SERVING OUR COMMUNITY
A REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2006

The science of medicine.
The compassion to heal.
Our Mission

St. Peter’s Health Care Services, acting in the Catholic tradition of the Religious Sisters of Mercy, is a community of persons committed to being a transforming, healing presence within the communities we serve.

- We treat all persons with dignity, hospitality and compassion, calling forth their best human potential.
- We provide comprehensive services that support healthy communities, including quality medical care with holistic approaches to healing body, mind and spirit.
- We care for and strengthen the ministry and all resources entrusted to us.
- We advocate for accessible health care and quality of life for all, especially those who are poor.
- We respond with courage and integrity to needs for services in a rapidly changing health care environment.

Core Values

Compassion – We share the suffering of others; showing empathy and concern for anyone in distress and responding kindly and sensitively.

Reverence For Each Person – We show respect and consideration for each person, affirming the sacredness of human life.

Community – We demonstrate our interdependence through inclusive and compassionate relationships.

Hospitality – We create an environment where persons feel welcome and included, striving to meet perceived as well as expressed needs.

Excellence – We take pride in our work, continuously improving our skills and abilities so that our distinctive service benefits those we serve and with whom we work.

Integrity – We keep our word and are faithful to who we say we are.

Courage – We dare to take the risks our beliefs demand of us.
Building A Healthier, Stronger Community

St. Peter’s Community Service Report highlights the many ways we are building a healthier and stronger Capital Region.

Although medicine and science evolve at a rapid pace, we continue to advance the mission and values of the Religious Sisters of Mercy in treating all persons with dignity, hospitality and respect. Our mission remains constant – “to be a transforming healing presence within the communities we serve.”

We carry out that mission in numerous ways:

- We maintain first-rate, primary care facilities in communities that need our support.
- We help families and children qualify for government-sponsored health insurance programs.
- We provide charity care for those who lack such a safety net. This gives them ready access to health care, including some for the first time in their lives.
- We are meeting the charity care criteria for our primary service area as designated by the Department of Health.
- We provide free health lectures and screenings.
- We collaborate with many community-based groups.
- Considering our charity care, community programs, medical services for which we are under-reimbursed and the value of our volunteers, we provide a community benefit of more than $10 million per year.

We know there is so much more to be done. Together, working with our legislative leaders, community agencies and others throughout Tech Valley, we can continue our mission.

Steven P. Boyle
President and Chief Executive Officer

Sister Gail Waring, RSM
Vice President, Mission Services
Accessing Care
Close To Home

“In the care of the sick, great tenderness above all things.”
Sister Catherine McAuley, Foundress of the Religious Sisters of Mercy

With three health centers located in underserved communities, St. Peter’s is dedicated to providing high-quality, compassionate care close to those who need it most.

Our experienced staff of physicians, dentists, registered nurses and health professionals are part of the St. Peter’s Ambulatory Care Network, our system of health care centers in the Capital Region. We have three centers in underserved communities including: Albany’s South End, the city of Rensselaer and the town of Westerlo in Albany County. Many of the families served by these centers have no insurance and little means to cover medical and dental expenses. The staff in these centers work with patients, families, social service agencies and community groups to offer a broad range of services.

These include primary care, internal medicine, pediatrics, gynecology, and obstetrics, including comprehensive prenatal services and high-risk pregnancy care, nutrition and dental care.

In addition, the staff continues its efforts to help those with diabetes and asthma – two chronic conditions that affect a considerable number of patients.

In 2006, there were 43,202 primary/preventive care visits by the underserved to St. Peter’s Family Health Center, St. Peter’s Rensselaer Health Center, Anna W. Perkins Helderberg Health Center and the St. Peter’s Dental Health program. This was an increase of 2,168 visits from the previous year.

AMBULATORY CARE NETWORK

St. Peter’s Anna W. Perkins Helderberg Health Center
• Pediatrics • Internal Medicine
Main Street
Westerlo, NY 12193
(518) 797-3238

St. Peter’s Family Health Center
• Ob/Gyn • Pediatrics
• Internal Medicine
326 South Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12202
(518) 449-0100

St. Peter’s Medical Arts at Slingerlands
• Ob/Gyn • Maternal Fetal Medicine
• Pediatrics • Nutrition
1240 New Scotland Road
Slingerlands, NY 12159
(518) 475-7000

St. Peter’s Rensselaer Health Center
• Gynecology • Pediatrics
• Internal Medicine
53 Columbia Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144
(518) 434-2526

St. Peter’s Dental Health Services
317 South Manning Boulevard
Albany, NY 12208
(518) 525-1757

St. Peter’s Rensselaer Dental Health Services
53 Columbia Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144
(518) 463-9809
Youths who are at high risk for alcohol or other drug abuse can learn ways to develop a healthy lifestyle under a prevention program offered by St. Peter’s Addiction Recovery Center (SPARC), the Albany County Sheriff’s Department and the Albany County Stop–DWI program.

The Youth Assistance Program (YAP) is for those ages 15 to 22 who may need help battling alcohol and/or drugs. The program was introduced in 2006. Youth are referred to the program by parents, courts, colleges or law enforcement for having problems including court actions or college disciplinary cases; unlawful possession of alcohol or other drugs; and using forged IDs.

“Our goal is to help young persons who have shown early warning signs how to develop a healthy lifestyle and avoid later substance abuse problems,” said Robert Doherty, executive director of SPARC, and Denis Foley, Ph.D., CASAC, administrator of Albany County Stop-DWI.

In six, 90-minute sessions at St. Peter’s Hospital, the youths learn about the nature of addictions and how their behaviors can lead to personal, social, physical and emotional problems. They develop a model for change, self-honesty and responsibility in their lives. (Participants who test positive for substance use are referred for a professional assessment.)

According to the 1998 state school survey, an estimated 8,732 youths ages 12 to 17 from the four-county Capital Region already need chemical dependence treatment. A much larger number is at risk for developing problems. (Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.)

The innovative program is being financed by a total of $3,400 in grants that St. Peter’s Hospital Foundation obtained from St. Peter’s Church; the Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families Youth Bureau; the Cohoes Savings Foundation; and Albany County Stop-DWI. The cost is $200 for a six-week session and there are scholarships available for those who qualify. In addition to the Youth Assistance Program, SPARC continued its efforts to educate young people. Counselors made presentations about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse to more than 1,200 students in 2006.

SPARC SEASONAL HOMELESS SHELTER

The Morton Avenue site, near some of the city’s lowest socio-economic populations, serves a particularly challenged population of homeless people. Despite the harsh Albany winters, this vulnerable group of homeless is often shunned by the area’s other shelters. Those shelters won’t allow intoxicated individuals into their shelters, or they require that individuals enter into treatment or job programs as a condition of admission.

The Morton Avenue shelter provides shelter and food for about 10% of the homeless in Albany. The shelter also has an addiction recovery section, as well as a rehabilitation center. All temporary residents must be referred to the shelter by The Homeless and Travelers Aid Society (HATAS).
Comprehensive dental care took to the streets in the fall of 2006 when St. Peter’s and its community partners unveiled a 40-foot, 26,000-pound, state-of-the-art Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™.

“Having good dental care is essential for children to get a healthy start in life,” said Steven Boyle, president and CEO, St. Peter’s Health Care Services. “This can help them to be healthy and confident throughout their lives.”

Capital Region families already make more than 14,400 visits every year to St. Peter’s two dental offices in Albany and Rensselaer. But the new mobile unit adds a unique outreach component to the dental care program.

An estimated 3,000 children per year will receive comprehensive dental care through the mobile unit, which is sponsored by St. Peter’s Health Care Services, Ronald McDonald House Charities® of the Capital Region, and Tech Valley Healthy Kids, Inc. (TVHK).

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) donated the $425,000 vehicle. The annual operating costs of nearly $500,000 will be borne by insurance reimbursements, grants, and philanthropic support from corporations and individuals. On Sept. 20, 2006, the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™ began making visits to five Albany public schools chosen for their high percentage of students receiving a free or reduced-cost lunch. They are: Giffen Memorial Elementary School; North Albany Academy; Philip Schuyler Achievement Academy; Sheridan Preparatory Academy; and Thomas O’Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST).

The mobile unit was unveiled to the public on Sept. 27, 2006 at Albany’s Riverfront Park with state and local dignitaries including the Honorable Mary O. Donohue, New York State lieutenant governor; Albany Mayor Gerald Jennings; and representatives of the sponsors. Additionally, Ronald McDonald; members of the Albany High School Step Team; and students from the five Albany schools participated.

The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile™ is the first such unit in New York state, and is one of 30 around the world. The care mobile has two patient examination rooms, a laboratory, and a reception and medical records area. Five professionals from St. Peter’s Dental Health Services, including a dentist, program director, hygienist, assistant and an outreach coordinator, provide services ranging from exams and X-rays to fillings, extractions and sealants. Several staff members are fluent in Spanish.
Before coming to Albany in the fall of 2006, Habibou Toumeou, 10, and his little sister Aminata, 8, had never before seen a dentist in their homeland of Senegal, a republic of western Africa.

“Did you ever miss school?” Blythe Thompson, program manager of St. Peter’s Dental Health Services, asked Habibou.

“Yes, because my teeth hurt,” he replied. “It was hard to learn.”

After a recent trip to the school nurse at Philip Schuyler Elementary School, Habibou and Aminata were brought to the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile for dental care.

“It was fun!” said Aminata in broken English. “To come with friends (was my favorite part).”

The children had a combined total of 17 cavities. Most of those teeth had to be extracted. Some were filled or sealed to prevent future problems. Perhaps most importantly, the children were taught proper tooth brushing routines. Their oral health has been improving with each visit.

“It’s been good,” their mom said with a smile. Aminata, who translated for her mother, said “She is very grateful.” Their mom said the children would not have received any dental care if it weren’t for the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile and the dental staff of St. Peter’s. Now, when you ask Aminata and Habibou about tooth pain, they grin.

“I sleep the night, and don’t need medicine,” said Aminata happily. And because their teeth don’t hurt anymore, both Aminata and Habibou say they do better in school now too.

“Care Mobile Helps Family New to the United States”

NATIONAL STUDIES SHOW THAT:

- Pain from dental disease is the second-leading cause of school absenteeism for children aged five to nine.
- In New York state, only one in four children in the Medicaid program sees a dentist every year.
- Approximately 5,600 dentists are enrolled statewide in Medicaid or public health insurance programs; fewer than 1,800 actually participate.
Caring for Kids and Families

“Seal a Smile” Program Receives HANYS Award

St. Peter’s and other local health care providers earned a statewide award for a collaborative program to improve children’s dental health.

The award was for the “Seal a Smile” program, a school-based program that provides children with oral health education, screenings, prophylactic measures and sealants. The program is targeted specifically to improve oral health of the children in Albany, Rensselaer and Schenectady counties. The “Seal a Smile” program finds dental homes for those children and their families covered by NYS Medicaid or Child Health Plus. Additionally, children who are in need of primary dental services are referred for further dental care. The target population is kindergartners and second graders in 31 schools and six community organizations identified as having the highest percentage of participation in the federal school lunch program as an indicator of poverty. “Seal a Smile” is a three-year-old project of a successful 10-year community health improvement partnership of the Healthy Capital District Initiative (HCDI).

Healthy Babies, Healthier Families

St. Peter’s is committed to providing services and care that promotes healthier babies and families. In 2006, we continued numerous efforts to raise awareness of proper health through our free educational programs for new parents, siblings and families. We also received a $10,850 grant from the Community Foundation to fund more accurate hearing tests for newborns.

Weekly Health Education

LiveSmart is published every Wednesday in The Times Union and includes tips and stories on how to live a healthy lifestyle. The page is a collaborative effort of St. Peter’s, NewsChannel 13, CDPHP, The Times Union, Price Chopper Supermarkets and The Community Foundation. Story topics include nutritious meal planning, heart disease, exercise, bone health and more.

St. Peter’s Supports Patients with ALS and Their Families

The region’s only ALS Center raised more than $246,500 in 2006 to provide people with ALS and their families with a comprehensive and specialized blend of services and resources.

ALS is sometimes called Lou Gehrig’s disease. It is a degenerative neuromuscular disease affecting motor nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord. Although ALS was first described in detail in 1869, the disease’s cause, cure and means of prevention are still unknown.
Educational Programming About Childhood Obesity

St. Peter’s Cardiac & Vascular Center, St. Peter’s Corporate Communications Department, WNYT-NewsChannel 13 and The Times Union continue to make an award-winning television program about childhood obesity available to teachers and educators. “Appetite for Change: Why Weight?” tackles the topic of childhood obesity. The 30-minute program was named the “Best Single Public Affairs Program for 2001” for large upstate markets by the New York State Broadcasters Association. Additionally, St. Peter’s medical staff continues public efforts to combat childhood obesity with televised interviews. Local pediatricians Diane Tenenbaum, MD, and Lisa Kamerling, MD, have appeared on WNYT at various times to provide tips on how to keep children healthy and active.

St. Peter’s Goes Tobacco-Free on January 1

As of January 1, 2007, cigarette smoking and the use other tobacco products have been prohibited on the grounds of St. Peter’s Hospital and all St. Peter’s facilities.

St. Peter’s is among 18 hospitals in the Capital Region that pledged to go smoke-free by the start of 2007. It is believed to be the largest such coalition of hospitals in the nation to take the step without a legal mandate to do so.

In the past year, St. Peter’s has conducted extensive education campaigns, removed designated smoking areas on its grounds, implemented policies and produced materials aimed at helping persons cope with the change.

The policy applies to all St. Peter’s facilities, including Our Lady of Mercy Life Center and St. Peter’s Nursing & Rehabilitation Center. St. Peter’s Addiction Recovery Center (SPARC) already went smokefree earlier this year.

As part of the campaign, the hospitals sponsored ads in key daily and weekly newspapers in the region prior to implementation. The group also sent letters to physicians’ offices throughout the area, asking them to reinforce the point with their patients and help interested persons quit tobacco use. In addition, hospitals have developed cards, posters, banners and table-tent cards to educate patients, staff and visitors.
In keeping with our mission and core values, St. Peter’s Hospital is committed to providing medically necessary care to all, including the uninsured and the underinsured.

This means giving special consideration to those who are unable to pay and those whose limited means make it extremely difficult to pay medical expenses.

Understanding the need for sensitivity and confidentiality in this area, St. Peter’s Hospital has established respectful and effective procedures for addressing the needs of those who are unable to pay for all or most of their care. Those patients are offered the assistance of a financial counselor to determine whether they are eligible for our Charity Care Program or discounts on their medical expenses.

What is St. Peter’s Charity Care Program?

Charity Care is provided to a patient with a demonstrated inability to pay. A patient is eligible for Charity Care consideration based upon meeting certain income eligibility criteria as established by the Federal Poverty Income Guideline Sliding Scale.

The Mercy Healthcare Benefits (MHB) program, established in 1992 by St. Peter’s, provides free or discounted care to poor persons without insurance. It is a subset of the overall Charity Care program that allows patients to receive medically necessary services at no cost or reduced cost when they meet certain eligibility requirements that are based on federal poverty guidelines and change each year. The Mercy Healthcare Benefits Program is designed primarily for residents of Albany and Rensselaer counties. Residents of other counties may participate if a similar service is not available in their county.

Payments for Service from Uninsured or Underinsured Patients

If patients do not qualify for Charity Care, they may be eligible to receive discounts. The hospital has established the following guidelines for uninsured patients who are expected to owe “out-of-pocket” for acute care health care services.

- **Outpatient Services**: A 65% discount of charges will be applied and the patient will be responsible for paying 35%.
- **Inpatient Services**: A 50% discount of charges will be applied and the patient will be responsible for paying 50%.

Finding Out If You Qualify

If you cannot pay all or part of your health care bills at St. Peter’s Hospital, we can help. First, tell us in advance if you will have trouble paying your bill. You will be asked to pay what you can. If you are eligible, St. Peter’s Hospital will pay for all or part of your care. Our financial counselors help people qualify for government health insurance, such as Medicare, Medicaid, Family Health Plus, Child Health Plus, the Prenatal Care Assistance Program (PCAP), Healthy New York and more. This may help with future health care bills. For details on the Charity Care Program at St. Peter’s, visit our website [www.stpetershealthcare.org](http://www.stpetershealthcare.org) or call the St. Peter’s Financial Counselors Office at (518) 525-1565 or 525-6760.

The Charity Care Primary Service Area for St. Peter’s Hospital as designated by the New York State Department of Health consists of the following counties:

- Albany
- Columbia
- Greene
- Rensselaer
- Saratoga
- Schenectady
- Schoharie
- Warren
- Washington
How St. Peter’s Benefits Our Community

Every year St. Peter’s Health Care Services compiles a Community Service Report offering a snapshot of how we are positively impacting the health of people in our community. From healthy births to heart disease prevention and treatment, the report summarizes a variety of activities sponsored by St. Peter’s Health Care Services and its community partners.

The Office of Mission Services at St. Peter’s keeps a complete Community Service Report compiling the events and financial impact (called community benefit) of our activities during the 2006 calendar year. St. Peter’s Health Care Services in 2006 provided more than $10 million in services and programs to benefit the community. The accompanying graph provides an accounting of the expenses.

2006 Actuals

- Volunteer Service Provided $570,664
- Cost of Community Benefit Programs $1,513,218
- Other Public Programs $1,825,075
- Care of the Poor – Patient $2,266,488
- Unpaid Cost of Medicaid $3,850,776

Total Community Benefit Costs: $10,026,221*

*This figure does not include: Unpaid Cost of Medicare $4,804,906
Bad Debt Expense $7,287,410

For more information or to provide feedback on our Community Service Report, please contact Mission Services:
Phone: (518) 525-1573 • Website: www.stpetershealthcare.org