



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

MAXWELL & ELEANOR BLUM  
PATIENT AND FAMILY  
LEARNING CENTER

THE CAMPAIGN FOR

**Mass General**

# 2019 Maxwell & Eleanor Blum Patient and Family Learning Center





# The Blum Center Year in Review

Located at the heart of the MGH campus—only a few steps beyond the White Building main entrance—the Maxwell & Eleanor Blum Patient and Family Learning Center serves as a comfortable, conveniently-located resource center where all are welcome.

In 2020, the Blum Center will embark upon its third decade of educating the patients and staff of Mass General and beyond. Through the website, the Blum Center connects with a large community around the globe, offering equal access to the latest health information.

Because people have exposure to many sources of digital data, it's more important than ever to present resources that are evidence-based. We provide accurate, timely information designed to meet the needs of a diverse population including every age range and people with accessibility challenges. We also collaborate with our healthcare staff to create the information we disseminate to our patients and family members.

Knowledge of a new treatment can save a person's life or improve the outcome of their healthcare. Our goal is to equip patients and family members with facts that will allow them to make the most informed decisions to benefit their health and wellness.

Last year, our staff welcomed 7,094 patrons into the Blum Center.



Blum Center staff from left to right: Maryam Dayib, BS – Health Educator; Carol A. Ghiloni, MSN, RN – Professional Development Specialist; Brian M. French, RN, NPD-BC, PhD – Director; Amy Sam, MPH – Health Education Project Specialist. Not pictured: Gail Alexander, MSN, RN – Patient Education Specialist, Catherine Mercer, BS - Health Educator.



## Health Education Programs

### Meeting the Needs of the Mass General Community

The Blum Center hosts a monthly series of one-hour educational health programs. Patients, family members and staff attend these free programs. Clinical content experts ensure that the information presented is current, reliable and accurate. Expanding the reach of these programs through Facebook live streaming continues to be an ongoing goal. Online participants can ask questions or watch taped sessions at a more convenient time.

In 2019, the Blum Center hosted a record high of 66 educational programs with 1,170 attendees. Many programs relate to special days, weeks or months about important health topics (e.g., an April program on autism spectrum disorder coincided with National Autism Awareness Month).

At the end of each program, participants complete evaluation forms. Participants can also recommend future topics. Wellness, nutrition, bone health and aging are popular topics.

### Fourteen nutrition-related educational programs

- Eight monthly Food Allergy Management Boot Camp sessions with MassGeneral Hospital for Children Food Allergy Center
- Two Optimal Weight and Nutrition sessions with the MGH Weight Center
- Decoding the Nutrition Label session with MGH Nutrition and Food Services
- Type 2 Diabetes and Nutrition session with MGH Diabetes Center
- Gluten-Related Disorders and Nutrition session with MGHfC Center for Celiac Research and Treatment
- Practical Food for Thought session with MGHfC Raising Healthy Hearts Program



In 2019, the Blum Center hosted a record high of 66 health education sessions.



## Nursing Orientation Focuses on Patient Education and Resources

In FY 2019, more than 400 newly hired registered nurses learned about the Blum Center as part of their orientation, and discovered the educational resources available for clinicians to share with patients. The class emphasized the importance of using teaching practices that promote health literacy for all Mass General patients.

Health literacy is the ability to obtain, process and understand basic health information and the services needed to make appropriate health decisions. It includes learning skills like understanding medication instructions; accurately describing symptoms; operating a computer; and navigating the complex healthcare system.

The Blum Center advocates delivery of care in a way that recognizes that anyone may have limited health literacy. Depending on the situation, a person's health literacy may change. It can be influenced by the stress of an illness or healthcare situation; the complexity of the healthcare system; or unfamiliarity with a topic.



Gail Alexander, MSN, RN – Patient Education Specialist.



During orientation, nurses learn how to avoid jargon; use simple language; select materials that meet plain language standards; and determine what patients understand. They also learn how to find materials from reputable sources, which are based on best evidence and reviewed regularly by experts who follow plain language principles. The Blum Center is available to help nurses locate specific patient education materials.



## Collaborating Departments, Centers, Programs and Initiatives:

Center for Cancer Risk Assessment	Palliative Care and Geriatric Medicine, Continuum Project
Center for Celiac Research and Treatment	Pediatric Diabetes Center
Council on Disabilities Awareness	Pharmacy
Delirium Steering Committee	Physical Therapy
Dermatology	Psychiatry
Diabetes Center	Radiology/Imaging
Food Allergy Center	Raising Healthy Hearts Program
Gastroenterology	Respiratory Care Services
Headache and Neuropathic Pain Unit	Rheumatology
Health Decision Sciences Center, Shared Decision Making Program	Speech, Language and Swallowing Disorders and Reading Disabilities
Health Story Collaborative, SharingClinic	Substance Use Disorders Initiative (SUDs) Committee
Heart Center	Thyroid Unit
Infectious Diseases	Urology
Lewy Body Dementia Unit	West End Clinic
Mass General Cancer Center	Weight Center
MassGeneral Hospital for Children	
Neurology	
Nutrition and Food Services	



## Improving the Blum Center Environment

Over the last year, many improvements to the Blum Center environment have helped us better meet the diverse needs of our patrons.

### Complete Library Update

After completing an environmental scan of the library, the Blum Center team consulted with colleagues from the Mass General Treadwell Library to determine the best way to update our collection. The group developed a plan to revise the entire library collection—the first major update in more than 10 years.

Although many books in our collection were still useful, they did not meet the current standards. Librarians use strict criteria to manage collections and ensure that books are up-to-date, relevant, evidence-based and useful. To help, we created a three-month internship. Katharine Jane, a Library Sciences major at Simmons University, joined our team in March 2019.

After a careful review of each book by date of publication and content, we realized that about 75 percent of our collection needed to be updated

or replaced. We then searched for new editions or similar titles and reached out to content experts around the hospital for suggestions, including colleagues in the Maxwell V. Blum Cancer Resource Program and the MassGeneral Hospital for Children. We now offer hundreds of new titles and are planning a social media campaign to call attention to these new offerings.

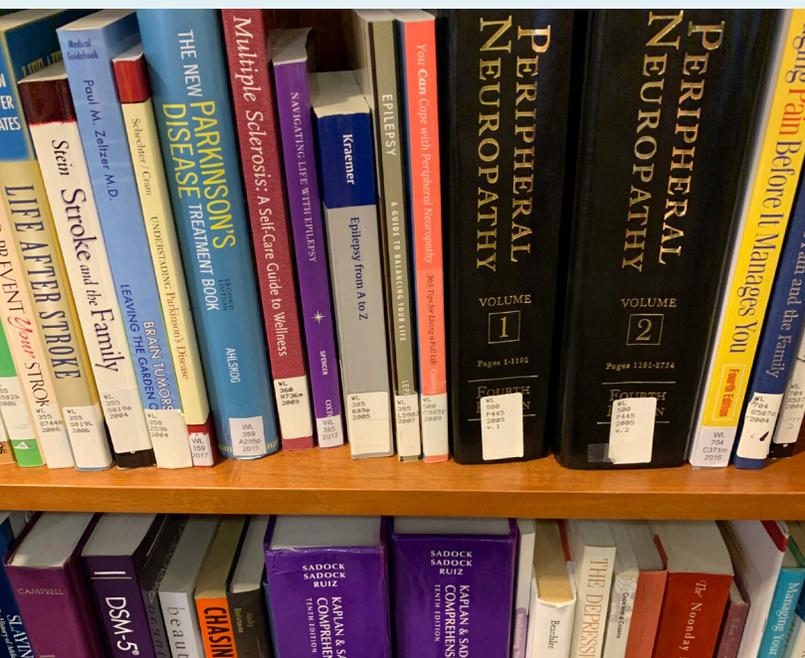
### Technology Upgrades

All Blum Center visitor computers now have larger screens and new software that supports a faster internet connection. Our Assistive Technology Center and staff computers include the latest version of Job Access With Speech (JAWS®), the world's most popular screen reader for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. We can now accommodate patrons, staff and interns with impaired vision. The Blum Center team worked closely with our Disabilities Program Manager to improve our accessibility.

### Enhancing Comfort

Visitors often refer to the Blum Center as a comfortable “oasis,” and to ensure we were able to meet our patrons’ expectations, our team decided to purchase all new chairs and tables for the reading room. The new furniture is more aesthetically pleasing, and it gives visitors a more comfortable place to access important health information or to rest between appointments—in short, to make sure we remain an “oasis.”

Visitors often refer to the Blum Center as an “oasis.”





## Blum Center Staff: Influencing Hospital-wide Initiatives Through Leadership

Blum Center staff bring their leadership expertise to many hospital-wide committees and initiatives including two of the MGH Nursing and Patient Care Services Collaborative Governance committees—the Patient Education and Patient Experience Committees. Collaborative Governance is the decision-making process that places the authority, responsibility and accountability for patient care with practicing clinicians.

In his role as advisor to the Patient Education Committee, **Brian French, RN, NPD-BC, PhD**, Blum Center Director, serves as the link between the committee, the Center, administration and the broader MGH community. As coach for the Patient Education Committee, **Gail Alexander, RN, MSN, CCRN**, Blum Center Patient Education Specialist, shares knowledge of evidence-based, patient education practices and health literacy, and provides resources to develop the knowledge and expertise of committee members.

Members of Collaborative Governance committees, called champions, join the committee to support and educate patients and colleagues. **Amy Sam, MPH**, Blum Center Health Education Project Specialist, is a Patient Education Committee champion. **Jessica Saad, BS**, Blum Center Health Educator, is a Patient Experience Committee co-chair. Committee champions focus their work on identifying opportunities to nurture an environment conducive to healing and comfort.

Amy Sam also serves as co-chair on the MGH Council on Disabilities Awareness. This council's mission is to move Mass General beyond compliance to create a safe, welcoming, comfortable and inclusive environment for all members of the Mass

General community—patients, families, employees and visitors alike. In this role, Amy has contributed to many council accomplishments:

- Coordinated presentations from the Lurie Center for Autism, Aspire Works Program, Down Syndrome Program and Office of Patient Experience
- Collaborated on Blum Center programs with the Disabilities Access and Inclusion Healthcare Series
- Visited the Spaulding Adaptive Sports Center in Boston
- Created the Council on Disabilities Awareness intranet site
- Consulted with MGH Marketing on accessibility for the Mass General website redesign
- Consulted with Brigham and Women's Hospital and Yale New Haven Health regarding Mass General programs, services, resources and initiatives for employees, patients and visitors with disabilities



## Paving the Way for Future Health Professionals

With a mission to provide the highest quality of patient education and consumer health information to a diverse community of patients, families and staff at Mass General, our internship program attracts talented people from area colleges, organizations and agencies.

### 2019 Interns

- Emily Butler and Emily Doke from the University of Massachusetts Lowell (Bachelor's in Public Health Program)
- Katharine Jane from Simmons University (Master's in Library and Information Science)
- Abby Edwards from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
- Olive Watts from Operation ABLE

One notable internship program is our 20-year relationship with the UMass Lowell Public Health Program. From January through May, two UMass interns were involved in many patient education initiatives relating to current public health issues. In April, the interns teamed up with the MGH Infectious Diseases Division to host an information table with resources about preventing the spread of infections and illnesses at home.

Topics included hand washing, proper antibiotic use and cleaning. Activities and giveaways attracted people to the table in the White Lobby of the MGH main campus, a busy location that many people pass through. It was a tremendous success.

This past year, Amy Sam, MPH, a Health Education Project Specialist, participated in several career panels aimed at inspiring the next generation of health professionals. At the Massachusetts



Commission for the Blind (MCB) Internship Opening Ceremony, Amy described the Blum Center's positive experience working with MCB students who are legally blind, highlighting Mass General's commitment to fostering an environment that includes talented employees with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Amy also served on the Mass General Volunteer Department Career Panel, where she spoke about her education, career journey and the skills needed for her Blum Center position. Her insight helped high school students consider potential careers as health professionals. At a Tufts University Master of Public Health (MPH) Program's Student & Alumni Networking Event, Amy connected with students, sharing her experience as a Tufts MPH student and offering advice for a successful school year. She also participated in the UMass Lowell Public Health Career Panel for fourth-year students. Because of these efforts, the Blum Center is now hosting another public health student as an intern.



## Blum Center By the Numbers



In-person Visits

7,094

Patients, families, and staff

Blum Center Website



22,751 Webpage views



12,166 Website visitors

## Plain Language/Health Literacy Consultations

144 New/revised documents, video scripts, forms, etc.

- 63 Pre/post procedure documents
- 23 General health/specific condition documents
- 12 Medication documents
- 11 Consent/agreement forms/letters
- 11 Video scripts
- 11 Program description/general department info documents
- 6 Research study documents
- 5 Public health emergency documents
- 3 Partners/enterprise-wide documents/EPIC screens
- 2 Lunder-Dineen documents
- 2 Newsletters

## Internal Health Literacy Workgroup with representation also from:

- Mass General Cancer Center
- MassGeneral Hospital for Children

## 7 Health Information Tables



With 11 sponsors and collaborators

- Infection Prevention at Home with UMass Lowell interns and Infectious Diseases Division
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month with Council on Disabilities Awareness
- Collaborative Governance Fair with Patient Education and Patient Experience Committees
- Patient Education and Health Literacy with Mass General Cancer Center and MassGeneral Hospital for Children
- Medication Take Back Day with Department of Pharmacy and Substance Use Disorder and Opioid Education Committees
- What Matters to You Day with Office of Patient Experience and John D. Stoeckle Center for Primary Care Innovation
- World Lymphedema Day with Catherine Holley, RN, staff nurse, Perioperative Care

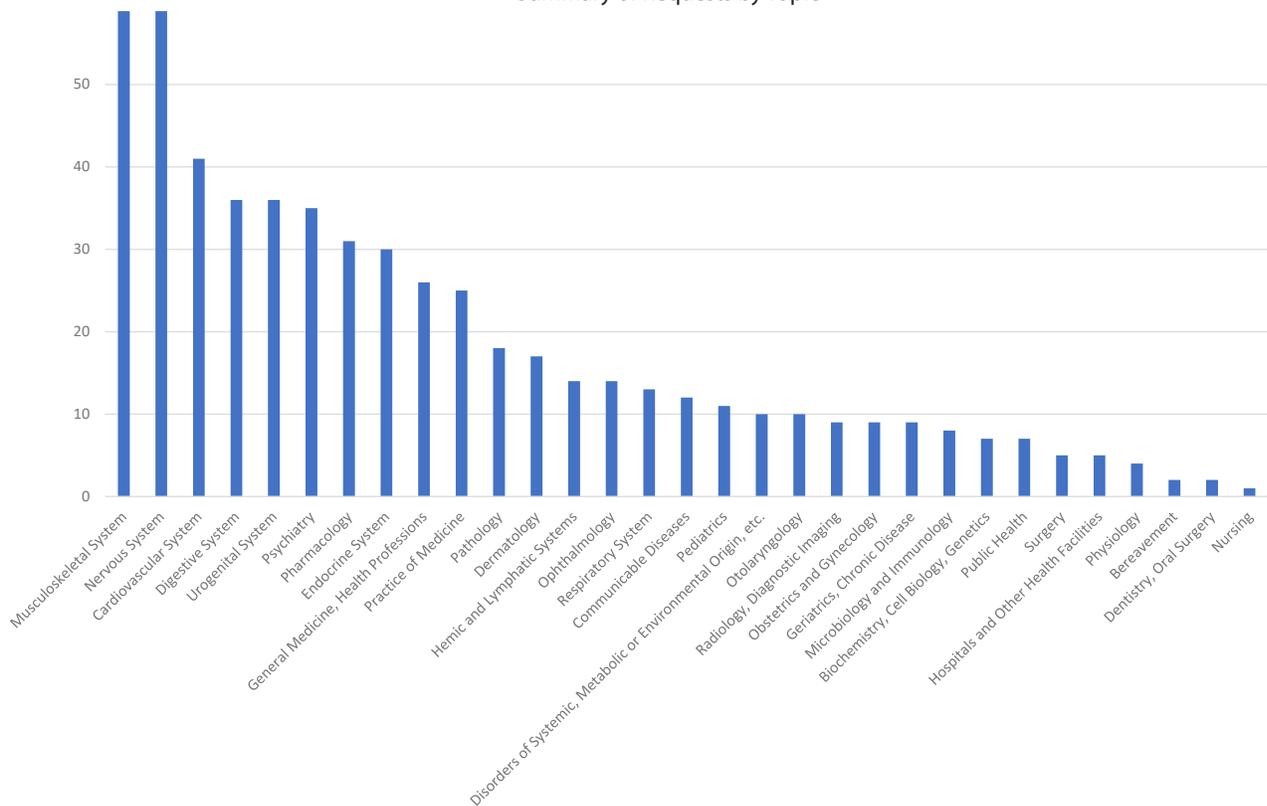


565  
Total

## Health Information Requests

Including 8 variant language requests in Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole and Spanish

Summary of Requests by Topic



## MGH Staff Education Programs



- Participation in all RN Onboarding Programs
- Introduction to Health Literacy to Collaborative Governance Patient Education Committee



### Blum Center Education Programs

**1,170** Attendees

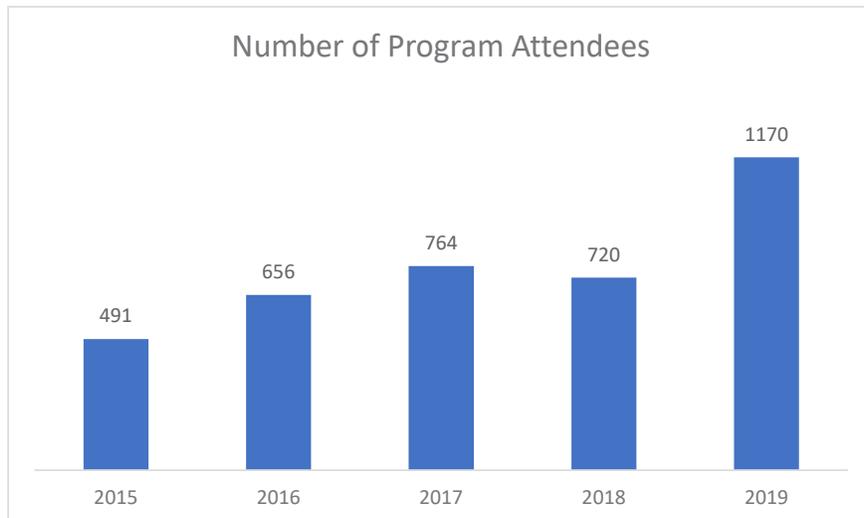
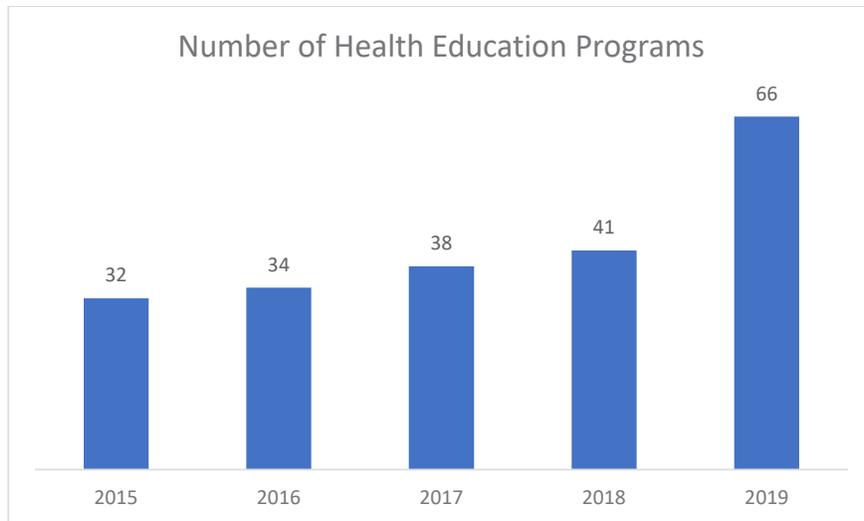
**66** Programs

**15** Facebook Live programs

Collaborations for ongoing programming with:

- Corrigan Minehan Heart Center
- Dermatology
- Gastroenterology (GI) Associates
- Health Decision Sciences Center, Shared Decision-Making
- Mass General Cancer Center
- MassGeneral Hospital for Children
- Nutrition and Food Services
- Radiology/Imaging
- Rheumatology
- Substance Use Disorders Initiative (SUDs) Committee

### Program Progression Over Time





## Collaboration with MGH Patient and Family Advisory Council, Patient Education Subcommittee

### 9 Patient education documents reviewed:

- Stroke Booklet
- Flying with an Oxygen Device
- Tips for Taking Care of Your Pain at Home After Surgery (2 versions)
- About Buprenorphine Extended-Release (Sublocade®) Injection
- Visiting Guidelines
- Living Well with a Serious Illness: Talking with Your Clinician About the Future
- Living Well with a Serious Illness: Talking About Your Illness with Loved Ones
- Pediatric Feeding Disorder Caregiver Letter

### 3 Blum Center/PFAC presentations:

- General Patient and Family Advisory Council
- Partners Quality & Safety Symposium
- Partners Patient Experience Summit

Review of Blum Center Lumen5 video for social media

Redesign of Blum Center folder

## Mentorship



2 Interns from UMass Lowell's Bachelor of Science in Public Health program



1 Intern from Massachusetts Commission for the Blind



1 Intern from Operation ABLE (job training/return to work program)



1 Intern from Simmons University's Master of Library and Information Science program



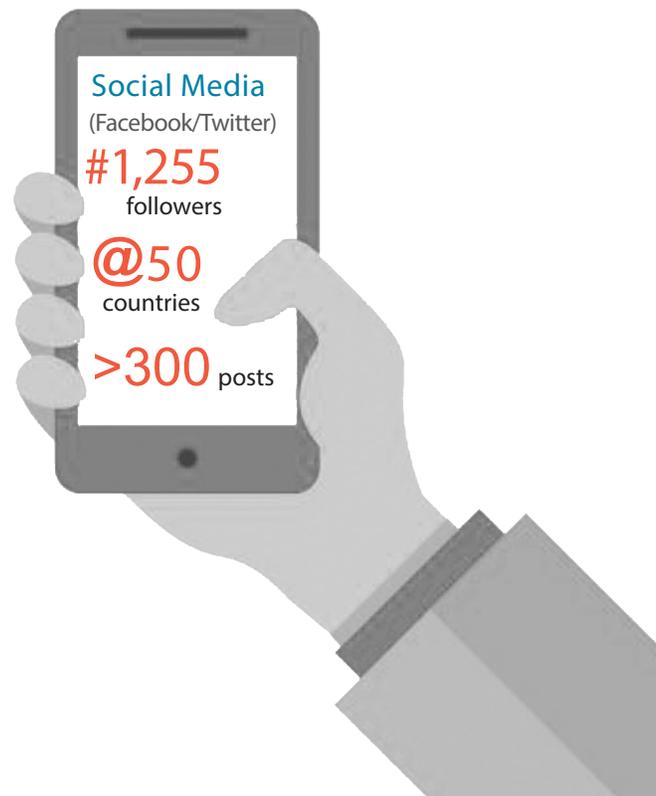
3 Carol A. Ghiloni Oncology Nursing Fellows



1 Intern from Curry College's Master of Science in Nursing program

## Collaborations with Substance Use Disorder and Opioid Education Committees

- 6 Recovery Month and Substance Use Stigma programs
- Medication Take Back Day information table





“I attend the Blum Center sessions as often as I can. I have learned a great deal about diseases that impact my family. What a tremendous resource this is.”

With gratitude to the Blum family  
on behalf of the patients, families and staff  
at Mass General and beyond.



## Blum Center Staff

Brian M. French, RN, NPD-BC, PhD – Director

Amy Sam, MPH – Health Education Project Specialist

Carol A. Ghiloni, MSN, RN – Professional Development Specialist

Maryam Dayib, BS – Health Educator

Gail Alexander, MSN, RN – Patient Education Specialist

Catherine Mercer, BS – Health Educator



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

---

MAXWELL & ELEANOR BLUM  
PATIENT AND FAMILY  
LEARNING CENTER