# Duffy Doings

RESTORING HEALTH, REBUILDING LIVES  
SPRING 2020

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A note from Heidi Nelson, CEO Duffy Health Center

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**A Good Night’s Sleep**

Donor Spotlight: Gary Gallo, Affordable Mattress of Cape Cod
From the Front Lines

A note from Heidi Nelson, CEO

We have found ourselves in an unprecedented time. The impact of COVID-19 on our neighbors and our economy will be vast and immeasurable.

On March 9, just one week before we had to drastically shift our operations, I received one of my favorite infographics. It's created for us by the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, and lays out the Value & Impact of Duffy Health Center in our community.

A few highlights include the number of patients served, the savings we provide the overall health care system, and our impact on the local economy through the jobs we create (see right).

Despite the statistics that so clearly illustrate the value and importance of community health centers like ours, Congress neglected to pass long-term funding for community health centers last fall. Instead, they passed short-term legislation for funding through September 2020.

Community health centers are on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis and we need your support now more than ever. Not only is our future uncertain, our ability to care for our community is being challenged in a way we’ve never seen before.

While many of our patients are truly homeless (living on the street, in their cars, in tents, etc.), we also care for those at-risk for homelessness. Undoubtedly the number of our neighbors who will lose their housing, incomes and health insurance as a result of the current crisis will grow. And so will the demand for our services.

To learn about advocating on behalf of Duffy Health Center, read on to page 9. If you'd like to support us in some other way, please reach out. We are so very grateful for your support.

Be safe and be well.

Heidi R. Nelson
CEO, Duffy Health Center

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In Response to COVID-19
Duffy Health Center, the pandemic, and our community

It’s no secret: the current pandemic has brought swift changes to every aspect of our lives. Duffy Health Center patients are some of the most medically vulnerable, and they’re often the least-equipped to handle changes in routine, layoffs and furlough, and social isolation.

We had to act quickly, adjusting our service model to continue providing support to our patients while keeping them and our staff safe. **We have implemented a system for telehealth (telephonic health) visits with the majority of our patients in order to abide by social distancing and stay-at-home orders.** Patients receiving primary care, behavioral health, and Medication Assisted Treatment services are all being treated using this method.

In primary care, Duffy providers are focused on managing chronic conditions and maintaining patients at their current level of health. Patients are given an appointment time, and just like a regular visit they begin with a routine screening by a Medical Assistant. Once transferred to the provider, the visit is conducted as usual, minus the physical exam. Providers are still able to order bloodwork and prescribe medication as they normally would. Medical Director Dr. Robert Baginski shared, “While there is the obvious challenge of not physically seeing the patient, the reward is that patients have really received telehealth well. **They appreciate that we’re still reaching out during this time and they’re able to get care when they’re locked in their homes.**”

For our behavioral health patients, telehealth services are more important than ever. For individuals who struggle with anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions, the stress of the current situation is likely to exacerbate their illness. **The ability to connect with their therapists in order to discuss coping skills, self-care plans, and talk through some of their feelings is extremely valuable.** “We have an opportunity to help our patients through a very unique situation,” says Brian Diehl, Associate Director of Behavioral Health. “It sort of brings social work back to its roots; we’re supporting our patients as they navigate uncertain times, and we’re emphasizing skill-building.”

Unfortunately, we have seen an increased need for our Medication Assisted Treatment services for substance use disorders since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Individuals are lacking routine, feeling isolated and hopeless. “The Duffy team has focused on access and outreach,” shared Daniel Rodrigues, Associate Director of Substance Use Disorder Services. **“We’ve created systems for triaging and taking on new patients despite the circumstances, and we’re doing telehealth visits with existing patients and outreach to high-risk individuals to foster a sense of connection.”** Duffy Recovery Support Navigators made 231 outreach calls to unique patients in March and 198 in April, compared to 65 in the month of February. These numbers are a testament to our commitment to providing increased support to those who need it during this challenging time.

**Shower Program**

For years, Duffy Health Center has conducted a shower program as part of our integrated care model. We offer this service for individuals experiencing homelessness and without access to the utilities needed for hygiene, a key factor in overall health. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the shower program inside Duffy was paused due to social distancing measures. Duffy leadership acted quickly to obtain shower stalls through the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency so that we could continue providing this vital service. Through collaboration with our community partners, showers are offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings.
Clinical Focus: Population Health

“How we take care of the patients who aren’t right in front of us.”

In the summer of 2019, Duffy Health Center had a federally-mandated site visit from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) - the primary federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable and a major source of our federal funding.

After a presentation on Duffy Health Center’s performance on several quality measures, one of the visitors asked a poignant question: “How do you achieve such positive outcomes when caring for a transient population?”

The answer: population health management. It’s difficult to find a succinct definition of this term, but at Duffy Health Center it consists of 3 full-time team members dedicated to connecting with patients in both individual and group settings in an attempt to improve their health outcomes.

A second piece of the puzzle is a Nurse Care Manager who works for both Cape Cod Healthcare and Duffy Health Center. This Care Manager’s role is to prevent avoidable Emergency Department visits and inpatient admissions. The Nurse Care Manager works with patients for a period of 30 days to assist them in transitioning their care to Duffy after they’ve been hospitalized. Like the Population Health Coordinator, the goal is to remove barriers to care and facilitate patients’ engagement with Duffy services. Those who need chronic care maintenance can remain engaged for an additional 90 days for a total of 120 days of support for an individual in need of services.

Coordinator of Chronic Disease Management Emily Hildebrant focuses on three diagnoses: diabetes, Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS. Emily defines population health as the coordination that happens behind the scenes to improve patients’ experience at Duffy and improve their health outcomes. Her work is to study measures from our community partners and create and facilitate group programs for our patients to address those that impact them the most.

The establishment of these 3 positions in the past 2 years reinforces Duffy Health Center’s commitment to providing support to those most vulnerable in our community. Personal connection, support, and assistance navigating the world of health care will have lasting effects on the health of our population and a huge impact on the health of our community.
Mr. Rob Baginski joined Duffy Health Center as Medical Director in early January 2020. Now that he’s had some time to settle into his new role, we sat down with him to learn more about his trajectory in medicine, what brought him to Duffy, and his first impressions of life in a community health center.

Q: How did you get into medicine?
A: It may sound strange, but medicine was an accident. I went to school for Environmental Studies - I was going to save the whales! It turns out no one was really hiring for that. I needed to pay the rent, so I went to EMT school and worked on an ambulance while also teaching music and working on a farm. I wasn’t sure what I was going to do next, so I looked into medical school. I applied, got in, and went into emergency medicine.

Q: What made medicine “stick” more than the other things you tried?
A: I’m not sure, there’s just something about it. It’s not just a job, it becomes your whole life, your identity, how you think and how you interact with people. Being in medical school and residency gives you a home in a weird way, because you spend so much time there.

Q: Speaking of home, what brought you to Cape Cod?
A: My husband was applying for a job in a local school district, so we drove down one Sunday to scope out the area. I had come to Harwich in the summers growing up. We found a little house that day, fell in love with it and ended up buying it. It was the most impulsive thing I’ve ever done! He didn’t get the job, and we both ended up commuting off-Cape.

Q: So besides a much better commute, what drew you to Duffy Health Center?
A: When I started looking at jobs on the Cape, I had really specific requirements in mind. The words humanitarian, homeless, public service, or environmental had to be in there somewhere, otherwise I would have stayed comfortably where I was. I need a job to have meaning. Obviously, when Duffy came onto my radar it fit that criteria.

Q: What have been your first impressions here at Duffy?
A: Everyone on the Duffy team is so genuine, nice, and welcoming. That’s made the transition easy. I’m learning how much work there is to do in this community that you don’t realize when you’re a “summer person,” or when you live here but commute off-Cape. It’s all just under the surface. It’s all stuff I want to address - that can be addressed with effective solutions.

The Duffy patients have also been great. When I worked in the ER, patients only came in when something was wrong - no one wants to be in the ER. With Duffy’s focus on preventive care, patients are actually coming in because they want to.

Q: Any final thoughts?
A: It may sound cliché, but everyone I’ve met here [staff and leadership] wants to be HERE. Everyone is here for a specific reason, and it makes for a wonderful work environment. I’m really happy here.
The sober-curious movement has gained a lot of momentum and cultural influence in the last few years, particularly in major cities. Many are exploring the notion of limiting or ceasing alcohol consumption as a way to improve overall health and wellness.

Alcohol remains the number one abused substance on the Cape at a tremendous cost to communities and families. At Duffy Health Center, sobriety and recovery are part of the daily conversation. Many of our patients are in active recovery and many more have diagnoses of substance use disorder. Several of our staff, providers and board members are also in active recovery.

The Zero Proof event concept demonstrates our commitment to and support of those in our Duffy community and beyond.

Renowned Local Chefs
Cape Cod has several excellent chefs who are known on the Cape and beyond. In October, we will be joined in Harwich by some of the most talented chefs from the Lower Cape. At a second event in Spring 2021, we will be joined by chefs on the Mid and Upper Cape as we gather in Sandwich for an equally spectacular event.

Curated Menu
Each chef will showcase a small plated menu item from their repertoire - something that represents their individual style and palate. Guests will have the opportunity to taste each plate at the restaurants’ designated stations.

Zero Proof Libations
Zero Proof - alcohol-free - Libations will be passed during a social “cocktail hour” as an introduction to the tastes of the evening. The libations, created by the featured chefs or their most talented mixologists, will also be paired with the evening’s delicacies.

Community Celebration
We will come together as a community to celebrate the work of Duffy Health Center and our commitment to those with substance use disorders and those in recovery. We’ll hear from individuals who have found support at Duffy and offer guests the opportunity to invest in the important programs and services we provide to hundreds of our neighbors.

The event is sponsored by:

Visit DuffyHealthCenter.org/zero-proof to purchase tickets!
Jeff Haddad has a wide range of life experience. He has run his own business and owned property. He has supported a partner through her pregnancy and lived the joy of becoming a father. He has cared for a sick parent and lost siblings.

Jeff has experienced homelessness. He has been diagnosed with and cured of Hepatitis C. He has been living with a liver transplant for 7 years. Jeff is also living in recovery, and has been a guest speaker at schools, talking with kids about the consequences of substance use by sharing his personal story.

Jeff has been a patient of Duffy Health Center since before it was called Duffy Health Center - the days when the clinic was based at what was then called the NOAH shelter. “I’ve always found that the doctors at Duffy are really up-to-date on the most recent medical knowledge,” says Jeff. It was through his Duffy provider that Jeff was diagnosed with Hepatitis C and connected with the appropriate care at a time when it was not widely known that a cure existed.

Today, Jeff is a member of the Duffy Health Center Board of Directors. “I was told I’d be a good Board member because I’m assertive with my beliefs and I fight for the underdog,” Jeff shares. “I’m in awe of the other Board members. I used to think that the ‘Board’ was just a figurehead, but these are people who are really dedicated to the work being done at Duffy, and they really care. They’re going out of their way to help, taking time out of their lives to make a difference.”

In his role, Jeff also serves as a liaison between the Board of Directors and Duffy’s Consumer Advisory Board. “It’s been a learning experience,” he says. “I’m hearing other patients’ perspectives, and there are a lot of great ideas. I bring the information from those meetings and report out to the full Board.”

Jeff admits, “I’m always skeptical of people. With everything I’ve been through, I don’t have a lot of trust in people,” but continues on to say, “Not at Duffy though. I have a lot of trust in this place. I see something here that I don’t see at other places. People here treat you with respect no matter who you are. They show that you can trust them. When you see that, you’re more likely to go back.”

Duffy Health Center Consumer Advisory Board

Federally Qualified Health Centers like Duffy are required to have consumer representation on their Board of Directors. For those with a health care for the homeless designation, the creation of a Consumer Advisory Board fulfills this commitment.

The Duffy Consumer Advisory Board (CAB) is an appointed group of Consumers whose input is sought for strategic and operations improvement purposes on an ongoing basis. The primary mission of the CAB is to facilitate open communication between Duffy Health Center leadership and Consumers.

The CAB is a crucial source of insight about Consumer issues and concerns and service requirements from Duffy. Members have the opportunity to influence decision-making at the highest levels of Duffy and to experience meaningful interaction with peers.
Upon entering the showroom at Affordable Mattress of Cape Cod in Yarmouth, you may be struck by its simplicity. It’s a straightforward, no-frill space with a singular focus on the quality of the product.

If you get the chance to speak with owner Gary Gallo, you’ll understand that the showroom closely mirrors the personality of the man behind the business: straightforward, genuine, high-quality.

If you mention Gary’s name around Duffy Health Center case managers, they light up. “He just gets it,” says Arlene Crosby, longtime Duffy Case Manager who has worked with him for several years. Gary is a steadfast partner and friend to Duffy Health Center and those we serve.

In the 8 years that he’s owned his business, he’s come to realize that his products have a much deeper value than he first realized. A quality mattress and a good night’s sleep can have an enormous impact on a person’s health and well-being. He reflects, “You take it for granted when you have a nice place to live and a nice bed to sleep on at the end of the day.”

At Duffy Health Center, one of the first questions we ask every person who walks through our doors is where they slept the previous night. We get a wide array of answers, from those who are housed but sleeping on an air mattress to those who are living and sleeping in their car or in the woods. We see firsthand the impact that quality sleep, or lack thereof, can have on a person’s physical and mental health.

Duffy follows the nationally recognized “Housing First” model - an approach that prioritizes housing as a platform from which individuals can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life (National Alliance to End Homelessness, endhomelessness.org). Our Housing First case managers assist patients and clients with all aspects of housing, from the search to settling into a new home to maintaining their residency. They seem to have Affordable Mattress’ number on speed dial.

Gary maintains a stock of standard, well-priced mattresses that are his “Duffy go-to.” Paired with a box spring and a frame, Duffy patients are charged just above his own cost, and delivery and set-up are always included.

In one instance, a patient suffering from cancer was sleeping on an old beat up mattress, exacerbating his discomfort. When his Duffy case manager reached out to Gary, without hesitation he said, “Don’t worry about it.” Gary’s staff delivered a new, donated mattress to the patient the very same day, and even took out the old mattress as a favor.

It’s true: Gary Gallo gets it. He understands the deep value of a good night’s sleep, but more importantly he understands the value of investing in his community. In what seems to be his signature understated tone, he says, “I just treat people how I’d like to be treated. I’m happy to have some part in what Duffy Health Center is doing.”

Affordable Mattress of Cape Cod is located at 23 White’s Path in South Yarmouth.

If you’re interested in giving to the Housing First Fund, visit DuffyHealthCenter.org/give
Long-term, permanent funding for community health centers like Duffy has been in danger for quite some time now. There is $4 billion at stake, and it will impact the future of community health centers across the nation.

Duffy Health Center alone stands to lose $1.6 million in federal funding if this legislation is not passed. As you may know, we are 1 of 4 health centers on Cape Cod providing vital medical and behavioral health services to thousands of patients. Disrupted funding will impact our communities tremendously.

Following the legislative process has been arduous. The initial deadline for Congress to renew the Community Health Center Fund was September 30th, 2019. Through a series of continuing resolutions and short-term funding patches, we now have our sights set on September 2020 - one full year later than the original deadline.

Given the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, community health centers need steady government support now more than ever.

In a recent letter to Congress, the President and CEO of the National Association of Community Health Centers outlined a revision of the previous request to include funding that would provide support to health centers on the front lines of the COVID-19 crisis in addition to permanent funding of the Community Health Center Fund.

Current priorities include funds for:

- Addressing the COVID-19 emergency ($7.6 billion over 6 months)
- Stabilizing current services and expand care to 10 million patients ($41.9 billion over 5 years)
- Critical expansion of workforce programs to address shortfalls ($7.8 billion over 5 years)
- Crucial infrastructure investment ($20 billion over 5 years or until expended)

Federal investments supporting the Health Center Program must be sustained in a long-term and stable manner to ensure health centers’ ability to plan for the future, recruit staff, and expand services for patients, as well as to reduce the uncertainty caused by year-to-year renewals of this critical investment in access to care. (Source: NACHC Health Center Funding Worksheet).

Duffy Health Center is registered as an Advocacy Center of Excellence with the National Association of Community Health Centers. We have shown our commitment to advocating for community health centers by:

- Establishing advocacy coordinators
- Creating an advocacy workplan
- Incorporating advocacy at staff and board meetings
- Passing a board resolution on advocacy
- Registering more than 50% of staff and Board members as advocates

Join us in advocating for community health centers by visiting the National Association of Community Health Centers at NACHC.org and registering to become an advocate.

Your voice counts!
On Saturday, March 7th, we had the honor of hosting our inaugural community yoga event at the beautiful Wychmere Beach Club in Harwich Port. We were joined by some remarkable members of our community - yoga instructors who donated their time and yogis who raised money in support of Duffy Health Center.

Together, we raised over $21,000 for Duffy Health Center’s programs and services.

We could not have accomplished this without our sponsors, the generosity of our presenting yoga studios, and of course, without the commitment of our participating yogis and those who supported them.

THANK YOU!

If you weren’t able to join us for this event, don’t worry! Future opportunities include:
• A Wellness on the Water yoga event next year - date coming soon - stay tuned!
• Additional events throughout the year to keep the momentum going and stay connected to the awesomeness of Wellness on the Water!
During our Community Celebration, patient speaker Alexandria Rose shared an inspiring message about her personal wellness journey. By practicing yoga, Alex started learning how to take care of herself: mind, body, and spirit. As part of this process, she enrolled as a patient at Duffy Health Center. She realized that her physical health was just as important as her yoga and meditation practices in her overall wellness.

“Being surrounded by kind and caring practitioners at Duffy Health Center has guided me in the right direction for my health care needs,” Alex told the group. She has now turned her healthy practices into a career, starting her own business focused on massage therapy and yoga. Thanks to Alex for sharing her story.
Episodes feature conversations with local leaders who are working on issues across the Cape that directly impact our community’s health and well-being.

Referred to as the *Social Determinants of Health*, podcast topics include access to health care and healthy food; early childhood development and education; economic development; poverty; and the stability and quality of housing, among others.

_These topics are important to all of us because we live here, work here, and raise our families here._

Episodes include:

- **Introduction to Social Determinants of Health** with Beth Albert, Director, Barnstable County Department of Human Services
- **Social Cohesion** with Lisa Guyon, Executive Director, WE CAN
- **Early Childhood Education** with Cindy Horgan, Executive Director, Cape Cod Children’s Place
- **Local Infrastructure** with Wendy Northcross, CEO, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
- **YMCA Cape Cod** with Stacie Peugh, President and CEO
- **Community Development on the Outer Cape** with Jay Coburn, CEO, Community Development Partnership
- **Housing Development and Planning** with David Quinn, Director of Housing Development and Planning at Housing Assistance

_A podcast brought to you by Duffy Health Center._

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