



2018 Henry L. Shattuck City Champion

Kate Walsh, President and CEO, Boston Medical Center Health System (BMCHS)

Kate Walsh's interest in urban community health care dates to her college years. Today as President and CEO of Boston Medical Center Health System, Kate heads up one of the region's largest health care systems that includes Boston Medical Center, New England's largest safety net hospital with over 6,000 employees, the BMC Health Plan, and a broad network of community health centers. Kate's vision in leading this organization is to make Boston one of the healthiest urban communities in the country by 2030.

Although Kate is the dynamo behind the system's significant growth, she shares these responsibilities with a remarkable team of health care workers who develop innovative and effective prevention and treatment programs for complex health problems.

Despite her many responsibilities and accomplishments, Kate is relaxed and approachable. She makes the effort to know BMCHS employees and shows appreciation for their work. Her quarterly "Town Hall" meetings provide opportunity for individuals to learn more about the medical complex or voice their concerns.

At BMCHS, Kate has worked continuously to improve health care quality and accessibility to meet patients' needs, at the same time driving performance improvements that respond to the challenges of a difficult financial environment. In the fall of 2018, completion of the hospital's campus redesign project will bring efficiencies and financial savings to hospital operations as well as improved patient facilities. BMCHS' recent transition to an accountable care payment model is another major initiative that reduces health care costs and better coordinates patient care.

Under Kate's leadership, BMCHS has also been a driving force addressing social determinants that affect health. Recognizing the impact of income, education, job security, early childhood development and housing on one's health, she advocates that health care providers must address these issues to truly address the medical complications they cause.

One example of Kate's approach to patients' well-being is her commitment to the prescription food pantry that, after more than 15 years in operation, has grown to serve approximately 7,000 families. Kate sees the pantry, which was the first of its kind in the country, as essential to the health of patients and their families. Recently, the hospital made an innovative \$6.5 million investment in local community projects that support good health. The investment funds services ranging from creating new stable housing stock to a new food market in Roxbury.

For additional information, please contact Boston Municipal Research Bureau at 617-227-1900