

THE WRITE STUFF: A feature by Paula Hartman Cohen in our Spring 2007 issue, "The Other Side of the Stethoscope," won a 2008 Will Solimene Award from the New England chapter of the American Medical Writers Association.



Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice.

Leg: The Dartmouth study was conducted in 14 communities that have been part of RWJF's Aligning Forces for Quality program since 2006. The researchers examined five different measures of care: leg amputation rates; breast cancer screening rates; diabetes blood-test rates; preventable hospital stays; and the percentage of patients with a primary-care provider.

The most striking finding was that the rate of leg amputations—a complication of diabetes and vascular disease—not only varies among regions but is four times greater in blacks than in whites. There were significant differences in the other four measures, too, including a three-fold variation in hospitalizations that could have been avoided with better outpatient management of such conditions as diabetes or heart failure.

Chronic: The 14 communities were chosen in 2006 for the first phase of the RWJF initiative, which focused on improving the

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quality of care in outpatient settings for patients with chronic conditions. With the new \$300-million investment in June, the effort was expanded to include inpatient care, to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in care, and to enhance the role of nurses. Both phases have involved patients, providers, and payers. The premise of the program is that no single person, profession, or group can improve care without the support of others.

Cities: The 14 communities represent 11% of the U.S. population and were chosen to reflect

the breadth of the nation. Included are several cities, such as Seattle, Wash., and Memphis, Tenn.; a few regions, like western Michigan; and a few whole states, including Maine. The communities have already begun to show improvements.

The initiative represents a new type of partnership, noted Lavizzo-Mourey. "Improving the quality of care can only take place where patients and best practices converge," she said.

LAURA STEPHENSON CARTER



Seattle, Wash., was one of 14 communities across the U.S. that the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation commissioned Dartmouth to study, as part of an initiative that's addressing racial, ethnic, and geographic disparities in the delivery of health care.

Worthy of note: Honors, awards, appointments, etc.

Constance Brinckerhoff, Ph.D., the Nathan Smith Professor of Medicine, has been named a master

by the American College of Rheumatology. One of the organization's highest honors, mastership

recognizes outstanding contributions to the field of rheumatology through scholarly achievement and service to students and the profession. See page 52 for more on Brinckerhoff's career.

John Wennberg, M.D., M.P.H. (below), the Peggy Y. Thomson

Professor of the Evaluative Clinical Sciences and director emeritus of the Dartmouth Institute for Health

Policy and Clinical Practice, and **Elliott Fisher**, M.D., M.P.H. (below), a professor of medicine and the

director of the Center for Health Policy Research, were named to a new Working Group on Medicare Reform convened by the Century Foundation, a nonpartisan public policy research organization.

The group, made up of prominent health-policy experts from

around the country, will assess the state of Medicare and make recommendations to reform and strengthen the program. Dartmouth is the only institution represented more than once on the 11-member group.

William Hickey, M.D., a professor of pathology, was elected a governor of the College of American Pathologists.

Paula Schnurr, Ph.D., a research professor of psychiatry, received a

Ladies' Home Journal Health Breakthrough Award, in recognition of her research on post-traumatic stress disorder in female military personnel.

A teaching tool called the Computer-assisted Learning in Pediatrics Program (CLIPP) was presented with the 2008 Academic Pediatrics Association's Outstanding Teaching Award. CLIPP was created by

Leslie Fall, M.D. (at left), and **Norman Berman**, M.D. (below); both are associate professors of pediatrics. A web-based software program, CLIPP is designed to be used by third-year medical students during their pediatric clerkships. It is now used by more than 80 of the 129 U.S. medical schools.

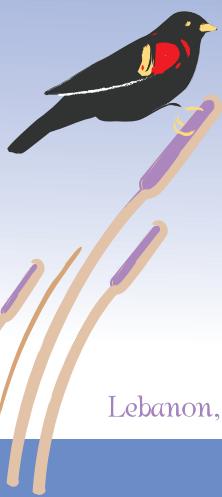
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Dr. Thomas G. Schell & Associates

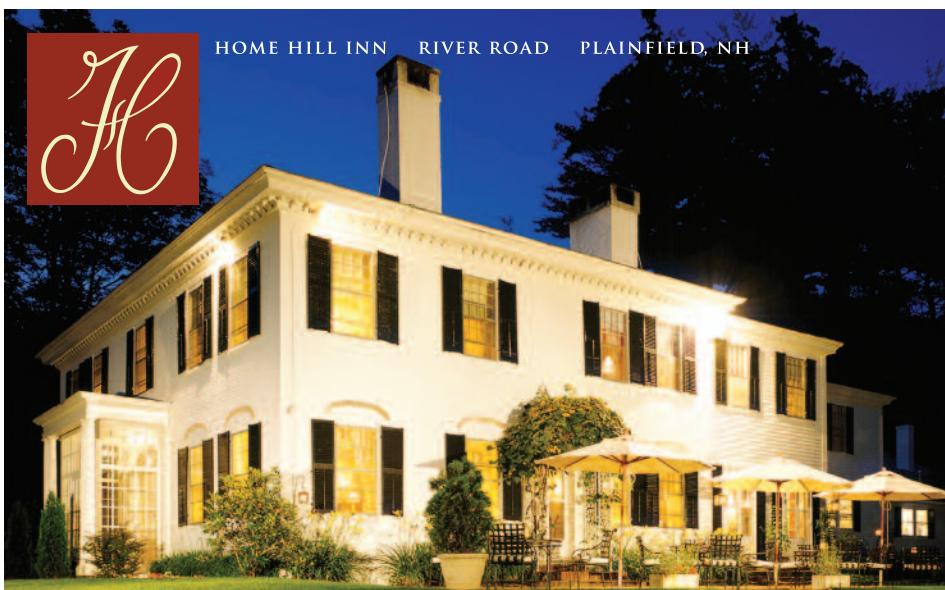
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Worthy of note

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Robert McLellan, M.D., an associate professor of medicine, received the 2008 Innovative Research Award from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Mountain and Plains Education and Research Center.

Gregory Tsongalis, Ph.D., an associate professor of pathology, was elected a member of the Council of the Pan American Society for Clinical Virology.

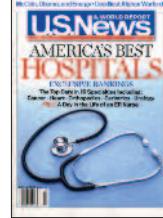
Camilo Fadul, M.D., an associate professor of medicine, received the Leonard Tow Humanism in Medicine Award from the Arnold P. Gold Foundation.

James Aubuchon, M.D., a professor of pathology, received the 2008 College of American Pathologists' Distinguished Service Award.

Matthew Reilly, a third-year DMS student, was named a 2008 Research Scholar by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the National Institutes of Health.

Amanda Thornton, a third-year DMS student (as well as a former editorial intern at DARTMOUTH MEDICINE), received honorable mention in the William Osler Medal essay contest, administered by the American Association for the History of Medicine. Her essay was titled "Coerced Care: Thomas Thistlewood's account of medical practice on sugar plantation slaves in colonial Jamaica, 1751-1786."

Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center was included among the nation's top hospitals by U.S. News & World Report. The magazine evaluated 5,453 hospitals all across the country, and only 170 (just over 3% of the total) made the top 50. Dartmouth-Hitchcock was included among the top 50 in three of the 16 specialties that were ranked—cancer; ear, nose, and throat medicine; and gynecology. This is the seventh year in a row that DHMC's Norris Cotton Cancer Center has appeared in the U.S. News ranking.



The DMS Family Medicine Interest Group received a Program of Excellence Award from the American Academy of Family Physicians. The group also won the award in 2007. ■