



DEDICATION. CARE. PERSEVERANCE.

DOTHOUSE HEALTH | 2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Since 1887, DotHouse Health has sought inventive ways to respond to the needs of our community in a warm and welcoming environment that respects our patients, staff and neighbors. **In 2019 we actively engaged in and led several partnerships which leverage a shared energy and commitment to respond to issues and challenges with a new approach.**

Last year's accomplishments are a result of our staff's commitment to our mission: 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.



MILESTONES OF THE HEALTH CENTER

- 1887 -

The Dorchester House Multi-Service Center was founded by local residents as a settlement house, a community resource dedicated to serving Boston's immigrant population and other underserved communities.

- 1909 -

The institution was recognized as the "Dorchester House" for the purpose of industrial, educational and charitable work as well as for the establishment and maintenance of reading rooms, library and social meetings.

- 1942 -

The organization moved to 1353 Dorchester Avenue where it has operated from for the last 78 years.

- 1974 -

On this same site, the new Dorchester House Multi-Service Center was built through the advocacy of a group of residents called the Determined People of Dorchester and featured a comprehensive health center, a pre-school/day care center and a community center.

- 1978 -

The demand for health services was so great that a second floor was added, allowing us to expand medical and behavioral health services and add a dental department.

- 2002 & 2011 -

Major building renovations and expansions occurred that enabled new exam room space, on-site pharmacy and a new urgent care department.

- 2014 -

The name changed from the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center to DotHouse Health to highlight our core mission.

As we sit to write this letter, we are still responding to the concerns and impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In the midst of these surreal times, we hope you are staying safe and well.

As our annual report was being prepared, we never imagined that we would be sharing it with you in the middle of a global pandemic. Like you, we thought we would be working on planned activities such as our signature fundraising event — DotFest, annual meeting, kicking-off our 3-year strategic plan and receiving site visits from funders among many other tasks and events. Yet, life threw us a major curveball. But as is characteristic of DotHouse Health, we are weathering this storm to support our patients and community and fulfilling our promise to always be there for the many individuals and families who call our health center their home.

DotHouse quickly adjusted to our new reality with the patience, flexibility and dedication that have always been the hallmark of our care and services. The health center continues to balance our focus between responding to patients' COVID-19 concerns and non-COVID routine, urgent and emergent matters. We shifted to telehealth visits where possible while also supporting the need for in-person visits as advised by the patient's care team. DotHouse implemented a dedicated COVID-19 triage line staffed by nurses to talk with patients about risks, symptoms and need for testing. With support from the City of Boston, DotHouse expanded upon our COVID-19 testing and set-up a community-based testing unit within a matter of days to expand access to testing to the broader community and to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in the burden of COVID-19 disease. Our teams from case management and financial counseling continue to support needs outside the exam room by helping individuals and families access food resources, file unemployment claims, apply or renew their health insurance, thereby promoting overall health during a time of great uncertainty and hardship.

Our spirits have been boosted during this challenging time by the outpouring of care, concern and support for our work. We have received donations of food for staff and patients, personal protective equipment and home-made masks sewn by hand. Several long-term partners of DotHouse have provided the needed funding to support the distribution of patient care kits that include non-perishable food as well as basic medical and household supplies. We are grateful and overwhelmed by the generosity of neighbors, colleagues and supporters to help the DotHouse community at a time of pronounced need.

We are so very proud of our staff during this time of adversity. Their dedication to continue serving our patients in a warm and welcoming environment is an enduring and everlasting quality, now and always. Our appreciation is also extended to our Governing Board for their steadfast guidance and support. It is through our collective teamwork that we are able to realize our mission.

Sincerely,



MICHELLE NADOW
PRESIDENT & CEO



MEGAN SONDEREGGER
BOARD CHAIR

Expanding Mental Health Access for Children

In 2019 DotHouse Health joined an evolving partnership that aims to improve early identification of behavioral health problems and provide a full complement of preventative and treatment services to children and their families. The model, **TEAM UP for Children** (Transforming and Expanding Access to Mental Health Care in Urban Pediatrics) expanded its program over the last year from 3 to 7 health centers across Massachusetts. TEAM UP brings together the resources and expertise of The Richard and Susan Smith Family Foundation, The Klarman Family Foundation and Boston Medical Center (BMC) to develop a pediatric mental health home at health centers. The reach and potential impact of the program is significant – 1 in 4 children served by a Massachusetts federally-qualified health center will benefit from this important transformational model to better integrate behavioral health services, strengthen socioemotional health and resilience at the earliest age.

The program comprises interdisciplinary teams of providers working together to promote positive child health and well-being. In addition to expanding access to care through the integration of behavioral health clinicians and community health workers, TEAM UP supports enhanced access to specialty care, including psychiatric consultation through BMC, and linkages to other community services, such as Early Intervention, to ensure high-risk children access needed services. The initiative will allow us to further support our pediatric primary care with additional expertise of behavioral health clinicians and Family Partner Community Health Workers (CHWs) to provide family support and navigation. Our past experience has shown that a co-located integrated behavioral health clinician paired with a trained Family Partner CHW increases family initiation and ongoing engagement in behavioral health services.

Working with Community Partners to Address the Social Determinants of Health

Last year, DotHouse Health joined in a new partnership — **Crossroads: Healthy Families, Resilient Fields Corner Collaborative** (Crossroads) composed of nine community based organizations serving the Fields Corner neighborhood of Dorchester. Crossroads received a Children’s Health Equity Initiative (CHEq) one-year planning grant as part of Boston Children’s Collaboration for Community Health.

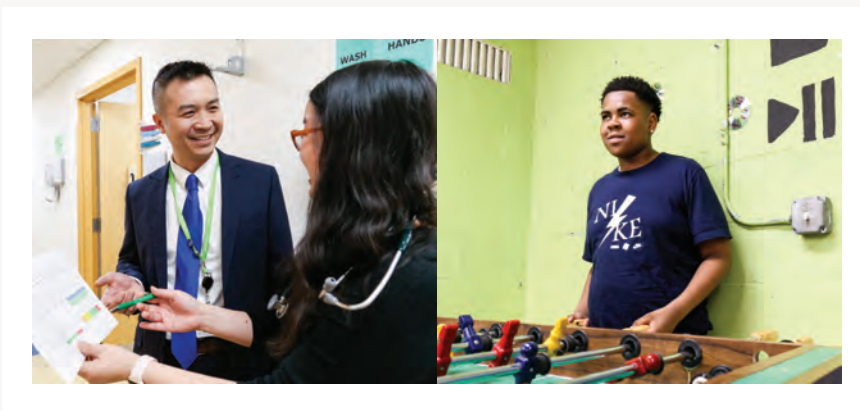
The grant funds a planning phase to build community unity, deepen relationships and develop a community-centric vision, platform and implementation plan to address social determinants of health for families in Fields Corner. This planning year gives the nine collaborative organizations an opportunity to break out of organizational silos to address changing needs of the neighborhood, design new ideas that can only be achieved in a group setting, leverage each other’s strengths to build community capacity and achieve scaled collective neighborhood and city-wide impact. Co-backbone organizations for this grant are DotHouse Health and VietAID.

20,732
patients in 2019

“Through this Crossroads collaboration, partners already share a common vision and agenda,” says Michelle Nadow, chief executive officer for DotHouse Health. “While we approach the work with different programs and activities, we all are committed to ensuring that the families in Fields Corner have access to the resources they need to thrive and build a healthy, safe and sustainable community.”



“Every day in clinic I see parents and children who struggle to describe how symptoms of depression, anxiety and past trauma affect their family relationships and their readiness to learn at school,” said Dr. Huy Nguyen, Chief Medical Officer at DotHouse Health and a practicing pediatrician at the health center.





“Pain management group visits focus on learning and practicing yoga, meditation and other holistic approaches to emotional and physical well-being,” said Dr. Ivy Brackup and Sonia Erlich, LMHC, who co-facilitate the group. “Participants have expressed that in addition to finding the new techniques helpful, learning them in a supportive, caring community has been especially powerful in helping them make positive changes in their lives.”



ABOVE, L-R: SONIA ERLICH, LMHC, DR. IVY BRACKUP; BOTTOM, L-R: DIGNA MEJIA-TEJEDA, DR. JENNIFER TRINH, ALEXANDRA DEPINA AND THAO PHAM IN THE CLINIC; DHH STINGRAYS SWIM TEAM MEMBERS PRACTICING AT THE POOL

In addition to DotHouse Health and VietAID, Crossroads members include All Dorchester Sports and Leadership, Asian American Resource Workshop, Boys and Girls Club of Dorchester, Dorchester Youth Collaborative, Louis D. Brown Peace Institute, MassCOSH and New England United for Justice.

All of Us: Improving Participation in Research and Communication with Patients

In 2019, DotHouse Health joined the **All of Us** (AoU) Research Program through a partnership with Boston Medical Center. AoU is part of the National Institute of Health's Precision Medicine Initiative. The goal of AoU is to enroll one million people in the United States, from all backgrounds, to volunteer their health information to create a diverse health database. The data will inform researchers how biology, lifestyle and environmental factors affect health, leading to more tailored medical treatments for many conditions that impact groups that historically have been underrepresented in past research.

As an enrollment site, DotHouse offers information to patients and community members about AoU and provides patient education on how to enroll in all our electronic patient interfaces. We believe that greater patient engagement with these interfaces has enormous potential to improve timely provider-patient communication and empower patients to participate in self-management strategies. Over the last year, DotHouse's Patient Engagement Specialist **Helena Joseph** has helped patients enroll into MyChart, our patient portal. This allows patients access to their Electronic Health Record, providing opportunities for them to review appointments and lab work as well as to request appointments and communicate with their clinical team. Through text reminders to enroll into MyChart after a visit and the extra elbow support from the Patient Engagement Specialist, enrollment and use of the patient portal has dramatically increased by over 10% in the last year.

A Unique Approach to Pain Management

DotHouse has added a new component to our workplan to increase capacity to prevent, treat and support individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs) and/or mental health diagnoses. With support from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through an Integrated Behavioral Health Services grant, DotHouse aims to prevent SUDs through enhanced pain management group visits. Mental health services are provided through a behavioral health-primary care integrated group visit model that uses evidence-based integrative medicine approaches for dealing with pain, anxiety and depression with the goal of improving health and decreasing the risk for chronic opioid use, SUD and hospitalization. The first of six eight week series began late last year with 10 unique patients completing the first series.

88%

of patients who report income live well below the federal poverty level



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In 2019 DotHouse Health welcomed new leaders to the health center while also seeing staff promoted from within the organization. **Byron Byfield** joined DotHouse Health as Chief Information Officer in July 2019. Prior to joining DotHouse, Byron most recently worked for Compass Medical as the Director of Health Informatics. Since his arrival at DotHouse, Byron has worked to align departmental goals with the organizational business objectives and develop an overall security/risk strategy for the organization.

Dr. Ignacio De La Cruz, DMD was promoted to Dental Director, having cared for our patients for over two years. He is a graduate of Tufts University School of Dental Medicine and completed his training at DotHouse. Ignacio is helping us to increase regular preventive dental exams as well as develop a dashboard to better track the oral health of our patient population. **Maria Papadopoulou** joined DotHouse in early 2020 as the Clinical Operations Director. Maria previously worked at another Boston-based community health center and her background speaks to a long-term commitment in prioritizing patient-centered care. She aims to continuously improve patient and staff experience; to support delivery of high quality care by developing strong multidisciplinary teams who work together to meet the needs of our community; and will help us insure the effective delivery of services to all of our patients including robust subspecialist referral workflows.

In 2019 **Dr. Mary Lunsford** was recognized with the Outstanding Community Health Center Clinician award from the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers at its annual gala event. This award recognizes a provider who has demonstrated consistent support of, and devotion to, the delivery of community health services through their clinical practice. For over 40 years, Dr. Lunsford has delivered patient-centered, culturally competent and compassionate care through a team-based model. She has built strong and trusted relationships with her patients, some spanning her entire tenure at the health center. Dr. Lunsford is a role model for community-based physicians, a generous teacher and dedicated to delivering medical care at DotHouse.



ABOVE, L-R: DR. MARY LUNSFORD (CENTER) RECEIVES THE OUTSTANDING CLINICIAN AWARD FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS LEAGUE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS (MLCHC). ALSO PICTURED IS MLCHC CEO JIM HUNT AND BOARD CHAIR SUE JOSS; DR. IGNACIO DE LA CRUZ, DENTAL DIRECTOR



49% of patients report they are better served in a language other than English



ABOVE, L-R: BYRON BYFIELD, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER; COMMUNITY RESIDENT AT THE FOOD PANTRY; DR. GRACE JEONG, OPTOMETRIST, CONDUCTING SCREENING IN THE EYE CLINIC.

Reports from Federal Funder Acknowledge Quality Care and Services

In August 2019, we received our annual report card from our federal funder the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) which reflects our performance against national clinical quality measures. DotHouse Health was recognized as a **Health Center Quality Leader**, by achieving the best overall clinical performance among all health centers and placed in the top 30% of the adjusted quartile rankings for clinical quality measures. We also received a Clinical Quality Improvers award by making a 15% or greater improvement in one or more of the clinical quality measures — DotHouse’s percentage of Children 2 Years of Age Who Received Age Appropriate Vaccines by their 2nd Birthday increased from 48% to 65%. Due to the efforts of DotHouse providers and clinical support staff, screening rates increased by 4% or greater for adult Body Mass Index (BMI) screening and follow-up, weight assessment and counseling for children and the percentage of children receiving dental sealants who are at a high risk for cavities. In terms of chronic disease, more patients exhibited better management of high blood pressure and diabetes than the previous year. The health center also received awards for utilizing our Electronic Health Record to report on clinical quality measures data for all of the health center’s patients and achieving Patient-Centered Medical Home recognition.



Learning and Implementing Quality Improvement



In 2019 **Amber Waake**, clinical care coordinator, was accepted into Boston Medical Center’s Improvement Leadership Academy (ILA). The ILA is a nine-month long, 12 session course, where participants from all departments of the hospital and community health centers have the opportunity to learn the basics of Quality Improvement methodologies while working on a project within their own department/health center. At the end of the program, participants showcased their hard work at the BMC Quality

Week Poster Session. Amber’s project focused on medication adherence for patients with hypertension in collaboration with two primary care providers, **Dr. Kathryn Harris** and **Dr. Grace Corbi**. In a small pilot, Amber checked patients’ blood pressure medication refill history and summarized findings in the charts of patients scheduled to be seen. The goal was to assess patients’ adherence to their high blood pressure treatment plans and to educate patients on the importance of regular medication intake for blood pressure control. The refill history proved to be helpful as providers were able to address medication adherence issues for 60% of patients seen with uncontrolled blood pressure. More study is needed to monitor the impact of these pharmacy refill checks on patients’ self-management of their hypertension in order to implement wider changes to our chronic disease management model.

ABOVE: 2019 BMC QUALITY WEEK POSTER PRESENTATION, L-R: DR. CHARLIE WILLIAMS OF BOSTON MEDICAL CENTER; AMBER WAAKE (CARE COORDINATOR); DR. KATIE HARRIS (PROVIDER, ADULT MEDICINE)



Reducing Visits to the Emergency Department: Appropriate Care, Lower Costs

In 2019, DotHouse Health continued its participation in MassHealth’s accountable care organization (ACO) model of payment reform as a member of the Boston Accountable Care Organization (BACO), one of 18 ACOs that supports the state’s transition from a fee-based model to a value-based care system for this insurance product. Other BACO members include Boston Medical Center (BMC), Boston University faculty and affiliated physicians, BMC medical staff, 3 health systems outside of greater Boston and 10 community health centers. A goal of the MassHealth ACO model is to slow the growth in the state’s annual Medicaid expenditures. Providers, like DotHouse Health, who participate in the ACO model, agree to share the financial risk of their patients’ annual total cost of care, including inpatient, outpatient and prescription health care costs. Because of this, our ACO, BACO, is trying to reduce Emergency Department (ED) visits for health issues that can be addressed in primary care. These ED visits are known as Low Acuity Emergency Department (LAED) visits. Last year, DotHouse had the lowest average ED utilization rate and the lowest LAED rate among the health centers in BACO. DotHouse also has one of the lowest increases in LAED rates for cold and flu during the winter months, a time when many primary care providers see a significant increase in their LAED rates. We believe our effective nurse phone triage, patient education, and urgent care clinic access, efficiency and trusted relationships with our patients keep them coming to us instead of going to the emergency department when they are sick.

ABOVE, L-R: USING TECHNOLOGY TO REGISTER FOR APPOINTMENTS, FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS AT OUR WEEKLY DISTRIBUTION, HOUSING ADVOCATE SUPPORTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOUSING SECURITY

DotFest: A Community Carnival



In April, we held DotHouse Health's annual fundraising event - DotFest. The health center's partners, donors, Governing board members, community members and staff filled the DotHouse Health gym, transformed into a festive carnival scene featuring food from local restaurants, games and entertainment. The evening honored **Boston Police Superintendent Nora Baston**, a native of Hyde Park and a graduate of Boston Latin School, who has a strong commitment

to community policing. Superintendent Baston is the leader of the Boston Police Department's new community engagement bureau where she is developing and implementing a strategy to cultivate a positive relationship between youth and Boston officers.

The Governing Board: Ensuring the patient and community voice is represented

The Governing Board helps to set the vision and policies for DotHouse Health, while maintaining fiduciary responsibility for the organization. A majority of our board members are patients (or parents of patients) of the health center and all have a personal and/or professional connection to the community, thereby ensuring the center is responsive to the needs of the communities it serves.

In 2019, the DotHouse Board oversaw the development of a **3-year strategic plan covering 2020-2023**. The four major goals from the strategic plan include:

- **Health Care Access and Utilization:** Our patients experience patient-centered access to timely, welcoming, appropriate health and wellness team services offered through efficient utilization of DotHouse resources.
- **Finance:** Our sustainable, flexible, proactive and transparent financial infrastructure supports integration, innovation and workforce retention.
- **Clinical Care:** We are a learning Community Health Center that delivers high-quality health and wellness services that anticipate and meet the changing and diverse needs of our patients and community.
- **Workforce:** We have a fulfilling work environment that supports a balance of personal life and work through growth and trust.

Over the course of the next three years the Board and staff will work together to execute the Strategic Plan's accompanying Action Plan. The Action Plan identifies specific objectives and activities, persons' responsible, timeline for completion and resources required to achieve the goals. By having an Action Plan we have developed a "road map" to accomplish the mission and vision of the Strategic Plan.

ABOVE: SUPERINTENDENT NORA BASTON



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets

Current Assets	\$6,546,209
Investments	10,906,258
Restricted cash	418,716
Notes and Deferred Interest Receivable	-
Property, Plant and Equipment	16,778,783
Net Total Assets	\$34,649,966

Liabilities

Current Liabilities	\$3,688,181
Notes Payable, net of current option	230,725
Conditional Notes Payable	1,252,754
Net Assets	29,478,306
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$34,649,966

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES & CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

Operating Revenue

Net Patient Service Revenue	\$22,853,995
Grant and Contract Revenue	6,106,046
Forgiveness of Conditional Notes Payable	293,915
Investment Income	257,872
Other Revenue	263,362
Rental Income	45,375
Total Operating Revenue	\$29,820,565

Operating Expenses

Primary Care Expenses	\$11,175,292
Other Medical Expenses	5,613,164
Pharmacy	2,698,753
Behavioral Health	2,998,103
Optometry	2,333,629
Dental	3,516,660
Public Health and Social Services	967,234
Rental Properties	378,998
Total Operating Expenses	\$29,681,833
Net Operating Surplus or (Loss)	\$138,732

Non Operating Revenue

Net Realized and Unrealized Gain on Investments	438,049
Total Non Operating Revenue	\$438,049
Change In Net Assets	\$576,781

**Audited Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities & Change in Net Assets for Fiscal Year Ending, September 30, 2019



LEADERSHIP

Michelle Nadow, President & CEO
Byron Byfield, Chief Information Officer
John Cooney, Chief Financial Officer
Huy Nguyen, MD, Chief Medical Officer
Zaranique Pope, Chief Human Resources Officer

2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Megan Sonderegger, Chair
Chris McCoy, Vice Chair
Phi Tran, Secretary
Jack Wu, Treasurer
Rosa Beriguete
Paulo DeBarros
Annissa Essaibi George
Jeffrey Lopes
Maryssa Schneider McLean
Dominique Sye
Joel Wool

HRSA Funding Acknowledgement –

This report is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$3,265,695 (12.7%) with approximately \$22,449,067 (87.3%) financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor are an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.



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