

The Newsletter of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England  
*Serving Maine, New Hampshire & Vermont*

## REAL REFORM INCLUDES WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE

In today's struggling economy, more women than ever are finding themselves in difficult financial circumstances. One important factor is the cost of staying healthy: women spend 68% more on health care than men, partly because of reproductive health care needs. We believe that no woman should have to choose between health care and living expenses — but many do. It is critical that we all work together to reduce health care costs and increase access to care for all women.

As one of our region's most trusted reproductive and sexual health care providers, PPNNE has been working to ensure that the needs of women are included in health care reform. Since July, PPNNE has been organizing support in our communities by publishing health care op-ed pieces, orchestrating letters to the editor, rallying at events, organizing phone banks targeting elected officials, and delivering more than 200 signed postcards to Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins urging them to support women's reproductive health care.

With her position on a key Senate committee — and as a pro-choice supporter — Sen. Snowe will continue to be a crucial vote on health care reform. Due in part to our efforts, we can proudly report that Sen. Snowe voted in favor of the Senate Finance Committee's reform plan that assures that women would not lose the health care benefits they have had for decades and addresses concerns that no federal funds would be used for abortion.



*President Obama greets a young supporter (Liam, son of PPNNE's New Hampshire Director of Public Affairs Kary Jencks) at a September health care town hall.*

Health care reform then moved to the House of Representatives where it passed with an amendment that seriously jeopardizes women's health care. Under the Stupak-Pitts amendment, millions of women would lose their existing private coverage for abortion services, and millions more would be prohibited from paying for it with their own money.

Now there's a new fight ahead in the full Senate, and it's one that we — and millions of Planned Parenthood patients around the country — cannot afford to lose. "Women must not be worse off after health care reform than they are now," emphasizes PPNNE Senior Public Affairs Director Chris Quint. "For so many women, PPNNE serves as their primary or sole health care provider, and often as a point of entry into the health care system. We need commonsense proposals that give women access to comprehensive reproductive health care and the opportunity to go to their provider of choice."



*PPNNE staff and volunteers rally to protect women's health care in New Hampshire and Maine.*

With our country in the midst of a heated debate over health care reform, it's important to consider the nearly 55,000 people in northern New England who depend on PPNNE to stay healthy. Our health centers are essential resources for communities everywhere, and our nation's broken health care system will not be fixed unless they are included in future reforms. Regardless of income level, Planned Parenthood makes sure that all women have access to the special services they need from affordable contraception to life-saving cancer screenings.

We call upon Sen. Snowe and her colleagues to stand up for women and increase the availability of the vital reproductive health care services they count on. To learn more about health care reform or to volunteer, contact Chris Quint at [cquint@ppnne.org](mailto:cquint@ppnne.org).



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**WWW.PPNNE.ORG** OR CALL **1-800-230-PLAN**  
TO REACH THE HEALTH CENTER NEAREST YOU.

Friends came from near and far to celebrate Nancy Mosher's career, including former PPNNE leaders Jim LeFevre and Allie Stickney.

PPNNE Board Chair Creston Lea and PPFA President Cecile Richards presented Nancy with the Sanger Award.



## Short Takes

### Merger Could Limit Reproductive Health Care

A proposed merger between Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health and the Catholic Medical Center HealthCare System (CMC) could limit women's reproductive health choices by requiring all affiliated clinicians to provide medical services in compliance with Catholic Ethical and Religious Directives. While this affiliation could expand access to primary and specialty care, it raises questions about whether women in New Hampshire will lose access to comprehensive reproductive health care including birth control and abortion referral. PPNNE is also concerned that the merger would give the Bishop of Manchester reserved power over an undisclosed percentage of Dartmouth-Hitchcock services and facilities, granting him the right to be part of private medical conversations. Contact Kary Jencks, PPNNE's NH Director of Public Affairs, at [kjencks@ppnne.org](mailto:kjencks@ppnne.org) to learn more.

## Choice Remarks: Thoughtful Transition

As we watched the leaves change color this fall, PPNNE was going through its own transition. In September, we celebrated Nancy Mosher's three decades of service and passion at events throughout northern New England. Our farewell dinner in Burlington brought together more than 100 friends, supporters, and staff, including Planned Parenthood Federation of America President Cecile Richards. PPNNE Board Chair Creston Lea and Cecile presented Nancy with the Sanger Award for her outstanding leadership. I think many will agree,



Nancy shares a moment with her husband Will after their unforgettable duet.

though, that the highlight of the evening was when Nancy's husband Will called her to the stage for a surprise duet.

We all know that PPNNE's next President/CEO has big shoes to fill. To make sure we get the right fit,

the PPNNE Board of Trustees has hired Russell Reynolds Associates, a senior executive recruitment firm, to conduct the search. All of the candidates have been impressive, and the exceptional caliber of applicants is due in large part to PPNNE's outstanding reputation and the decades of contributions made by Nancy, her predecessors, and our committed staff. We expect to welcome a new President/CEO in early 2010.

Our new leader will have plenty of opportunities to explore and some pretty significant challenges to face. Research shows that preventive health care is the first thing to decline during an economic downturn. We know many of our patients are already choosing to pay for heat, gas, and food over health care. Even if they are eligible for free or discounted services, they often can't afford to take off from work, pay for childcare, or arrange transportation. In a tough economy, women will forgo birth control and other reproductive health care needs. Like many non-profits, PPNNE's challenge has been to meet patient needs in the face of escalating costs and diminished funding. We've been forced to find ways to cut costs wherever possible while keeping our focus on limiting patient impact. It's with that in mind that we regretfully announce the difficult decision to close

our Springfield Health Center on December 18. More changes will be announced next year.

The opportunities for PPNNE center around the core of our mission — our commitment to helping women decide when and whether they want to be mothers. In 2010, this means helping them protect their fertility. We have already begun the work of informing our patients, advocates, and communities about the links between reproductive health and the environment, and we will continue to expand these efforts. This fall, our "Critical Link" conference saw more than 200 people in attendance...what a great kick off to our work!

Nancy gave us all a wonderful legacy — she entrusted us with the organization she helped to build 31 years ago. In spite of all of the change and uncertainty that lies ahead, I know that if we continue to work together, there truly is no challenge we can't overcome.

Thanks so much for your continued support of our work.

*Thomas S. Gray*



Interim President/CEO Tom Frank

# HUNDREDS ATTEND CRITICAL LINK CONFERENCE

On September 10, over 200 health care providers, advocates, legislators, and students participated in PPNNE's groundbreaking conference called "A Critical Link: The Environment and Women's Health."

Former President/CEO Nancy Mosher kicked off the conference by introducing PPNNE's commitment to reducing the impact of chemical exposure on women's health, children, and fertility. Presentations by nationally recognized experts and authors included *The Chemicals Around Us* by Ann Blake, Ph.D., *Environmental Contributions to Learning and Environmental Disabilities* by Elise Miller, M.Ed., *Environmental Risks and Breast Cancer* by Janet Gray, Ph.D., and *The Not So Pretty Beauty Industry* by Mia Davis.

Dr. Sandra Steingraber, author of "Living Downstream" and "Having Faith," closed the day with a keynote

address called *The Falling Age of Puberty in U.S. Girls and the Implications for Learning*. Dr. Steingraber told the story of her own pregnancy, weaving in new discoveries about genetics and the transformation of a mother's body as it prepares to give birth. She also discussed environmental hazards — from industrial poisons found in amniotic fluid to the toxic contamination of breast milk — that now threaten each crucial stage of fetal development.



In addition to lots of scientific information about the declining age of puberty, Dr. Sandra Steingraber shared personal stories about visiting Planned Parenthood for services.

Conference attendees became advocates for chemical reform and education, and gained a better understanding of Planned Parenthood's important role in educating women and families about this issue.

*"If we have the political will to do something, we will make a difference," said Elise Miller, Director of the Collaborative on Health and the Environment.*



## 40 DAYS OF FIGHTING BACK

For the third consecutive year, Planned Parenthood staff, volunteers, and patients had to deal with "40 Days for Life" protests that targeted health centers around the country. This year, the protests took place from September 23 through November 1, 2009 and included rallies, vigils, and "sidewalk outreach" outside PPNNE facilities in Burlington, VT, and Manchester, NH. Despite the inconvenience, we continued to provide health care services in a secure environment. A Burlington staff member reflected on the experience on

the 37th day of the campaign: "We've become accustomed to facing protesters every morning on our way into work and most evenings on our way home. They either block the steps or try to shame us from across the street with signs, posters, and banners.

The protesters try to convince the staff that we are doing something morally wrong by coming to work. They try to deter our patients by making them feel guilty for picking up a prescription, getting a Pap test,

or receiving abortion services. Many of our patients are scared and feel threatened by the protesters. We do what we can to comfort our patients, yet encourage them not to lash out at the people who are making our job more difficult than necessary.

We understand the concerns of our patients and the motivations of the protesters, but at the end of the day, we're here to provide valuable services. We will stay strong, because we're a resource to those who need us the most."

Seventh Generation's David Rappaport moderated a panel discussion and Shelia Hollender spoke about the benefits of chlorine-free, organic cotton tampons.

## Short Takes

### Page Turner Book Club

Look out, Oprah! Earlier this fall, PPNNE teamed up with the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics to launch "Page Turner" book clubs in communities throughout northern New England. Book lovers in Manchester, NH, and Burlington, VT, joined PPNNE education staff to discuss "Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry" by Stacy Malkan and make their very own all-natural, non-toxic face scrub. Everyone also went home with information on how to identify toxic ingredients and choose safer products. We're planning additional page-turning events this winter; contact [heatherw@ppnne.org](mailto:heatherw@ppnne.org) to learn more.

### New HIV Tests Deliver Results...Fast

According to the CDC, up to 1 out of 4 people who have HIV don't know it. That's why HIV testing is so crucial. Fortunately, testing for HIV has become faster, easier (blood tests are often optional), and more convenient. Today, there are many new testing options and PPNNE is now offering Rapid HIV tests — with results in as little as 20 minutes — at a number of our health centers. Learn more at [www.ppnne.org](http://www.ppnne.org) or call 1-800-230-PLAN for the Planned Parenthood health center nearest you.

**GOOD CHEMISTRY**

Blog entries on issues ranging from chemicals in hair dye to the benefits of organic wine can be found at [www.good-chemistry.org](http://www.good-chemistry.org).

# NEWS SOURCE

[If you receive more than one copy,  
please give this to a friend and notify us.]

## ABOUT US...

We welcome your ideas, contributions,  
and questions. Please write to us at:

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## DOUBLE YOUR MONEY: GIVE TO PPNNE BEFORE DECEMBER 31

Each day a woman will walk through our doors to ask for birth control, HIV testing, or a potentially life-saving annual exam. She may have lost her job or can't afford insurance, and she will ask us for help.

**And we will say yes.** She'll get the care she needs, even if she can't pay for it. Your financial gift allows us to help her and thousands others like her across Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

**For every patient who can't  
pay full price for care,  
there's a donor who makes  
that care possible.**

Every year, our costs increase and so does the need for services in our communities. As we go to press, we still have \$650,000 to raise before we meet our fundraising goal for 2009.

That's why we're excited to announce an unprecedented Year End Challenge. Inspired by the success of our September Challenge, an extremely generous donor will match all gifts received by December 31 — up to a total of \$250,000!

**Please take this amazing opportunity to double your gift before December 31** so it can go even further in making a difference in the lives of so many. You can use the enclosed envelope to make your gift today, or you can give online at [www.ppnne.org/donate](http://www.ppnne.org/donate). On behalf of our patients, staff, and board, we thank you for standing with us and wish you a happy and healthy New Year.

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