

Dot Health Digest

www.dorchesterhouse.org

Dorchester House Public Flu Clinics — Over 6000 Vaccinated!

Since September, Dorchester House has been holding free flu clinics every Saturday from 9:00-1:00.

Open to anyone, the clinics are staffed by employees and volunteers from Dot House and volunteers from the Boston Public Health Commission.

At the first five clinics, over 2,600 doses of seasonal flu vaccine were distributed.

Due to a shortage in supply, Dot House stopped offering seasonal flu vaccine on November 7th and began distributing doses of H1N1 vaccine.

Through the last three clinics,

Dot House has inoculated over 4,000 people.

This massive effort by Dot House to vaccinate the residents of Boston

has not gone unnoticed by the BPHC or the community.

BPHC continues to give large amounts of H1N1 vaccine doses each week to Dot House due to the well-organized, high volume clinics.



Lisa Broderick, RN, delivers a flu shot.

The November 14th clinic was highlighted on WCVB channel 5 nightly news – check out our website to see the clip – and Dot House

has heard great feedback from clinic customers.

We continue to encourage people who are most at risk for flu, including children, pregnant women, and adults with respiratory or immune problems

to get the H1N1 vaccine.

Dot House free public flu clinics will continue to be held each Saturday from 9:00-1:00 through the end of December, pending the distribution of vaccine by the BPHC.

For this reason, each week there is a possibility of a clinic being cancelled or rescheduled.

For the most up to date information regarding vaccine availability and Saturday clinics, please call our hotline at 617-740-2553 or check our website at www.dorchesterhouse.org.

Inside this issue:

Free Public Flu Clinic	1
Letter from the CEO	2
Prenatal Case Management	2
Healthy Weight for Life	3
Program Offerings	3
Welcome to our E-newsletter	3
Teen Center Expands	4

H1N1 Flu: Facts to Know

- H1N1 flu is commonly referred to as “swine” flu.
- Symptoms are similar to seasonal flu and include cough, fever, sore throat, muscle aches, and chills. They can be mild or severe.
- H1N1 spreads the same way as seasonal flu, through sneezing or coughing.
- H1N1 is different from seasonal flu because it is a new strain of virus, and most people do not have

protection against it.

- Children and people under the age of 25 are most at risk of catching H1N1.
- For those who catch the flu, factors associated with serious complications include pregnancy, diabetes, asthma, and heart disease. Those over age 65 are also at risk.

Did you know...Dorchester House gave out **over 270 turkeys** to families in need for Thanksgiving?

Protecting Yourself from “Swine” Flu

- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently.
- Cover your mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Get a vaccine for H1N1, especially if you one of the “at risk” groups above.
- See our website or www.bphc.org for more information on H1N1 and on free flu clinics.



Letter from the CEO...

Dear Friends,

I am excited to welcome you to the first edition of *Dot Health Digest*, our e-newsletter. It is appearing just as I begin my 24th year at Dorchester House.

This has me thinking about the many changes we have experienced during that time—we have instituted a no-smoking policy, introduced computer technology, constructed a state-of-the-art facility, implemented the electronic health record, and so much more. Ours has been a culture of change and innovation.

Given the sobering financial picture we are facing, one might ask if that culture must end. The

answer is an emphatic “no”. On the contrary, we need to continue to put our energies toward adaptation or we will succumb to the bad stuff.

One of our most promising initiatives is the Patient Centered Medical Home. As the name implies, the central tenet of the PCMH is “the patient” for whom all care is coordinated by the primary care provider and team.

Being patient centered means not always telling the patient what we think is best, but often accommodating the patient’s needs and wants. Our new walk-in service, for example, is meant to serve patients who want immediate care, while also reducing the unnecessary use of

emergency rooms.

Being patient-centered also means tracking and helping to guide our patients’ care through all referral processes — never losing touch with the patient. Pat Egan and I will be communicating with you more about the PCMH in the near future.

Patient-centeredness is just the latest in our continuing effort to maintain our organization as a place of excellence. When I think about all the great things we do here at the Dorchester House — our comprehensive care, clinical excellence, and variety of wellness services, from the Teen Center to our pool, to name a few—I see that we are doing more than



Joel Abrams, CEO

delivering health care. We are making our community stronger.

Yours in health,
Joel Abrams

Sharing Good News

Expanding Prenatal Case Management

“Providers and medical staff will work closely with the case managers to provide a seamless range of patient-centered, prenatal care.”



Jametta Cooley and Clara Cabral

Through the addition of two new grants, prenatal patients at Dorchester House now have access to intensive case management and social services throughout their pregnancy and two years post-partum.

We are happy to welcome two new case managers, Jametta Cooley and Clara Cabral, who are working with Black women and their babies through the Boston Healthy Start Initiative (BHSI), funded by the Boston Public Health Commission.

They are joining Nicole White

who is working part-time on this effort. Bach Yen Tran continues her work as a case manager with the Parent-to-Parent (P2P) program, funded by Tufts Medical Center. P2P services focus on Vietnamese women as a priority population while offering prenatal case management to other patient populations within the health center.

During their prenatal visits to Dorchester House, pregnant patients are offered the opportunity to join one of the programs in order to receive services from

the case managers and participate in workshops. Case managers are also reaching out into the community to help women access our prenatal services and provide information on the importance of early prenatal care.

Providers and medical staff will work closely with the case managers to provide a seamless range of patient-centered, prenatal care. By emphasizing early and regular prenatal care and support services, these initiatives will produce better birth outcomes for our patients.



For a Healthy Dorchester

Dorchester House is bringing back the Healthy Weight for Life Clinic starting January 12th. The program promotes healthy eating and exercise for children by involving the entire family.

The Healthy Weight Clinic is unique because it brings families together in a group setting so they can support and learn from each other.

The group meets monthly for hands-on learning and active play for the kids, and group education for the parents. A healthy dinner is also included as part of the program.

As part of Dorchester House's broader Healthy Weight for Life Initiative, this clinic brings together a pediatrician, nutritionist, case manager, and physical

therapist in collaboration to support our patients' diverse needs.

The program is designed for children ages 6-12 whose BMI is greater than the 95th percentile. For more information on the program, contact Mary Lynch or Marika Hewes at 617-740-2636.



"Step Up to a Healthier You" participants.

Welcome to our E-Newsletter!

Dorchester House Multi-Service Center is pleased to welcome you to our first e-newsletter!

Dot Health Digest will provide news for our supporters and our patients. Our goal is to provide only the most useful information, such as seasonal medical tips, updates on new initiatives, or a spotlight of a volunteer.

Many of you will remember our old newsletter, *Dot House Healthy Times*. We

want to build on that great tradition with *Dot Health Digest*, but also take advantage of new technologies and ways of communicating.

In short, we want to produce a newsletter that you want to read, in a format that is easy for you to access. If you think we can improve, visit our website at www.dorchesterhouse.org and go to the suggestion box, or call our main number at 617-288-3230, and we will gladly respond!

Dot Health Digest will be published in print and electronic form four times a year, and will be distributed through email, in our waiting rooms, and on our website.

Want To Donate?

Visit website for details.

Community Offerings

Autumn's Featured Programs

For Youth

Fantastic Kids

A **DotWell** after-school fitness and nutrition program that combines fun, interactive nutrition games, healthy snacks, and gym and pool activities for children age 8-12 that struggle with eating healthy and staying active. (Call Helio for details at 617-740-2388.)

Step Up To A Healthier You

An after-school program for girls ages 13-18 that are overweight and are interested in finding a healthy weight. The program aims to promote self-empowerment, nutrition awareness, physical activity, and an overall healthy lifestyle. (Call Marika at 617-740-2572 for details.)

For Parents

WIC (Women, Infants and Children)

A nutrition education program that provides nutrition, health education and healthy foods to families. **Please call today to see if you qualify.** 617-825-0805.

Fun With Nutrition

Groups for Parents and Kids that meet on Tuesdays at 6pm, and on Fridays and Saturdays from 9am-1pm. **Breastfeeding Classes** are offered every Thursday at 5:30pm in English and Vietnamese. Please call ahead to schedule, all are welcome.



Nurturing Fathers

Also known as "Dot Dads," this 13-week program helps men of all ages to develop better nurturing skills and become more confident parents and/or caregivers. (For more information call Paul at 617-740-2269.)

Open to All

Community Pool

Our pool has it all: yearlong membership fees, senior swim hours, family swim times, kids programs, and a community swim hour every day for only a few dollars. Swimming is

fantastic exercise! (For more information on pool hours, swim lessons, and programs, call Nate at 617-740-2234.)

Did you know... Dorchester House offers **acupuncture services**? See website for details.



Dorchester House
Multi-Service Center



Health Care and Wellness . . . For Life!

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Dorchester House Expands Teen Center

On October 19th, Dot House held a grand unveiling for the expanded Teen Center.

Functioning as a drop-in center, the Teen Center is a place where youth can come to meet new friends, participate in activities like basketball or the cycling program, get help on school or home issues, and learn important life skills.



Of particular excitement is the arts and multimedia initiative, through which a group of teens produced their own Teen Center promotional video.

Marisa Luse, DotWell’s Director of Community Programs, calls the Teen Center “a place for teens to develop, to explore, and to give back to the community,” noting that it is a great resource for young people to be active and engaged in their community.

The center, newly painted and furnished with furniture kindly donated by our supporters, has hosted about 100 teens each month since

moving into its new space, with 31 of them being newly registered.

Monetary and in-kind donations are always welcome. For more information, call Cheryl at 617-740-2231.

Far left: Teen Center participants prepare a healthy meal for the Boston Collaborative Fund & Fitness Community Meeting.

Middle: Dorchester Youth Council members shoot some hoops at the Dot House gym.

Right, bottom: DotWell peer leaders teach FanKids participants about portion control and snacking.



Dot Health Digest

Dot Health Digest is published four times a year by the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center, dedicated to serving the Dorchester community.

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