Dear Colleagues,

WE WISH TO EXTEND our deepest thanks to all members of our MGH family who work tirelessly every day to make a difference in the health and well-being of our patients and their loved ones. This year was another remarkable one for the MGH, but the most important achievement has been the exceptional care delivered to more than a million patients who have looked to this hospital for care and hope.

One of the most exciting times of the year came in July, when we learned the MGH was ranked No. 1 in the nation on the U.S. News & World Report 2012-13 “Best Hospitals” list. The MGH was recognized among the top U.S. hospitals in each of the 16 specialties on the survey. This distinction was a great honor as well for Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, which are considered together with the MGH in ear, nose and throat, ophthalmology and rehabilitation. We were thrilled to be able to celebrate this success with so many members of the hospital family July 17 – a day that Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino named “MGH is #1 Day.”

This past year also included many other momentous milestones. In October, Joe Kinan became the first MGH patient to receive a hand transplant as part of the MGH’s new Hand Transplantation Service. Undoubtedly, this groundbreaking procedure will not only enhance Joe’s life but the lives of countless other patients in the future. Also during the past year, the MGH welcomed new chiefs to two departments: Merit Cudkowicz, MD, MSc, for Neurology; and Michael Blute, MD, for Urology. We also saw the launch of new programs and facilities, including the opening of the cutting-edge Henri and Belinda Termeer Center for Targeted Therapies at the MGH Cancer Center, and the Paul S. Russell, MD Museum of Medical History and Innovation. These and many other highlights of the past year are featured in this special edition of Hotline.

Whether engaged in clinical care, research, education or community health or whether in a role that supports these missions, everyone who works here is part of a team that contributes to the care and welfare of patients and families in Boston, throughout the region, and indeed, around the world.

As we head into a new year, we look forward to continuing our promise of providing the very best health care to our patients. We thank all members of the MGH community for your ongoing commitment, passion and dedication to excellence.

Wishing you a healthy and happy new year,

Peter L. Slavin      David F. Torchiana
MGH President        MGPO Chairman and CEO

Campaign for Third Century of MGH Medicine marks milestone

THE CAMPAIGN for the Third Century of MGH Medicine hit a milestone earlier this month when it reached its $1.5 billion goal more than one year ahead of schedule. Believed to be the largest-such initiative in New England, funds raised through the “Individual Care, Global Impact” campaign will support five top priorities at the MGH: building medical facilities for the present and future; promoting innovative research; enhancing medical education; supporting multidisciplinary care centers; and subsidizing the unrestricted MGH Fund, which allows the hospital to quickly respond to emergencies and opportunities.

“The generosity of our loyal donors has also been pivotal to our progress during this campaign. Many MGH campaign centers of excellence have benefited. Among other things, this effort has strengthened our standing as a powerhouse of scientific discovery, reinforced our already strong programs for educating the medical leaders of tomorrow and bolstered our capacity to serve vulnerable communities at home and abroad,” said campaign co-chairs W. Gerald Austen, MD, now chair of the MGH Chiefs Council, and Patricia F. Ribakoff, MGH trustee and co-chair of the MGH Philanthropy Program.

The goal was surpassed on Dec. 11 thanks to 190 gifts and pledges recorded that day, ranging from $5 to $1 million. Among these donations were commitments to all five priority areas, including a gift to support the Lunder Building; pledges for various centers — including cancer, heart and vascular, the Red Sox Foundation and MGH Home Base Program, Psychiatry and MassGeneral Hospital for Children; research support for many areas including within the Cancer Center; donations to support lectures and nursing education; and multiple gifts to the MGH Fund.

Although the goal was reached early, the campaign will continue through its regularly scheduled conclusion at the end of 2013 to address ongoing needs. To learn more or to make a donation, visit the campaign website at www.thirdcenturyofmedicine.org.
A look back: MGH 2012

Here is a look back at just some of the many notable events that took place in 2012.

Advancement in care

THE MASS GENERAL Orthopedics Sports Performance Center opens June 4 next to Gillette Stadium at the Brigham and Women’s/Mass General Health Care Center at Patriot Place in Foxborough. The state-of-the-art facility combines the most advanced 3-D biomechanical imaging technology with the clinical expertise of MGH staff – including orthopedic surgeons, physical therapists, biomechanists, biomechanical engineers, performance trainers, nutritionists, athletic trainers and coaches – to help athletes prevent and recover from injury and improve their performance.

No. 1 in the nation

MGH employees, affiliates and public officials gather under the Bulfinch Tent July 17 to celebrate the news that the MGH ranked No. 1 in the nation on the U.S. News & World Report 2012-13 “Best Hospitals” list. The MGH takes the place previously held by Johns Hopkins Hospital, which had been at the top of the list for 21 consecutive years.

An MGH first

ON OCT. 7, the MGH performs its first hand transplant surgery on Joe Kinan, 43, a survivor of the devastating 2003 Rhode Island nightclub fire. The 15-hour surgery is led by Curtis L. Cetrulo Jr., MD, of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and the new Hand Transplantation Service. Cetrulo continues to work closely with the Transplantation Biology Research Center, which this year also celebrates the 10th anniversary of the first use of the tolerance protocol in an organ transplant patient. The protocol includes a bone marrow transplant using cells from the donor in conjunction with the transplant, which results in the body eventually accepting the transplanted tissue without the need for life-long immunosuppressive drugs.

Epic decision

IN JULY, Partners HealthCare signs a contract with Epic, a leader in health information technology that specializes in working with academic medical centers and health systems. Called Partners eCare, the system is expected to be fully implemented in 2017.

History and innovation

AFTER YEARS OF PLANNING, fundraising and construction, the Paul S. Russell, MD Museum of Medical History and Innovation opens its doors to the public in April. The museum, which features interactive exhibits highlighting the evolution of medicine and clinical practice throughout the MGH’s 200-year history, also includes a second-floor gallery and rooftop garden.
Collaborative caring

THE MGH LAUNCHES the Institute of Heart, Vascular and Stroke Care, the first truly integrated cardiovascular and cerebrovascular institute in the region, which sets a new paradigm in the management of patients. Led by Michael R. Jaff, DO, medical director of the Vascular Center; Thoralf Sundt, MD, chief of Cardiac Surgery and co-chair of the Corrigan Minehan Heart Center; and G. William Dec, MD, chief of Cardiology and co-chair of the Heart Center, the Institute provides well-rounded integrated clinical care to improve and advance the diagnosis and treatment of heart, vascular and cerebrovascular conditions.

Building a brain

AN MGH RESEARCH TEAM discovers a remarkably simple organizational structure in the brains of humans and other primates. Employing sophisticated mathematical analyses of advanced imaging data, they find that the pathways carrying neural signals through the brain are arranged not in a disorganized tangle but in a curved, three-dimensional grid.

Innovation units

AS PART OF the Patient Affordability and Care Redesign initiative at the MGH and Partners HealthCare, the MGH launches 12 Innovation Units to serve as testing grounds for promising new strategies to improve clinical outcomes and enhance patient, family and staff satisfaction while reducing costs and length of stay.

Joint Commission

A SEVEN-PERSON TEAM from the Joint Commission – the independent nonprofit that accredits and certifies more than 19,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States – surveys the MGH in July. The rigorous assessment includes processes of care, documentation records, environment of care, laboratory services and other key areas. During the group’s five days at the MGH, the surveyors cover significant ground: they visit more than 40 inpatient and outpatient locations, speak with more than 250 staff members and review nearly 80 patient cases.

Improving treatment

MGH RESEARCHERS make a major advance toward improved treatment for cystic fibrosis (CF) by creating induced pluripotent stem cells from the skin cells of CF patients and using them to generate cultured, CF-affected lung tissue. The ability to produce unlimited quantities of CF cells and tissues will allow screening of new drugs that may directly target the mechanism behind the disease.
Nominations are now being accepted for the MGH Cancer Center’s the one hundred, an annual fundraiser that honors 100 individuals and groups leading the way in the fight against cancer. Nominees do not have to be MGH employees. To nominate someone, visit www.theonehundred.org. The deadline to submit a nomination is Dec. 31. For more information, e-mail theonehundred@partners.org.

Other highlights of 2012

THE LUNDER BUILDING officially receives a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification level, the internationally recognized mark of green building excellence, from the U.S. Green Building Council. The MGH is the first hospital in New England to perform a heart transplant using the so-called “heart in a box” technology, which delivers warm, oxygenated, nutrient-enriched blood to the heart after it is removed from a donor and monitors it while it continues to beat in a nearly normal state. The device allows for longer transport times.

The Cooley Dickinson Board of Trustees votes to negotiate an affiliation agreement with the MGH, which would help the Northampton, Mass. hospital develop and expand care programs and increase revenue. Southern New Hampshire Medical Center also reached a formal agreement with the MGH to integrate services in pediatrics, oncology, digestive health, surgery and cardiovascular care, which includes cardiac, vascular and stroke treatment.

The MGH participates in a record-breaking kidney transplant chain, resulting in 30 transplants and 60 lives changed.

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The Lurie Center for Autism at MassGeneral Hospital for Children announces it will take part in a $12.6 million study of the effectiveness of using intranasal oxytocin - a hormone believed to be important in the formation of social bonds – to treat children and teens with autism spectrum disorders.

MGH emergency responders are deployed to an evacuee shelter at York College in Queens, a medical needs shelter in Brooklyn and a supply warehouse in Maryland to help in the wake of October’s Hurricane Sandy, which caused major flooding, structural damage and widespread power outages.

The Henri and Belinda Termeer Center for Targeted Therapies at the MGH Cancer Center opens, offering a comprehensive translational research program to speed the discovery and delivery of new targeted therapies to patients with early and advanced stage cancers.

The Mass Health Information Exchange is launched during a special ceremony at the MGH. The HIE system, also known as “Mass HI-Way,” allows for electronic health information to be transmitted securely between health care providers and organizations to better coordinate care, increase patient safety and privacy, and lower health care costs.