It continues to be an honor to serve as President of the Board of Directors of Indian Stream Health Center. As I enter into my third and final year as President of this great organization, I am reminded of all that has been accomplished in just a few short years, thanks to the dedication and expertise of our board members and staff.

Of particular importance has been the expansion and renovation of our facility on Corliss Lane that has served to house quality primary health care in our community for more than three decades. With a combination of funding from a Federal grant and a USDA guaranteed mortgage, we were able to complete a 4200 square foot addition and renovation of our old facility that included the following:

- Additional exam room and administrative space
- A community education room
- Refurbished waiting areas both upstairs and downstairs
- Registration areas that accommodate more privacy and meet handicapped requirements
- New entrances with automatic entry doors
- Unfinished space for future growth or program development
- Additional parking and paving
- Overall refurbishing of the original facility with fresh paint and new flooring

We also embarked on a Capital Campaign with a goal of raising $188,000 which we estimated to be the amount needed to complete all the renovations needed on the original structure to include:

- Replacement of roof, windows and lighting
- Fire alarm and security system throughout the facility
- Waiting area and community room furniture
- Computer/networking equipment
- Foundation repairs
- Exam room upgrades including new furniture, equipment and doors

Despite extraordinarily difficult economic times, I am very pleased to report that, with a recent anonymous donation of over $4,000, we have met our goal! Over the course of our two year campaign, we received significant contributions totaling $97,500, or 52% of our total, from four organizations: Tillotson Corporation, Tillotson North Country, Tillotson Fund and First Colebrook Bank. The remaining gifts totaling $90,500 were received from individuals and small companies or organizations in the North Country. We are grateful for every gift. Thank you for making this campaign a success!
**A New Program – An In-House Pharmacy!**

Thanks to a capital development grant of just over $500,000 from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services to expand primary health care programs in low income communities, ISHC will soon be embarking on the development of an in-house 340B prescription medication program. The funding will support the following:

- Renovation of present unused space on the first level of the health center including all fixtures, shelving, storage units and equipment
- Expanded parking, driveway and portico to accommodate a drive-thru pickup window
- Installation of an elevator to allow for handicapped access to both levels within the building

Funding from the Tillotson Fund will support initial start up costs including purchase of medications and support of salaries for a full time pharmacist and pharmacy technician. ISHC has provided low cost prescriptions to our uninsured patients through contractual arrangements with area pharmacies for more than five years. However, the addition of a pharmacist to our health care team supports an emerging standard of comprehensive, safe patient care within a primary care setting. Studies show that such access increases patient satisfaction and improves drug utilization and compliance. We anticipate starting the project before the end of August with the opening of our pharmacy in the Spring of 2013.

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**Accountable Care Organization (ACO) - What Does It Mean for Patients?**

ISHC, in partnership with three other community health centers in northern New Hampshire, has developed an accountable care organization named North Country ACO. The program in which we are participating is called a Shared Savings ACO and it is limited to only Medicare patients. Those who are now part of this program will see no change in your care. You will continue to see the provider of your choice including specialists; the benefits that you have always enjoyed as a Medicare beneficiary will continue; your deductible will remain unchanged. In short, there will be no visible change for you.

However, there will be changes for the health center, mostly in the way of reporting and payment. As a participating member of the ACO, ISHC will be expected to track and report on more than 30 quality and financial measures. Examples of such measures include hospital emergency room and inpatient use; costs per visit; test results; outcome measures, etc.

It is anticipated that by reporting and reviewing our results against those of other providers nationwide, that standards of care will improve and costs to deliver that care will be reduced or at least maintained. Key partners in this project are the hospitals in the region including UCVH. We will be working closely with them to assure the highest quality of care for our shared patients.

For the first three years, providers receive a small monthly payment per Medicare patient to cover the cost of system implementation. After the initial three years, it is anticipated that there will be enough data to measure the success of the demonstration project and that systems will be in place to maintain the program. From that point forward, participating health care providers will be compensated for quality performance only.
New Providers at Indian Stream Health Center

Kitty Martin, P.A.  The Board and staff of Indian Stream Health Center were pleased to welcome our newest provider, Kitty Martin, a Physician Assistant.  Before accepting our position, Kitty cared for patients at the Delaware Valley Medical and Wellness Center, in Levittown PA; prior to that she worked as a Pediatric Physician Assistant at We Care Pediatrics in Langhorne PA.  Kitty has received awards for her outstanding achievements and innovative contribution to the Physician Assistant Profession; she has been a guest lecturer for PA programs at various universities, and has been featured twice in NEWS-Line, a Physician Assistant publication.

A graduate of Hahnemann University where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree, Kitty also holds a Master’s of Health Sciences Degree from Drexel University as well as a Graduate Certificate in Complementary and Integrative Therapies. She has volunteered in “Reins of Life”, a therapeutic horseback-riding program for disabled children, the 1995 Special Olympics World Games, and at a Veteran’s Hospital Alzheimer’s Unit in Coatesville, PA.

Now seeing patients and beginning to build a practice in Colebrook, Kitty states, “I’m really excited about finally being here where I have vacationed for a number of years and now own a home. ISHC’s model of patient centered care matches my own commitment of caring for the patient and his/her whole family,” said Kitty. “I can envision myself staying at ISHC until the end of my career, which I hope will be a long time from now.”

Jayne Tarkelson-Berube, D.O.  We are pleased to announced that a pediatrician, Jayne Tarkelson-Berube, D.O. will be starting at the health center on August 30. Contracted through Weeks Medical Center, Dr. Tarkelson-Berube will be scheduled for one day a week which may be increased in the future if needed. A graduate of the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Tarkelson-Berube went onto complete a three year pediatric residency in July 2012 at the Sparrow Hospital/Michigan State University.

Many area people may recognize her name as her father, George Tarkelson, served as the community’s veterinarian for many years. Dr. Tarkelson-Berube grew up here and graduated from Colebrook Academy and is looking forward to returning to this area where she has many fond memories.

Recruitment Activities.  We continue to work closely with Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in our recruitment efforts for a full-time family practitioner or internal medicine physician. Although a number of physician candidates have come to Colebrook and met with both health center and hospital representatives, it remains very difficult to find someone who is willing to relocate to such a rural area as we have in northern New Hampshire. ISHC and UCVH’s experience is not unique among rural providers. Many studies support the fact that it has long been a challenge for rural providers to recruit physicians. The reasons are varied but generally include the following: lack of a variety of cultural and educational opportunities; few choices of employment for partners/spouses; and absence of high tech diagnostic and treatment equipment as well as close proximity to a variety of specialty care. While 20% of the country’s population lives in rural areas, only 9% of primary care physicians choose to practice in a rural area.

Despite the challenge, however, we are working with numerous recruitment agencies in our search and are confident we will succeed in our efforts.
Medical Director’s Message

As many North Country residents know, I have been associated with Indian Stream Health Center (ISHC) for nearly 25 years and I continue to consider it a privilege to care for people in our service area. Recruited by Drs. Gifford and Parsons right out of an internal medicine residency at the University of Massachusetts, I had been a life-long resident of the greater metropolitan Boston area. There were many I suspect, including my own family, who were sure I would not stay in Northern New Hampshire long. But here I am, more than two decades later, still practicing primary care medicine and still caring deeply for both individual patients as well as the community as a whole. Although it often seems that there have been many changes since Drs. Gifford and Parsons established a medical practice to become known as “The Clinic”, the core of primary medical care has really not changed significantly. In the tradition of Indian Stream’s founders, ISHC’s team of dedicated staff strive to care for our patients within a compassionate, caring and comprehensive environment.

Although we no longer follow our patients in the hospital as we once did, nor do we deliver babies here in Colebrook, we work very hard to assure that when you or family members need that level of care, you will receive it from qualified professionals in an appropriate and safe environment. We have long partnered with Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital (UCVH) where a number of specialists see patients on a weekly or monthly basis. Likewise, we refer our patients when needed to UCVH for outpatient lab and radiological testing that is performed there as well as in-patient care by a hospitalist who has ready access to both your ISHC electronic medical record and your care provider. One of our providers is available 24 hours a day and we confer routinely with UCVH hospital staff to ensure you receive the care you need. We also have close relationships with staff at other hospitals and specialists from throughout our region and in the state. As a Patient-Centered Medical Home, our patient care teams provide care coordination that ensures smooth transitions between providers as well as self-management support for patients dealing with chronic disease. This new model of care facilitates partnerships between patients and their personal provider, and when appropriate, their family.

While the way providers, especially primary care providers, care for patients has changed very little over the years, how providers are paid to deliver that care is changing significantly. Rather than being paid for volume (how many patients are seen in a day) third party payers (Medicaid, Medicare and commercial insurers) are beginning to provide payment based on the quality of care that is provided. We at ISHC welcome this change. Since our approval as a Federally Qualified Health Center, we have been developing benchmarks based on best practice standards and outcomes particularly for our patients at risk of developing or with a diagnosis of chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure or heart disease. As an example, while we believe we were always diligent in measuring and managing our patients’ blood pressure, before we became an FQHC, we could not have shown anyone the outcomes of our care. Now, however, with the use of an electronic medical record ISHC providers review our patient records on a monthly or quarterly basis and compare our outcomes against industry standards of quality and adjust our systems as necessary to maintain high quality care.

Thanks to our strong administrative team, ISHC more often than not successfully competes in the national arena against much larger organizations. The funding we received to support the development of our pharmacy was extremely competitive. Likewise, the approval of the North Country Accountable Care Organization discussed on page 2 of this report, was one of only five across the country approved by Medicare out of hundreds of proposals that were submitted.

Along with the rest of the ISHC staff, we will continue to work hard to care for residents of northern Coos County. This is our home and many of our patients are our friends and neighbors. You will always find updated information on our website at www.indianstream.org or watch the papers for any new developments!