



Spring 2014 Newsletter

Founder's Corner

Dear Friend,

I am excited to share the success we are having with an important new elder care services program.

In 2013, Women of Means (WoM) launched the Medical Home Without Walls (MHWW), a program that targets elderly women who are homeless, and provides them with coordinated healthcare services. In collaboration with Commonwealth Community Care at Boston Medical Center, WoM is enrolling 50 women aged 65 and older who depend on the shelters for survival needs. In this pilot program, eligible clients receive cell phones so they can communicate with their care team, and are given holistic, personalized medical care and care coordination services to improve their health and health literacy, making it easier for them to access care, and decreasing their reliance on emergency room services.

Statistics Show Success

After only a year, we already have documented success in reducing emergency room use by nearly 50%. Inpatient admissions for MHWW patients are now just a small handful compared to last year. One of our patients told me, "I don't know how to thank Women of Means. If I had not joined this program, I don't even want to think what might have happened to me. I'm 74 years old. I'm too old to go bouncing from shelter to shelter with all my medical problems. It's just not right."

For those who have followed WoM from our beginning in 1999, the launching of the Medical Home Without Walls Elder Care program is a proud milestone. To make this program a success, we rely on the commitment of our extraordinary nurses, volunteer doctors and our newest staff member, Community Health Worker, Valeria Vargas.

Better care, lower cost. Seriously.

We have managed to provide all this care at a fraction of what a large, bureaucratic health care system would charge. The WoM budget has hardly grown in the past 5 years, but our care delivery has quadrupled. What does this show?

It shows that your gift to Women of Means gets a great return on investment.



We need your help to sustain and grow these important programs that are saving and transforming the lives of our most vulnerable citizens. Please, dig deep and [donate whatever you can](#) to help these women. And please know that all of us—doctors, nurses and patients—appreciate your generosity. – Thank you! Roseanna Means, MD

Maureen is a Medical Home Without Walls client who was recently housed. This afghan was lovingly made by the Wellesley Village Church knitting ministry as a housewarming gift.

What a Nurse Practitioner Can Do

Take your stress away..

Last fall, nurse practitioner students from MGH's School of Health Professions taught relaxation and stress reduction techniques to guests at Women's Lunch Place (WLP). Women of Means has been providing free care to guests at this shelter since 1999.

Overseen by faculty advisor and veteran WoM Nurse Practitioner Elyse Goodman, the program included relaxation exercises and other strategies to help the women release tension from head to toe. In addition, retired nurse and WoM volunteer, Bettye Budlong, provides weekly relaxation workshops at the Women's Lunch place twice each month, complimenting the students' work.



Make your heart happy...

In celebration of Heart Health Month, nurse practitioner students from MGH, under the supervision of WoM Nurse Practitioner Elyse Goodman, participated in a Heart Health Fair, "Circle of Red". Given that heart disease is the #1 national cause of death for women, this fun and educational event included a blood pressure clinic, diet and exercise education, heart-healthy snacks, games and plenty of educational materials. We would like to thank MGH's Institute for Health Professions, Kathleen Miller from MGH's Wellness Center, and the American Heart Association for sponsoring this event.

Bridging Communication Gaps

We're so excited to welcome Valeria Vargas, who recently joined WoM as our Community Health Worker. Valeria is tri-lingual, a skill that helps her connect and communicate effectively with our patients. She helps to increase outreach, connect women to existing resources and provide care management in coordination with the nursing team. Valeria's role is an essential part of our elder care program, the Medical Home Without Walls.

Symphony of Success



The Longwood Symphony Orchestra (LSO) played in perfect harmony with our donors, corporate sponsors and volunteers to create an amazing benefit concert for Women of Means on October 5, 2013. Special thanks to the members of the LSO, and to our sponsors, including Old Mutual Asset Management, Waldron H. Rand, Partners Healthcare, Delta Dental and Kal and Ellen Heller. The Wellesley Townsman and PR consultant Kim Cunningham helped to spread the word about the concert, while Sav-Mor Liquors of Somerville and North End Treats of Framingham helped to make it a deliciously fun event.

Women Of Means Gets an Online Facelift

Womenofmeans.org recently got an amazing new look! Our fresher-than-ever site is made possible by Kevin Sletten a volunteer web developer, and Ruth Gerath, our new WoM Board Member. Kevin comes to us from Hands On Tech, a non-profit that provides pro-bono information technology services to charitable organizations. A special shout-out to Ruth, who devoted many hours to the newly designed website. Please visit us at womenofmeans.org to see the results!

Gifts from the Heart...



We're so grateful for the thoughtful and touching donations we received on behalf of our clients. Special thanks to:

Davis, Logan and Addie Winnick, a wonderful family who donated special gift bags from their children's birthday party. Each 'Project Night-Night Bag' contained a stuffed animal, a blanket and a book for guests of WoM's Waltham family shelter.

The members of Temple Beth Shalom, who provided individually wrapped gift bags of toiletries and personal notes of inspiration—items that are always in need!

Our eternal gratitude to: Sondra Szmczak (through Tufts Alumni Association); St. Andrews Church Knitters; Southfield-Dexler Schools' Knitting Club; Black Sheep Knitters; and the knitting circle of Temple Beth Avodah for the beautiful hats, scarves and gloves they so lovingly made for the women this cold winter.

Family Shelter Guests Make a Splash!



The YMCA in Waltham has the perfect way to help take the sting out of winter: come on inside and take a dip in the pool! On Martin Luther King Day Monday, they opened their doors for guests of the Home Suites and Mary's House family shelters. Coordinated by WoM Family Shelter Nurse Care Manager Marie Nowicki, this community event introduced families to all that the YMCA offers. With free transportation and activities including arts and crafts, a bouncy house, rock climbing, Zumba, storytime, sports, and swimming, families had a great day and worked up an appetite for our nutritious lunch.

Unsung Heroes Award



(L-R) WoM volunteer physicians and clinical staff: Heidi Eichenberger, MD; Roseanna Means, MD; Deb Choate, MD; Elyse Goodwin, NP, and Virginia Byrnes, MD.

This December, Roseanna Means and several members of WoM's clinical staff, including volunteer physicians--Heidi Eichenberger, Deb Choate and Virginia Byrnes--along with Elyse Goodwin, NP, and former WoM clinician, Evelyn Malfroy-Carmine, NP, were honored by the MA Association of Women Lawyers for their work on "improving the lives of women in our communities by providing quality health care, education and advocacy."

[Make a Donation](#)

Women of Means depends upon the generosity of our friends to provide the medical supplies with which our volunteer medical staff treats 2,500 women and children annually. Won't you please help? [Donate securely online](#), or call us at 781-239-0290.

[Volunteer](#)

Women of Means volunteers include some of the best doctors and nurses in the Boston area, as well as numerous lay volunteers who assist in fund-raising, administration and other roles. Call 781-239-0290 or [email us](#) at wom@womenofmeans.org and find out how you can make a difference!

WoM Presents at Conference on Homelessness

Homeless families face daunting challenges.

Many are placed in transitional motel housing, at the outskirts of urban centers. Away from their previous neighborhoods and with limited access to transportation, they must adapt to new routines and schools, while missing their family and friends.

This January, WoM Family Clinic Coordinator, Dr. Marcia Tanur, and Tufts medical student, Ali Schmerling, presented their seminar, **Group Visits with Homeless Families** at [Beyond Housing](#), an annual national conference on issues created by homelessness. Together they highlighted the unique obstacles that homeless families face, and shared strategic solutions and the success stories they've helped to create.



[About Us](#)

While working with a health clinic serving the homeless between 1990 and 1998, Dr. Roseanna Means observed that homeless women were under-represented. Upon investigation, Dr. Means discovered that traditional

clinic processes overwhelm women impaired by exhaustion, mental illness and, most significantly, fear. Dr. Means founded Women of Means, an innovative new health care model, in 1999. Today, a team of over 20 volunteer and paid medical professionals bring care into the shelters where the women feel safest.

www.womenofmeans.org

Women of Means is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization (tax ID 043487205)
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