

# Dot Health Digest



## Patient Spotlight: Tammy Ly Built a New Life in Dorchester

In 1991, Tammy Ly made the difficult decision to move to the United States to seek a better life for her and her children.

Many challenges would lie ahead for Tammy. She was a single mother with two young children, ages 2 and 8. She spoke no English at the time, had no relative to help her, and little in the way of money.

Tammy settled in Dorchester, knowing it had a strong Vietnamese community. People here spoke her language, and she could ask them for help.

One of her first tasks in her new home was to find a place for her children to receive medical care. Tammy understood the importance of good health, and wasted no time in asking her neighbor for a recommendation.

*“Tammy’s story is inspiring...she has accomplished so much for herself and her children.”*

When her neighbor told her to try Dorchester House Multi-Service Center for its language capacity, Tammy decided to try it out. She quickly discovered that Dot House not only has Vietnamese translators, but excellent and friendly providers.

“The staff took the time to listen to my children’s medical needs,” says Tammy. Of her own provider, Nsa Henshaw, M.D., Tammy notes: “Dr. Henshaw is a caring, courteous, and good listener.”

For the Dot House staff, seeing her and her children was a pleasure!

“Tammy’s story is inspiring,” notes her friend Mary

Truong, Director of External Affairs. “She has accomplished so much for herself and her children.”

That may be putting it mildly, as Tammy’s story is truly inspiring. Deciding to improve her and her children’s lives, Tammy enrolled in a trade school. She realized she wanted to own her own nail salon.

The task would be hard, but Tammy was not to be denied. Upon graduating, she borrowed some money from friends and opened her first nail salon in 2001.

A mere ten years later, Tammy now owns three salons, employs ten people, and is respected in the Dorchester community, which she now supports through charitable contributions.

Tammy has built a good life for herself — she is a



Tammy Ly, Dorchester House patient and friend

successful businesswoman, and her two children were able to graduate from college, earning degrees from UMass Boston and Harvard.

The folks here at Dot House are proud of Tammy and her children, and pleased to still serve as their primary care providers. We are honored to spotlight Tammy in this newsletter, and thank her — and the many fantastic patients we have — for continuing to make this health center such a great place to be.

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## Letter from the CEO...

Dear Friends,

The past few months have flown by at Dorchester House, as we have many exciting things going on.

We broke ground on our new building at the end of October, in a ceremony that featured many of our area's committed supporters, including Mayor Menino and other dignitaries.

Board Member Annissa George told the story of her family which now has three generations who are patients at Dot House. While she spoke, her young children played around the podium,

charming the crowd.

Since then, construction has sped along, thanks to the good people at Shawmut Construction. These guys work rain, shine, or snow, and we owe them a huge "thank you."

**Did you know...** You can see pictures of the construction project on our website!

Our efforts to transform Dorchester House into a nationally-certified Patient-Centered Medical Home continue. Our staff focus daily on making our great health center even better, by finding ways to make the

Dorchester House experience more friendly, convenient, and faster for the patient.

They focus equally on improving patient health outcomes through better service coordination, case management, and chronic care management.

Our partners at DotWell support this mission through their efforts to address the social determinants of health in truly innovative ways. They are a big help to us and to Codman Square Health Center in improving the overall health outcomes of the neighborhood.



Joel Abrams, CEO

I am proud that as we build a new wing to expand Dot House, we are making ourselves feel more like a *Home*.

Yours in Health,  
Joel Abrams

## Sharing Good News

### Introducing TEAMS at Dorchester House

Patients in Adult and Family Medicine may have noticed something different in the past several weeks.

Perhaps they noticed that every time they visit us, now, they see the same medical assistant.

Maybe they also heard providers, nurses, registration, and appointment staff using a new word: "TEAM."

As we become a Patient-Centered Medical Home, we

have **teams** of providers, nurses, and medical assistants.

What does this mean? If you are a patient, it means that when you come for a visit, you will not just see anyone who is available.

Instead, you will see the same people at every visit — your own doctor, the same medical assistant, and soon you may get used to seeing the same nurse. This is because the

same staff work with your provider all of the time!

It means you will get to know the people who take care of you, and they will get to know you.

Even if your provider is not here on a day you need to visit, you can see another provider on the same **team**. This means that the person will not be a strange face, but will already know you.

For example, say you need to

contact a medical person but you do not need an appointment. That used to be a challenge, but now, you can contact someone on your **team!**

Dorchester House is a large health center. But by organizing our medical staff into **teams** that patients can depend on, we are making ourselves feel just a little bit smaller.

**Did you know...** Teams will soon be added to Pediatrics!



## Community Happenings

### Local Partner: Mujeres Unidas en Acción

Dot House is pleased to feature a local partner, Mujeres Unidas en Acción, or MUA.

MUA's mission is to "strengthen the voice of low-income Latina women and to empower Latino families to participate more actively in the political, social, and economic life not only of the

Latino community, but also of society at large.

MUA recruits women for its educational programs, which include classes, workshops, leadership training, and a social service component.

Executive Director Felisa White is proud of MUA's Bridge to College classes,

which accept anyone (males and females) who are interested in going to community college.

Staff from Dot House will be visiting MUA on February 2 (see sidebar).

For more information, visit [www.muaboston.org](http://www.muaboston.org).

### Dot House in the Community

Come see staff from Dorchester House in the community. Swing by to say "Hi," and improve your health while you are there! Call Mary at 617-740-2419.

**February 2, 2011: Health Talk** Family Planning, at Mujeres Unidas En Acción, 11:00am

**February 24, 2011: Health Talk** Health Care Proxy, at Cardinal Medeiros Manor, 2:30pm

**March 1, 2011: Screening** Diabetes Screening, at the Washington Heights Tenants' Association, 10:00am

**March 3, 2011: Forum** Vietnamese Leaders Community Forum, at Dot House, 12:00pm

## Winter Featured Programs

### For Youth

#### Healthy Weight for Life Clinic

For children who want to achieve a healthier weight, eat delicious food, and learn how to swim! The current class is full, but anyone interested in the next group can ask about the program. (Call Mary for details at 617-288-3230 x 2636.)



### Green Corner

Keep your home warm this winter, and save on heating costs, with these tips:

- Make sure your storm windows are in place to keep the heat inside.
- Keep shades open during the day, and closed in the evening, to retain heat.
- Do not block radiators or vents with furniture or draperies, and keep them clean of dust.
- Set your water heater between 110 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

### For Adults

#### DotWell Tax Clinics

If you earned less than \$49,000 last year, come have your taxes prepared for free at Dorchester House or Codman Square. Last year, these clinics returned over \$4.5 million to the community! Come Mon. and Wed. from 4-8pm, or Sat. from 9am-Noon. (For more information call Shauntell at 617-822-8171.)

**Did you know...** Dorchester House swim classes are **American Red Cross certified?** To learn more, call Nate, listed above.

### 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.)

**When you NEED care, just walk right in.**

**Walk-in Urgent Care now 7 days a week!**

Illness doesn't keep business hours which is why our Urgent Care is open for you 7 days a week.

During regular hours:  
 Mon - Thur 8am - 9pm  
 Friday 8am - 5pm  
 Saturday 9am - 1pm  
 AND, weekend hours:  
 Saturday until 3pm  
 Sunday 9am - 1pm

*High quality, friendly health care in your neighborhood.*

**Dorchester House**  
 Multi-Service Center  
 In Fields Corner  
 1353 Dorchester Avenue  
 617-288-3230  
 For more information, visit us on the web at [www.dorchesterhouse.org](http://www.dorchesterhouse.org)

### Want To Donate?

Visit website for details.



Dorchester House  
Multi-Service Center



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Health Care and Wellness . . . For Life!

Meet us on:



## A Community Movement to Prepare Children for School

The programs and services at Dorchester House often seem varied, but all our efforts are tied together by the singular goal of improving our patients' health.

That is why Dot House is pleased to serve as the "hub agency" for *Fields Corner Children Thrive*, a key pillar of the Boston-wide *Thrive in 5* initiative that emphasizes school readiness for young children in the community.

But what does community health have to

do with "Thrive," as the initiative is called? Simply stated, education matters. It is widely accepted that education is highly important in predicting a person's lifelong health status, and the first five years of a child's life are vital for future educational achievement.

That is why, as a partner for *Fields Corner Children Thrive*, Dorchester House is helping to ensure that children are ready for school. Our goal is to develop a community-directed *movement* in Fields

Corner that supports parents, enhances services for families and young children, and engages the community in promoting early childhood education and care.



By investing in our children's education, we invest in their health for the future — and in the health of the neighborhood.

To learn more, visit our website at [www.dorchesterhouse.org](http://www.dorchesterhouse.org). All who live and work in Fields Corner should be involved!

### 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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