

Seconds count

STEMI Quality Improvement Task Force celebrates major achievement

FROM THE TIME a person first experiences symptoms of a heart attack, such as shortness of breath or chest discomfort, to the time he or she undergoes cardiac catheterization – a procedure used to diagnose and treat a blocked coronary artery – every second is of utmost importance.

In 2003, the MGH established the ST-segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) Quality Improvement Task Force, a team with representatives from the Heart Center, Emergency Department (ED), and MGH/MGPO Center for Quality and Safety. Their goal was to focus on ways the team – along with emergency medical service (EMS) personnel – could shorten the timeframe between a patient's arrival at the hospital to the restoration of blood flow to the patient's heart in the cardiac catheterization lab. This critical period of time, known as the door-to-balloon (DTB) time, has a target set by national quality organizations of 90 minutes or less.

"The multidisciplinary STEMI task force looked closely at ways to streamline existing processes and also develop new strategies to decrease DTB time," says Kenneth Rosenfield, MD, section head for Vascular Medicine and Intervention and chair of the task force. "As a team, we examined all the pieces of the puzzle – EMS activities, ED protocols, transport issues and cardiac cath lab processes – so we could better fit the pieces together and significantly decrease the time it takes to get the patient into the cath lab to remove the blockage and restore blood flow."

Among the ways the task force improved the average DTB time was implementing a process to review all cases arriving at the MGH as possible
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90 MINUTES OR LESS: From left, Scott Taylor, of Professional Ambulance; Lt. Phil Arsenault, of the Cambridge Fire Department (CFD); Perrin; Lt. Ray Vaillancourt, of the CFD; and Rosenfield



New mural on Bigelow 6

TELEVISIONS, SNEAKERS, giant lollipops and tennis racquets usually aren't found in trees. But those items can be found nestled in the leaves of a giant tree in a sunny park scene painted on the walls of the Conscious Sedation Room in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) on Bigelow 6. The mural was painted by local artist Elisabeth Rutchick, who found the opportunity to volunteer her creative talents through "a friend of a friend of an MGHer," according to Hilary D'Amato, MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGHfC) Child Life specialist, who spearheaded the project.

"We are thrilled with the mural Elisabeth painted," says D'Amato, whose own creativity helped to devise the scene
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I SPY: Rutchick stands in front of the mural she painted on Bigelow 6.

– Seconds count

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heart attacks. “May Cadigan, a registered nurse in the Cardiology Division, regularly compiles an information sheet about each case,” says Liz Temin, MD, attending physician in the ED. “She records data from every part of the case – such as the names of all staff involved, presenting symptoms, whether or not there was prenotification by the ambulance personnel and the interventions performed in the cardiac cath lab. Feedback and suggestions for improvement are requested.”

Temin explains that EMS staff members also receive a report. Information including the EMS assessment, the electrocardiogram, the cardiac cath lab intervention and a before-and-after photo of the occluded vessel is sent to the team. This feedback is important for continued improvement in coordination between EMS and MGH providers.

“Gathering these data and sending them back to all of the caregivers involved from start to finish enables all parties to see themselves as part of a larger care team working toward the common goal of optimizing the outcome for the patient,” says Rosenfield.

Since 2005, the average DTB time has steadily improved at the MGH. In 2010, approximately 95 percent of cases at the hospital met or exceeded the goal of 90 minutes or less, putting the MGH in the top tier of hospitals across the United States. To celebrate this accomplishment and the teamwork involved, the STEMI Quality Improvement Task Force gathered with members of the ED, cardiac cath lab, MGH/MGPO Center for Quality and Safety, and EMS at a celebratory breakfast March 24 in the East Garden Room. As a highlight of the event, two patients who had benefited from short DTB times and received life-saving cardiac catheterization gave remarks expressing their gratitude.

Steven Perrin, one of the two patients, suffered a heart attack and cardiac arrest at his office in June 2010. Unconscious, he was given CPR by a coworker. EMS arrived within minutes to continue the resuscitation and bring Perrin to the MGH, alerting the MGH along the way so ED staff would be ready to receive him. The DTB time for Perrin was 76 minutes, and he is now riding his bicycle 20 miles a day. He cannot remember what happened after he collapsed in his office, but he expressed his appreciation to all of the team members at the event for saving his life.

Says Elizabeth Mort, MD, vice president for the MGH/MGPO Center for Quality and Safety: “Door-to-balloon time is a very specific measure of quality. There are so many steps and multiple staff and hospital departments involved in the process. It was critical to look at existing processes and develop ways to restructure them. I am extremely proud of all of the individuals involved in these remarkable achievements. It really is a team effort.”

For more information about the STEMI Quality Improvement Task Force, contact Paul Nordberg, senior consultant for Performance Improvement at the MGH/MGPO Center for Quality and Safety, at pnordberg@partners.org. ■



LEADING SOCIAL SERVICES: Cannon leads the MGH Social Service Department in a Volunteer Day parade around the Bulfinch lawn on June 22, 1944.

March is Social Work Month

AS PART OF its bicentennial celebration, the MGH recognizes the important legacy of the Social Service Department. In 1905, the MGH was the first hospital in the United States to establish such a department. Under the leadership of Ida M. Cannon, the inaugural chief, the department initially provided assistance to outpatients and addressed issues at the intersection of health and social welfare, such as tuberculosis prevention and the needs of young unmarried pregnant women.

“Today, licensed clinical social workers provide a wide array of psychosocial services to patients and families – such as crisis intervention, adjustment to illness and eliminating psychosocial barriers to optimize health care,” says Ann Daniels, PhD, LICSW, executive director of the department. “We are extremely proud of the department’s long tradition of pioneering social work care for our patients.”

During Social Work Month in March, the department hosted a variety of events and activities to showcase the expertise and dedication of these professionals. The celebration launched with a series of information tables in the White Lobby from March 7 through 19, featuring a different departmental program each day. A poster series provided passersby in the lobby with information on special programs and services highlighting the department’s storied history.

Social service staff also shared their expertise with the MGH community through a series of grand rounds presentations. The topics were mindfulness in the health care setting, ethics in end-of-life care, attachment therapy, cultural formulation models and living with uncertainty.

For more information about the MGH Social Service Department, access www.mghsocialwork.org. ■

– Mural

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with the tree and its unusual items. “Elisabeth was extremely flexible and willing to incorporate my ideas even when they changed throughout the project. She understood that the mural needed to be interactive and not just decorative.”

D’Amato explains that both parents and caregivers can use the mural to distract a nervous child by asking him or her to spot hidden items. A complete list of the objects to locate soon will be posted in the room.

Rutchick completed the project in only three weekends in February and March, donating her time and talent. MGHfC patient

Sebastian Matia Coreas had seen the work in progress and noted that a skateboard was his favorite item in the tree, but he thought it could use some more detail. He suggested to Rutchick that she add a lightning bolt to the skateboard. She did, and it made Sebastian’s day when he later saw the mural.

Steps to Success

“WHERE DO I START?” This and other questions were addressed at “Taking the First Step, Strategies to get on a Successful Career Path,” hosted by the MGH Training and Workforce Development Office on March 17. The workshop is the first of the annual “Steps to Success” career development series established to help employees make informed career decisions.

Evette Sewell, a coordinator in the Emergency Department (ED), shared how she took the first step by successfully completing the Partners Career and Workforce Development (PCWD) pre-employment program, interning in the ED and ultimately being hired. “You must leave your comfort zone to acquire what will be a better life,” she told her MGH colleagues.

“We know higher education is the key to career advancement in health care, but sometimes that first step can seem like an enormous leap,” says Carlyene Prince-Erickson, director of Employee Education and Leadership Development.

Beyond the financial challenges higher education presents, working adults often face the difficulties of managing the priorities of family and/or multiple jobs. For Sewell, that challenge came in the form of a house fire just one day before she was scheduled to start PCWD. “I had a choice: abandon my dream or persevere,” she says. Sewell chose to persevere and has her sights on earning a master’s degree and pursuing a career in radiology.

The programs and services available to MGH employees – such as tuition assistance, academic coaching, online resources and the Employee Assistance Program – are designed to help staff navigate those challenges. “It’s the collaborative efforts of many, including Partners Career and Workforce Development and Jewish Vocational Services, that make these resources available to our workforce,” Prince-Erickson says.

For more information about MGH Training and Workforce Development initiatives, visit http://is.partners.org/hr/New_Web/mgh/mgh_training.htm. ■



FIRST STEPS: Sewell shares her success story at the workshop.



UNIQUE NEEDS: From left, Karen Darocha, RN, MGHfC staff nurse; Rosemond Boateng-Boadu, MGHfC patient care associate; and Broder-Fingert discuss specialized care plans for patients with autism.

Improving care for patients with autism

APRIL IS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH, and at MassGeneral Hospital for Children (MGHfC), a team led by Sarabeth Broder-Fingert, MD, a second-year resident in Pediatrics, is working to improve the inpatient experience for patients with autism and their families.

Through the Quality and Safety Mini-Grant Program of MGHfC, Broder-Fingert received support to create a specialized hospital admission plan for patients with autism and their families. To carry out the project, she recruited a multidisciplinary team, including caregivers from the Lurie Family Center for Autism at MGH, other MGHfC physicians, occupational therapists, social workers and child life specialists, and parents.

After months of meetings and with the guidance of an advisory board, the team came up with a standardized document carefully designed to identify the special needs of each patient with autism, whether related to environment, feeding or communication. The document, which will be a part of the patient’s electronic medical record, provides staff with the detailed information they need to ensure that the patient is as comfortable as possible. In addition, a summary of the information will be posted at each patient’s bedside for easy access.

“Every patient with autism is unique, and likewise, his or her needs are unique,” says Broder-Fingert. “Sometimes small things can make a really big difference, whether it be speaking softly or changing the lighting in the room. These things can literally make or break a hospital admission for a patient with autism, but they are not usually listed as part of a patient’s official medical chart. We are trying to change that.”

The team began incorporating the new documentation into patient medical records this month and expects the initiative to be fully implemented by August. Post-visit surveys of parents and providers are being conducted to gain feedback about the effectiveness of the initiative. So far, says Broder-Fingert, the feedback has been excellent.

Now that the team is helping better communicate the needs of patients with autism, it is purchasing specialized supplies to support staff in meeting those needs, including weighted vests and blankets, sensory toys, and communication software for creating storyboards and social stories. The supplies, which are being purchased with funds from the MGHfC grant, will be kept in the Ellison 17 Playroom.

“At MGHfC, we have a strong tradition of family-centered care,” says Broder-Fingert. “This initiative is a way for patients with autism and their families to have a voice in their care.”

WHAT'S HAPPENING**MGH Senior HealthWISE**

MGH Senior HealthWISE is offering a lecture for seniors ages 60 and older, "Common Adult Foot Problems," April 7 from 11 am to noon in the Haber Conference Room. Lauren Fisher, DPM, a resident in MGH Podiatry Services, will present. For more information or to register, call 617-724-6756.

National Healthcare Decisions Day

In honor of National Healthcare Decisions Day, the Patient Care Services Ethics in Clinical Practice and Patient Education committees will sponsor information tables in the White Lobby April 15 from 8 am to 3 pm about advance-care planning. The annual national initiative

and the information tables aim to encourage patients to express their wishes regarding their health care decisions, increase awareness among health care providers about respecting those wishes and emphasize the importance of providing patients, families and staff with information about advance-care planning. A list of helpful websites and materials about the role of a health care proxy and the advance-care planning process plus on-site consultation and education will be available.

Research subject privacy

The Clinical Research Program will offer "Maintaining Research Subject Privacy and Information Security: What Clinical Researchers Must Know" April 7 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm in the Simches Research Center, Room 3.110. Paula Moran, MGH privacy manager; Kirk Jones, MGH information security officer; and Elizabeth Hohmann, MD, physician director of Partners IRB, will present. This lecture is strongly recommended for all clinical investigators, research nurses and study coordinators. To register, access <http://hub.partners.org/catalog>. For more information, contact Lauren Michaels at lmichaels@partners.org.

Heart Center education class

The MGH Heart Center is holding its monthly patient and family education class, "Understanding Heart Failure," April 6 from 10:30 to 11:30 am in the Yawkey Center, Room 4-820. The class will be taught by Jagmeet Singh, MD, PhD, and Mary Orencole, NP, both of the Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy Program. For more information or to register, call 617-643-1452.

Journey of Hope

"Multiple Myeloma: Journey of Hope," an event to benefit multiple myeloma research at the MGH Cancer Center, will be held April 8 at 6:30 pm at the Liberty Hotel. The event will include food, drinks, music, and live and silent auctions. For more information, visit www.mmmhope.org.

Stress management talk

The Maxwell and Eleanor Blum Patient and Family Learning Center is hosting an event in its "Healthy Living" series featuring Peg Baim, MS, NP,

MGH ranks among top metro and national hospitals

THE MGH RANKS among the best hospitals in the Boston area and nationwide according to *U.S. News & World Report* and Thomson Reuters, respectively. While *U.S. News & World Report* annually issues the much-anticipated list of the nation's "Best Hospitals," on March 29 it announced the first-ever "Best Hospitals metro area rankings," in which the MGH ranked number one in the Boston area. In the Thomson Reuters list, the MGH was identified among the top 100 U.S. major teaching hospitals.

The *U.S. News & World Report* metro area list drew on data from the national 2010-11 "Best Hospitals" list. To be ranked, hospitals were required to score in the top 25 percent in at least one of 16 medical specialties. Scores were based on reputation, death rate, patient safety and other care-related factors such as nursing. The Thomson Reuters ranking used objective research and public data to evaluate hospitals on measures including patient care, operational efficiency and financial stability and compared them to similar facilities in terms of size and teaching status.

For more information about the *U.S. News & World Report* best hospitals in the metro area list, access <http://health.usnews.com/best-hospitals/area/boston-ma>. For more information about the Thomson Reuters list of top 100 hospitals, access www.100tophospitals.com.

of the Benson Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine, April 6 from noon to 1 pm at the Blum Center in the White Building, Room 110. Baim will discuss techniques for general stress management and conduct a brief relaxation module. This program is free and open to all. Registration is not required. For more information, contact Jen Searl at 617-724-3823.

On-site Spanish classes

MGH Training and Workforce Development, in partnership with the HablEspañol Language Center, is hosting Spanish classes beginning the week of April 10. Each class meets one evening a week for 10 weeks from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. The \$150 course fee, which includes all materials, is due by April 8. To enroll in the Tuesday level one beginner class, access <https://libridge.partners.org>. Select the "PeopleSoft HRMS Production Link," and then navigate to Self Service > Employee > Tasks > Request Training Enrollment. Click the "Search by Course Code" link and enter "MGHSPB" in capital

letters. To request enrollment in the beginner level two class on Tuesdays, or the intermediate level two class on Wednesdays, email mghtraining@partners.org for information on completing a brief language assessment test.

SAC meeting April 13 and 14

The 2011 meeting of the MGH Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) will begin with the annual Celebration of Science on April 13 and a poster session from 11 am to 1:45 pm at the Holiday Inn Beacon Hill, 15th floor. Scientific presentations, featuring the winners of the 2011 Martin Prizes and Goodman Award will begin at 2 pm in the Simches Research Center, Room 3.110. The SAC meeting itself, which will review historical highlights of MGH research and look at the challenges of the changing environment for funding, will begin at 8 am on April 14 in the Simches Research Center, Room 3.110. More details on the two-day event will appear in the April 8 issue of *MGH Hotline*.

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