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Spring 3-1-2003

News from Mabel (Spring 2003)

Mabel Wadworth Health Center Staff
Mabel Wadworth Health Center

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Staff, Mabel Wadworth Health Center, "News from Mabel (Spring 2003)" (2003). *Maine Women's Publications - All*. 224.

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Increased Demand in a Tough Economy

The Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center provides more than 4,000 gynecological and obstetrical visits each year. Two-thirds of the Center's clients have Medicaid coverage or lack insurance altogether.

In 2003, the Center's cost of providing women's health care services will exceed \$750,000. To maintain the Center's high standards of care, we retain eleven professional staff members. Equipment costs, including the purchase of an ultrasound machine, will surpass \$60,000 this

year alone. Insurance, rent, and utilities will exceed \$100,000.

The Center does not accept any local, state or federal government grants or contracts.

So, how does the Center cover the expenses?

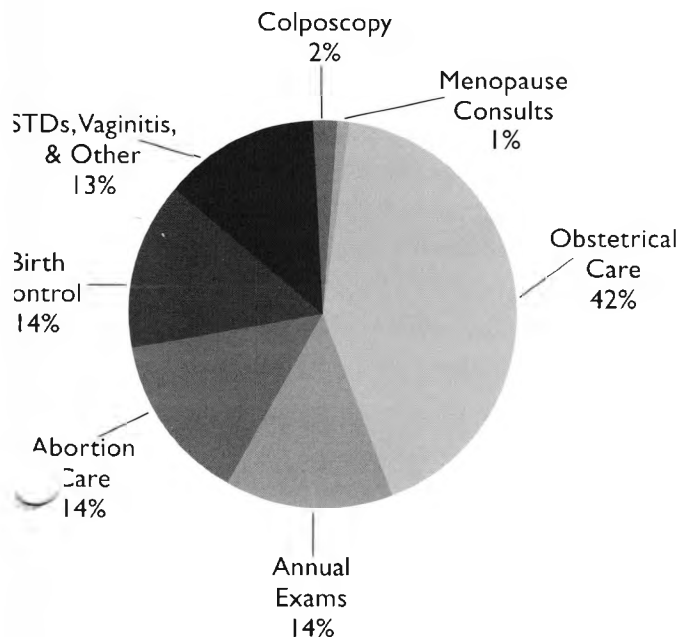
Three major revenue sources fund the annual budget:

- payments for clinic services
- foundation grants
- private contributions

This year, \$150,000 in private contributions are needed to provide essential health care services to women in our community.

When the economy is weak, the demand for our services increases dramatically, straining the Center's resources. In times like these, the community's generosity becomes more critical than ever.

Purpose of Visits 2002



Did you know ...

- we accept all major insurances?
- we welcome Medicare and Medicaid?
- we set up convenient and individualized payment schedules?

Health Services

Abortion care
 Adoption referrals
 Annual exams
 Breast exams
 Colposcopy
 Contraception
 Lesbian health care
 Menopause consultation
 Pap smears
 Pregnancy testing and options education
 Prenatal care
 Postnatal care
 STD testing

Professional Training

Abortion care
 Contraception
 Lesbian health
 Menopause
 PMS
 Prenatal care
 Sexuality
 STDs

Political Advocacy

Abortion rights
 Lesbian and gay rights
 Women's sexual and reproductive health care

“ The Center sees clients as whole persons, not just parts that need fixing. ”

– MMWHC client

A Successful Collaboration: the Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program

Early detection of breast and cervical cancer accomplishes two important goals: it reduces health care costs and it saves lives.

The Maine Breast and Cervical Health Program (MBCHP) and the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center help to realize both goals. By providing women between the ages of 40 and 65 with no cost breast exams, mammograms, and pap smears every year, the program encourages early

detection of cancer – saving limited health care resources and, most importantly, women's lives.

Women who meet income guidelines also receive post-examination radiological readings and pathological analyses at no cost. When mammograms or pap smears indicate potential abnormalities, the MBCHP also pays for biopsies, colposcopies, and subsequent pap smears to make accurate diagnoses.

To ensure that low-income women receive high quality, preventive breast and cervical health care, the Center collaborates with

- the Maine Department of Human Services
- the Penobscot Breast and Cervical Health Coalition

- Eastern Maine Medical Center's Breast and Osteoporosis Center
- St. Joseph Hospital's Regional Breast Care Center

"Collaboration is fundamental to the work we do," according to Executive Director Ruth Lockhart. "The more people involved, the better women in this area will be served – leading to healthier women and a healthier Eastern and Northern Maine."

To receive a program application, please call the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center at 947-5337. For other enrollment questions, please call the Maine Department of Human Services' Division of Community and Family Health at 1-800-350-5180.

Number of People in Your Household

You are Eligible if Household Income is Less Than

1 person	\$22,150
2 people	\$29,850
3 people	\$37,550
4 people	\$45,250
5 people	\$52,950

Real Choice Requires Options

Last spring, the Center began offering an alternative to surgical pregnancy termination: medical abortion.

A woman who prefers a noninvasive method that can be carried out in the privacy of her own home can now choose medical abortion.

A medical abortion requires two visits to the Center. During the first visit, an ultrasound is performed to make sure that the woman is less than 63 days pregnant. Then, a physician prescribes two medications, mifiprex and misoprostol, which jointly cause abortion.

While at the Center, the woman takes an oral dose of mifiprex. This medication stops pregnancy growth by ending progesterone production. Two days later, in the comfort of her own home, the woman administers misoprostol, which causes the uterus to cramp and expel fetal tissue.

The woman returns to the Center within ten to fourteen days for a second ultrasound to ensure that the abortion has been effective. Ninety-six percent of medical abortions are successful within 24 hours of taking the misoprostol.

The side effects of medical abortions include cramping, nausea and vomiting, fever and chills, and diarrhea. These symptoms can last for as little as two hours, but may last for up to 48 hours.

The Center charges the same fee for medical and surgical abortion care.

For women who are facing an unintended pregnancy, the Center provides education about all pregnancy options. All women have the opportunity to explore their full range of birth control options.

Prenatal Clients Receive Comprehensive Care

Prenatal care is vital to the health of both the pregnant woman and her developing fetus. With proper care, maternal deaths due to pregnancy complications are reduced and infants are much more likely to be born within a safe weight range and without serious birth defects.



Unfortunately, fearing high costs, hundreds of pregnant women in Maine do not seek prenatal care until late in their pregnancies. And, uninsured and underinsured women do not see health care providers on a regular basis.

Expanding access to prenatal care is a priority for the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center. In October 1997, the Center started offering this comprehensive service. Working with the faculty at Eastern Maine Medical Center's (EMMC) Family Practice Residency Program, the Center's Women's Health Certified Nurse Practitioners (WHCNPs) help more than 100 women experience healthy pregnancies and deliver healthy babies each year.

Client Kimberly Martin (right) sees Clinical Assistant Teresa Kelley (left) for a prenatal visit.

Through the Center, women receive comprehensive health care from the date their pregnancies are ascertained. The WHCNPs monitor the health of both the woman and her developing pregnancy by listening to heart tones, checking blood pressure, analyzing urine, and measuring weight gain.

Prenatal clients visit the Center every four weeks until their pregnancies reach the 30-week milestone. The frequency of visits increases as pregnancies progress. Practitioners see women every two weeks until they reach 36 weeks, and then visits occur on a weekly basis.

When women go into labor, the Family Practice Residency Program manages the deliveries at EMMC.

The Power of One

Suzanne Duval learned about the Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center and its plans to open a clinic during a 1992 class that Executive Director Ruth Lockhart taught at the University of Maine. Suzanne immediately volunteered to help.

During the past decade, Suzanne has generously donated more than 1,000 hours of her time to the Center. She cleans and sterilizes clinical instruments, stocks shelves, organizes and maintains files – whatever task is needed to support the Center's work.

Her dedication and hard work were honored in 1997 when the Center presented her with the Woman Power Award, given to an outstanding volunteer. Suzanne believes that individuals need to volunteer because there is always more that needs to be done than organizations can afford. According to Suzanne, the organization is not the only beneficiary: "Meaningful volunteer work is such a wonderful thing to do for yourself."

Suzanne focuses her volunteer work at the Center because it "provides needed services in a way that is rare – with so much caring and compassion."

When asked why she enjoys her work, Suzanne said, "I feel it is a privilege to be able to volunteer at the Center and I will continue to do so as long as I can make a contribution – so I'll probably be here for the rest of my life!"



Volunteer Suzanne Duval.

Prepared Childbirth Classes

The Center offers six-week classes on prepared childbirth. Evelyn Conrad of Your Birth Connection is certified by the International Childbirth Education Association and has been instructing for more than fifteen years. Conrad teaches her prenatal students not to fear birth because it "is a natural event and a very beautiful journey."

Participants learn:

- the physiology of labor and birth
- breathing and relaxation techniques
- what to anticipate at the hospital
- breastfeeding practices

Participants also have an opportunity to watch birth films and ask questions about the birthing process. They leave the class confident and ready for the events of the big day.

Clients of the Center, as well as clients of area obstetricians and midwives, are invited to participate. Please visit www.yourbirthconnection.com or call 945-9804 for a schedule of upcoming classes.



Calendar of Upcoming Events

Annual Benefit Dinner

May 29: Spectacular Events Center

Pre-registration is required.

Sister Support sponsored tickets.

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Silent Auction

6:45 – 9:00 p.m. Dinner, Volunteer Recognition, and Presentation of Mabel Sine Wadsworth Women's Health Achievement Award to Darylen Cote.

Plant Sale

May 31: Twin City Plaza in Brewer

9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Call the Center to donate plants.

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