the family and the community are all connected – that's why supporting people in all areas of health and well-being has always been at the heart of our work in Dorchester. This past year we strengthened a number of the traditions and services that make DotHouse Health a home to thousands, and introduced new events and offerings to support our community programs.

## Ring in the New Year

For several years, DotHouse Health has partnered with the Federation for Children with Special Needs to cohost an annual Vietnamese New Year celebration, Tết, at the health center. Our Tết celebration includes singing, the múa lân (lion dance), a luncheon and a range of activities that bring the hallmark traditions and fun of Tết to life in an environment tailored to the needs of children affected by autism. Our 2017 celebration included a visit from Mayor Martin J. Walsh, who stopped by to offer New Year's greetings to families and hand out red envelopes of "li xi" (lucky money), along with our CEO Michelle Nadow.



Mayor Martin J. Walsh at the 2017's New Year Celebration

## Children's Christmas Party

For many families, DotHouse Health's Annual Children's Christmas Party is a central holiday tradition. At our 25th holiday party on December 9, we welcomed over 800 children and their families – a record – into the health center for face painting, games, crafts, gifts and pictures with Santa. Our holiday party team was directed under the leadership of **Michelle Rue** with support from **Dr. Peter Loewinthan** and many staff and community members, including volunteers from Ropes & Gray LLP and Boston Cares. Our partners at Toys for Tots, Notre Dame Academy in Hingham, and our colleagues from Boston HealthNet Plan, WIC and our own Dental Department were also instrumental in making this another joyful celebration.



DotHouse Health Staff at 2017's Christmas Party - Do Quyen Pham, Michelle Nadow, Hieu Bui, Holly Goodale, MD, Bethel Aklilu



## DotFest: A Community Carnival

Last April marked the return of DotHouse Health's annual fundraising event. Newly branded as DotFest, around 300 of the health center's partners, donors, board members, community members and staff filled the DotHouse Health gym, transformed into a festive carnival scene. The evening honored Mayor Martin J. Walsh for his lifelong work as a champion of Dorchester, and featured food from local restaurants, games and entertainment.

## Tackling Asthma in the Water

Pediatric asthma has serious consequences for children, families and their communities. Children with asthma can often feel limited by exercise-induced asthma flare-ups, though research shows that exercise is critical to overall health, and when done well, exercise can actually help reduce susceptibility to asthma problems. Indoor swimming, which takes place in a highly humidified atmosphere, is one of the best exercises for children with asthma.

In 2017, we brought back our Asthma Swim Program, a longstanding collaboration between DotHouse Health and Boston Children's Hospital focused on supporting children with asthma. The ten week program, led by our very own Aquatics Coordinator **Dirk Bovell**, pairs asthma self-management instruction with swim lessons. Over three sessions, 38 children ages 7-12 participated in Asthma Swim last year, with all parents reporting afterwards that the program improved their child's asthma management and knowledge and helped them learn to swim.



President & CEO Michelle Nadow, Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Boston City Councilor Annisssa Essaibi George at DotFest 2017



Asthma Swim participants in the DotHouse Health pool



# From the Chair of the Board of Directors

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Three long-time members are leaving the DotHouse Health Board of Directors: Judi Smith, Rosemary Gallagher and me. For us, it has been a privilege to serve this great organization. We leave knowing that CEO Michelle Nadow is providing the DotHouse with great leadership and the Board members will stay true to the founding ideals of the DotHouse.

As I reflect on serving on the Board for more than thirty years, I think of the people who got me started with volunteerism. I had the great fortune to know Pat Egan and many of the other Dorchester activists who organized the Determined People of Dorchester in the late 1960s and 70's. They achieved their goal of making the Dorchester House into a multi-service center. At that time, it was a small recreational and social center without a medical clinic. There were about six local doctors serving the 35,000 people in this community. These activists had passion and determination to get things done. They inspired me and urged me to get involved in the community. I did so. I first volunteered as a certified court mediator in the Urban Court Program of the Dorchester District Court in the late 70's. This began my history of activism and volunteering, including serving as a community member and consumer on the DotHouse House Board.

It is important for the DotHouse to have community members and consumers on the Board. This empowers the community and assures that the services provided reflect the needs of the community. The DotHouse came to be during the settlement house movement over one hundred years ago. Settlement houses existed to build communities by

developing the strengths of new immigrants, including having community people direct the social and educational services offered. Likewise, the model for health centers is that they be community-driven. Community health centers were the idea of Dr. Jack Geiger and Dr. Count Gibson. They were civil rights activist in the 1960's who started health centers in poor neighborhoods in Mississippi and Columbia Point. They wanted to empower communities. Based on that ideal, federal law requires that 51% of the Board of Directors be consumers of the health center.

To stay true to its history, the DotHouse must remain community-driven. The Board of Directors presently has a wonderful group of community people. There is room for more. I urge you to get involved.

I leave the DotHouse Board thankful for the life lessons in kindness and dedication that I learned from being with so many thoughtful and determined people connected to the DotHouse, now and through the years.

Sincerely,

**Kevin McDermott**  
Board Chair



# Statement of Financial Position

## Assets

Current Assets	\$4,632,737
Investments	9,154,439
Restricted Cash	667,856
Notes and Deferred Interest Receivable	8,031,811
Property, Plant and Equipment, Net	3,699,834
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$26,186,677</b>

## Liabilities

Current Liabilities	\$4,221,532
Notes Payable, net of current option	466,830
Conditional Notes Payable	1,638,216
Net Assets	19,860,099
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$26,186,677</b>

# Statement of Activities & Change in Net Assets

## Operating Revenue

Net Patient Service Revenue	\$21,955,152
Grant and Contract Revenue	4,602,547
Forgiveness of Conditional Notes Payable	293,915
Investment Income	194,153
Other Revenue	247,817
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$27,293,584</b>

## Operating Expenses

Primary Care Expenses	\$13,367,731
Other Medical Expenses	3,286,243
Pharmacy	4,622,248
Behavioral Health	2,704,941
Optometry	1,766,448
Dental	2,339,618
Public Health and Social Services	981,852
Information Systems	579,000
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$29,648,081</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus or (Loss)</b>	<b>\$(2,354,497)</b>

## Non Operating Revenue

Net Realized and Unrealized Gain on Investments	\$579,947
Interest Income on Note Receivable	215,067
Total Non Operating Revenue	\$795,014
Change in Net Assets	\$(1,559,483)

\*Audited Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities & Change in Net Assets for Fiscal Year Ending, September 30, 2017



# Leadership

Michelle Nadow, President & CEO

## Executive Management Team

John Cooney, Chief Financial Officer

Donald Duger, Chief Operating Officer

Mary Irwin, Chief Human Resources Officer

Danny MacNeil, Chief Information Officer

Huy Nguyen, MD, Chief Medical Officer

## 2017-2018 Board of Directors

Kevin McDermott, Chair

Judi Smith, Treasurer

Rosemary Gallagher, Secretary

Gloria J. Coulter

Paulo A. De Barros

Annissa Essaibi George

Jeff Lopes

Christopher McCoy

Megan Sonderegger

Dominique Sye

Phi Tran

Joel Wool

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