



**CEO UPDATE:  
Frederica M. Williams  
President and CEO  
October 2016**



***Whittier Street Health Center has been designated as a Patient Centered Medical Home PRIME by the Health Policy Commission (HPC) of the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Health and Human Services***

Our work in integrating behavioral health into our primary care programs has been recognized and is officially Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH) PRIME certified. According to the Massachusetts Health Policy Commission (HPC), to date, Whittier scored the highest of all health centers in the entire Commonwealth. We are among the first practices to be certified under this innovative program.

We are proud that our commitment to patient-centered health care and addressing health disparities has been recognized. With the opioid abuse epidemic in Massachusetts at an all-time high, behavioral health care is vital and we are committed to reducing the high number of at-risk individuals. Addiction to pain killers is on the rise and according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health there were approximately 1,659 deaths in 2016 due to accidental overdose. The PCMH PRIME certification allows Whittier to address mental health and substance abuse disorders by facilitating early diagnosis and treatment.

***Whittier named Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts***

The Commonwealth Institute and Boston Globe have named Whittier one of the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts. This marks three consecutive years that Whittier has made this list. The award will be presented at an October 28th breakfast event and the Top 100 ranked list will appear in the October 30th Women and Power edition of the Boston Globe magazine.

***New Pharmacy to open in North Dorchester on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and a clinic in early 2017!***

The new Whittier clinic and pharmacy in North Dorchester will promote healthy living and disease management to help at-risk seniors in our community remain physically and mentally healthy, independent, and socially active. It is an investment in a long term bulwark against the rising tide of chronic diseases that will only grow more prevalent among seniors if left unchecked. The goal of the clinic is to also improve wellness and prevention services for children and adults. The new clinic will be located in the Quincy Commons on 279

Blue Hill Avenue, a new senior building owned by Nuestra Comunidad.

### ***Annual Back to School BBQ/Summer Enrichment Program celebration on August 26th***

Each year, Whittier hosts a summer enrichment program for 60 Boston Public School students living in the surrounding public housing developments, and creates job opportunities for peer leaders and youth interns. At the end of each summer enrichment program, Whittier hosts its Annual Back-to-School BBQ to celebrate the new school year. More than 600 community members came out to enjoy the festivities including live youth performances, food on the grill, fresh popcorn, and snow cones. Children flocked to the bouncy castle, bouncy playground, and inflatable basketball hoops. We are grateful to our sponsors for helping to create another successful Back-to-School BBQ. We wish to thank The Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) for providing refreshing water courtesy of its H2Go Water Trailer; The Boston Police Department (BPD), who gave out free ice cream; and Cradles to Crayons and General Electric (GE), who each provided 200 free book bags. GE also had volunteers assist with this fantastic day.

***Please click on the link to view 2016 Annual Back to School BBQ***

***Photos: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/whittierstreet/5B7108>***

### ***Whittier's Strategy for Patient Self-Management proves Effective for Community Health***

Self-care is a key strategy for health promotion and disease prevention that Whittier teaches patients as part of its overall effort to prevent chronic diseases, save lives and reduce healthcare costs. Through the Prevention & Wellness Trust Fund (PWTF) Boston Partnership funded by the Department of Public Health and supported by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), Whittier led several initiatives to address falls prevention in seniors, in partnership with the Central Boston Elder Service. The Whittier Falls Prevention Program includes geriatric wellness services, Matter of Balance (teaching patients meditation and balance) and a six-week Chronic Disease Self-Management workshop (My Life, My Health), in which patients worked on weekly action plans - goals that they hope to work on and achieve. Fifty percent of the seniors had previous falls and did not inform their primary care provider or caregiver and 100% of them were afraid of falling. By the end of the workshop 85% of the participants' surveys were no longer fearful of falling. All of the participants (100%) in the My Life, My Health workshops had a better understanding of their chronic disease and could focus on self-care and wellness.

According to BPHC students in six of the eight elementary schools in Roxbury and North Dorchester have an overall absentee rate 30% higher than their classmates without asthma. Forty-one percent of hypertensive patients had blood pressure rates greater than 140/90 mm Hg. Fall-related death rates was 29.2 and 27.2 per 100,000 for North Dorchester Roxbury respectively among residents 65 years and

older. By 2020, fall-related health care costs are estimated to reach \$44 billion, the total costs associated with asthma are estimated to be \$56 billion annually, total costs associated with hypertension were \$46 billion in 2011 and direct medical costs for falls reached \$53 billion in 2013.

### ***Whittier's Take-the-Clinic-to-the-People Initiative Encourages Community to Take Charge of their Health***

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is now the leading cause of death and disability for African Americans. According to the National Stroke Association, one in three African Americans has hypertension. Hypertension is the leading cause for seven out of every ten first heart attacks, eight of every ten strokes and seven of every ten heart failures. Whittier is moving from managing chronic diseases with primary care to self-care and we do not wait for patients to come to our clinic; we take our clinic to them. Our ***Take-the-Clinic-to-the-People Initiative*** aims to give each patient the knowledge and confidence to self-manage chronic conditions. We conduct blood pressure screening exercises at public housing developments and community events, and educate those who are already hypertensive to explore the right treatment options for their current condition.

### ***New BPHC Grant Funds Aim to Improve Access to Healthy Food Options among Boston Residents***

Public housing residents in Boston are 3.5 times more likely to be affected by obesity and related health conditions than non-public housing residents. The price of healthy food, particularly fruits and vegetables, is often too high for low income families. According to the American Dietetic Association, an average low-income family would have to devote 43 to 70 percent of its food budget to fruits and vegetables to meet the recommended five + servings of fruits and vegetable each day. Through our partnership with Fair Foods Boston, a non-profit food rescue organization, residents have access to healthy and affordable food, as bags stuffed with fresh produce and fruit can be purchased for just \$2 per bag! Our nutritionists also provide nutrition counseling and education, and healthy demonstrations in our kitchen at Whittier. The funding will also support educational opportunities for five of Whittier's trained social health coordinators (SHCs) living in the five public housing developments to perform education and outreach activities. SHCs have been effective in providing community members with linkages and referrals to local resources 24/7.

***For more information, please click on this nine minute [Whittier Street Health Center Video](#) that highlights our efforts to provide equitable access to high quality health care for all, regardless of their ability to pay for services!***

#### **Upcoming Events:**

- Thursday, October 13, 2016 12p.m. to 2 p.m. Hispanic Heritage Celebration, Whittier Street Health Center
- Thursday, October 27, 2016 3.30p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Boo to Bad Health, Whittier Street Health Center
- Friday December 9, 2016 12 p.m. to 2p.m. Holiday Event for Seniors, Whittier Street Health Center

- Thursday, December 15, 2016 3.30p.m. to 6.30 p.m. Clean Teeth for Toys, Whittier Street Health Center
- Wednesday, December 7, 2016 4p.m to 6p.m Women For Whittier Holiday Tea, Keynote Speaker Attorney General Maura Healey, Boston Park Plaza Hotel
- Thursday, April 6, 2017 5.30p.m. to 9p.m. Roast for Tom May, Chairman, Eversource Energy, Fairmount Copley Hotel

Thank you for continued support for Whittier Street Health Center's mission. Please visit our website ([www.wshc.org](http://www.wshc.org)) and our Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube pages for more information regarding our impact in the community and upcoming events.



Wishing you good health!

Frederica M. Williams  
President and CEO

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**Comprehensive. Compassionate. Community.**

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