

JOHN P. MUSANTE HEALTH CENTER

A MEDICAL HOME, OPEN TO EVERYONE

Medical and oral health care is essential to all of us, yet many of our neighbors go without.

THE OBSTACLES TO CARE

Many of us may be surprised to learn that in Amherst, Northampton, and surrounding towns, thousands of our neighbors go without appropriate health care every year. Obstacles include cost, residency status in this country, and homelessness. Others cycle on and off of public and private health insurance for a variety of reasons, including the loss of employer-sponsored plans. Many have no oral health care coverage—an insurmountable challenge to the dental care that directly affects their overall physical health.

While many local providers work to remain accessible, the demand for their services is enormous. Many practices are full. Fifty-seven percent of family medicine physicians and 29% of internists are not accepting new patients. Because of a lack of primary care providers in the region, new patients in Hampshire County must wait an average of 57 days for an internal medicine appointment.

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THOSE IN NEED

In our area, the need for affordable, accessible care is shared among diverse populations:

- Homeless individuals
- Trauma survivors and those with mental health needs
- Undocumented residents
- Seasonal workers
- Underinsured families
- Service industry workers with inflexible work schedules
- Working families with no dental coverage
- Working adults with dental insurance with high deductibles and minimal coverage
- Senior citizens on fixed incomes
- Individuals with public insurance who cannot find a provider able to accept this insurance
- Veterans

SEARCHING FOR SOLUTIONS

Twenty years ago in Amherst, a group of three dozen local health providers, service organizations, community groups, town and elected officials, and others came together to share their concern about the need for more accessible and affordable care. This group, the Hampshire County Health Care Access Task Force, searched for an effective response to this growing need. In 2013, Hilltown Community Health Center (HCHC), the Town of Amherst and Cooley Dickinson Hospital stepped forward with the resources needed to shift the Task Force's dream to a realistic possibility. The Town of Amherst offered space in its downtown Bangs Community Center. Cooley Dickinson Hospital provided initial planning funds. And the Hilltown Community Health Center agreed to operate a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) satellite.

Annually, Massachusetts FQHCs save **\$1,250** per patient in health care costs.





THE JOHN P. MUSANTE HEALTH CENTER

The John P. Musante Health Center is an accessible, affordable health center that provides primary and preventive medical, dental, and behavioral health care services. The Health Center is staffed with culturally sensitive providers and support staff who are trained to address the unique needs of the constituencies most in need. As is required of all FQHCs, these services will be provided to every patient regardless of their ability to pay.

Services will be provided through a patient-centered health home model. Clinical teams will collaborate and coordinate patient care in the context of the clients' broader needs, recognizing that obstacles to health go beyond clinical services. Factors such as poverty, education, language, transportation, and food security must be addressed so that patients can prioritize their health care and

adhere to treatment plans. In order to be as convenient as possible, the new Center will operate with hours that best meet the needs of its target populations. The Center's downtown location is available by several bus routes.

The Musante Health Center will have strong collaborative and referral relationships with other established providers and local service organizations. This reciprocal relationship will allow the Health

Center to connect clients with additional services.

Staffing includes 12 positions, including two full-time equivalent (FTE) primary care providers, one FTE dentist, one FTE dental hygienist, two FTE RN/LPNs, and one FTE community health worker. Operations are fully self-sustaining through insurance reimbursement and federal FQHC grants. Annually we anticipate serving 2,700 patients for a total of 10,200 medical and dental visits, once the Center is fully operational.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE JOHN P. MUSANTE HEALTH CENTER

Today, a group of volunteers is soliciting gifts from the community to create the John P. Musante Health Center. The \$2,400,000 cost of starting up the Health Center includes renovation, equipment, and a reserve fund. We've received strong financial support for the project. Through a highly competitive grants process, the federal Human Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) has awarded us \$1,000,000. Cooley Dickinson Hospital has granted \$150,000, and HCHC has committed over \$170,000 toward project costs.

Our fundraising efforts are imbued with that same commitment that motivated advocates 20 years ago, as well as a desire to honor John Musante's own passion for this mission.

We look to you, our friends and neighbors who value community health, to help us establish a community health center that will serve thousands of individuals and families who might otherwise go without medical and dental care. In doing so, you can help improve the well-being of our entire community. We invite you to join us in this truly community-driven effort and thank you in advance for your consideration.

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