

Connections

A PUBLICATION FOR BAYSTATE HEALTH TEAM MEMBERS

Improving the Health of Our Communities, One Van Ride at a Time

Baystate Wing Hospital and the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QV CDC) have collaborated to help remove transportation barriers to care with the funding of the Quaboag Connector Van. Since August 2022, the van has been providing curb-to-curb service for patients with non-emergency medical appointments at Baystate Wing Hospital Convenient Care and primary care sites.

Since 2017, Baystate Wing Hospital and medical staff have invested \$210,000 in the Quaboag Connector in response to the regional needs for safe and reliable transportation services in the Quaboag Hills Region. This service provides community members transportation to employment, education, healthcare, workforce training, shopping, and benefit services within and outside the region. This newest addition to the connector fleet reflects Baystate Wing Hospital's investment of \$65,000 for the purchase of the Convenient Care van, and an additional \$155,000 annually to cover operational costs of the new van service, all with a focus on access to healthcare in the region.

Transportation issues are not unique to our area, but this collaborative work on the local level is leading to creative and successful local solutions. To date, 76 patients have used the service for 400 medical rides, receiving essential care they may not have otherwise.

"As a former city bus driver, I know from personal experience that it can be very difficult for people to take care of their medical needs when they don't have access to transportation that is reliable



and convenient," says Carolyn Hurston, driver for the Baystate Health Convenient Care Van. "Because there has been such a great need for transportation in our region for a long time, I felt compelled to be part of the solution to help people get to their medical appointments on time without long wait times to return home. I'm proud to be part of the community that helps people in need; and it also helps that I really enjoy driving, too!"

Quabog Connector Convenient Care Van

- Currently serves the communities of Ware and Warren
- Additional services available to patients living in Quaboag Region communities including Belchertown, Hardwick, Palmer, Monson, West Brookfield, Brookfield, and East Brookfield
- Operates Monday-Friday
- Make ride requests by calling the Quaboag Connector Ride Connect at 413-544-3401
- For more information: visit www.rideconnector.org