Get Your Facility Benchmarking Survey Back Today

How many surveys have you filled out but never seen the final data? More importantly, have you ever wondered if you're wasting your time even doing the survey?

The yellow 1997 NEHES Healthcare Facility Benchmarking Survey inserted in this newsletter is very different. If you complete the survey, you'll get the results free of charge AND have important data from 200 healthcare facilities to use in operating your own facility - data that is not available elsewhere.

Bob Loranger, NEHES secretary and Facilities director at New England Medical Center (Boston, MA), created this survey and a similar one in 1994. That survey went to 52 institutions; this one will go to 200.

"We want to solicit everyone's help, to ask that they get these back promptly," Bob said. "This will give them countless comparisons to point out what they're doing well or not doing well."

All data is anonymous. Bob will tabulate the results and distribute them free at Spring Seminar March 26 to members who completed a survey. He must have surveys back from NEHES members by March 1.

NEHES President Don Garrison said the survey will assist NEHES in a membership drive.

"We're sending out survey forms to 189 facilities that do not have NEHES members. A membership application will be included with these survey forms. They don't have to be members to complete the survey, but they need to become members if they want to receive the results."

The CEOs of NEHES member institutions will also receive surveys, Don said. "We want to encourage continued membership and participation. We want the CEOs to know this valuable data is collected and that NEHES member is participating in our survey."

If you have questions about the survey, call Bob at (617) 636-5267. See back of survey for instructions.

Learn About Commissioning at Spring Seminar

A building commissioning expert who has managed some of New England's largest healthcare renovation projects will lead the NEHES Spring Seminar Wednesday, March 26 at the Hynes Convention Center, Boston.

Stephen P. Rizzo, commissioning services manager for BR+H, Boston, is this year's Seminar faculty member.

His projects include chiller replacements and huge expansions at many healthcare facilities. Recent projects are renovations or additions at Beth Israel Hospital ($95 million); Harvard Medical School ($80 million); Children's Hospital of Philadelphia ($94 million); and University of Pennsylvania ($93 million).

Bring your questions about construction, building commissioning, projects best suited to commissioning, and proper planning for successful commissioning. Spring Seminar is also a time to meet other NEHES members, get the latest information on upcoming educational seminars, and, this year, get your copy of the NEHES Healthcare Facility Benchmarking Survey results.

The Western Mass. Society of Healthcare Engineers is planning this event. Registration is at 8 a.m.; seminar hours are 9 a.m. to noon.

A luncheon and visit to the NEHA vendor show following Rizzo's talk are included in registration fees - $50 for NEHES members and $75 for non-members.

If you haven't received registration information, contact Kurt Peterson, (413) 582-2313.

Joe Mona Wins Award

Joe Mona, just promoted to director of Facilities and Engineering at Spaulding Rehabilitation (Boston, MA), was among 1,500 Partners HealthCare System employees receiving a Partners in Excellence award recently.

The award recognizes employees for exemplary effort in quality treatment and service, leadership, innovation, teamwork, efficiency, and contributions to the community.

Joe won his award for installing medical gas lines and emergency power sources for Spaulding's Ventilator Weaning and Rehabilitation Program ahead of schedule and within budget.

Crediting his employees for the project's success, Joe said, "My philosophy is to enable employees to achieve the level of autonomy they are comfortable with, enabling them to be proud of their individual contributions."

Joe has worked at Spaulding for six years. A resident of Windham, NH, he is well-known for his biking and running abilities. Spaulding, one of the largest facilities of its kind in the U.S., is the only New England hospital to be named to the U.S. News & World Report list of top hospitals two years in a row.

Violence in the Workplace Seminar Planned

Violence in the workplace is a growing problem. NEHES members will learn to prevent or deal with violence at a new NEHES training seminar sponsored by the Vermont Healthcare Engineers Society at the NEHES Education Committee.

Ode Kiel of Safety Management Services, Inc. and former JCAHO head of plant safety technology will lead the discussion. "The day will consist of an overview of the problem in the workplace and the health-care environment," said Dick Harris of North Country Hospital, Newport (VT), the Vermont group's Education Committee chair and VHES vice chair.

"Those attending will get assistance in developing a violence prevention/containment program."

All NEHES members are invited to the seminar in May or June in Massachusetts. More details will be available at the March 26 Spring Seminar.
President's Comments

One of the most important things you learn in business training is in order to be successful you need location, location, location. I am beginning to learn that in order for us to be successful as healthcare engineers we need to prepare a business plan, a business plan, a business plan.

This document can tell you many things about your operation to help you continue to be successful. In essence, it is a document that tells you and your management how much it will cost to carry out your operation for the next one- to two-year period of time.

More importantly, though, it forces you to inventory the components of your operation and attach a value to each (including labor costs). The plan also allows you to show management what services they get for their dollars spent.

It is also a very good document to use when comparing what you can provide with what some private contractor might provide. Our society of NEHES is attempting to help you complete your plan.

Our new secretary, Bob Loranger, has agreed to put together a facilities survey similar to the one he completed in 1994. This document allows you to compare yourself with other facilities. This information can be very helpful as you go about completing your business plan.

I would urge each of you to collect the best data possible, submit it to Bob quickly, and use the survey results to make adjustments in your operation where necessary.

If you want to learn about business plans, ASHE will be offering some training at their yearly conference in July. If there is enough interest, we will try and offer something at our NEHES seminar in Newport, RI, during the first week of October. If you have other ideas, I urge you to contact our new Education Committee chairman, Steve Cutter, and let him know so we can develop plans to help you.

Your NEHES board of directors is very busy working on other projects in addition to the facilities survey mentioned. We want each of you to be proud of your organization, to participate, and to encourage other engineering professionals that you know to become members.

Don Garrison took office January 1. A longtime NEHES member and officer, Don is chief of Engineering Services for the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Yongs, ME.

NEHES Welcomes Eight New Members Who Joined for Education, Networking

Robert Centrella is the Engineering manager at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, 540 Litchfield St., Torrington, CT 06790 (860-496-6460). In health care for 26 years at this hospital, he is a member of the Connecticut Healthcare Engineers and ASHE. "I started going to some of the NEHES programs and I liked them," he said. "I joined for the education, to network with other engineers, just to expand my knowledge."

Anthony DiCicco is the director of Environmental Services at United Methodist Elder Care, 30 Alexander Ave., E. Providence, RI 02914 (401-438-7210). In health care for just one year, he has a background in general construction and holds several trade licenses.

"This is an all-electric building. When I got here they were getting ready for renovations. I have been able to help get them get the proper contractors and coordinate everything," he said.

Douglas J. Hartley is manager of Engineering at St. Joseph Medical Center, 128 Strawberry Hill Ave., Stamford, CT 06904 (203-353-2090). He came to the facility after serving as a chief engineer in the Merchant Marine and is a member of ASHE and CHES.

He attended the NEHES Fall Seminar and decided to join because of networking and educational opportunities.

Dawn LeBaron is the director of Security, Safety and Engineering at Newton-Wellesley Hospital, 2014 Washington St., Newton, MA 02162 (617-243-6000). She also joined to network and learn.

"My number one priority is having good management skills," she said. She has managed most hospital support services departments.

Richard Malmstrom is the plant engineer at Boston University Medical Center, 88 E. Newton St., Boston, MA 02118 (617-638-8819). He has always worked in health care, starting with a temporary job as a student. He joined NEHES to interact with other healthcare professionals.

"I joined to learn and share things, to learn how they deal with certain vendors, especially utility companies. With deregulation, everyone is trying to sell us something."

Pierre Richard is the general supervisor of power plants at Baystate Medical Center, 759 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01199 (413-784-4309).

He has been in healthcare since 1986, and came to Baystate two years ago. He has also worked for a state institution and at a college.

The outgoing president of the Western Mass. Healthcare Engineers Society, Pierre joined NEHES to take advantage of educational opportunities.

Larry Rubin is the director of Engineering at Brigham & Women's Hospital, 75 Francis St., Boston, MA 02115 (617-732-5500).

In healthcare for less than a year, Larry has worked for a commercial company that builds, operates, and maintains highrisers, and he has been a vice president for engineering, a school teacher in Chelsea, MA, and a Boston police officer.

He became interested in NEHES while attending the AHA conference in Orlando several months ago. "I do a tremendous amount of training here and am always looking for more information," he said.

David L. Stymiest, PE, SASHE, is a senior Facilities engineer at Partners HealthCare System, 55 Fruit St., WEH 205, Boston, MA 02114-2696 (617-724-3763). Formerly a consultant to health care, he has been active in ASHE.

"Once I became aware of the scope of the NEHES activities, joining seemed like the right thing to do," he said. He has written several papers for ASHE and met NEHES members at the last ASHE convention.
Member in the Spotlight

Steve Cutter of New Hampshire

Steve Cutter has worked at the same healthcare facility for 20 years, but that doesn't mean his responsibilities, education, and training have stagnated.

Professionally as well as personally, he has grown with the times and as healthcare has changed. Now director of Engineering Services at the Cheshire Medical Center, Keene, NH, he is his chapter's choice for this issue's Member in the Spotlight.

"His involvement with the education portion of our program has been so strong," said Jim Woods, New Hampshire Healthcare Engineers president. "He comes up with some real innovative ideas. He's been appointed to head the NEHES Education Committee and he had the idea to construct the New Hampshire and NEHES web pages on the internet."

A New Hampshire native, Steve studied engineering in the Navy. He first worked as a power plant technician at TCMC. He was promoted to lead technician, plant supervisor, and to his present position.

Education and acquiring new skills have always been his priorities. When he decided to get a college degree in management, it wasn't easy to attend school and study at night with a job and family (he is married with two teenaged daughters).

Steve has used computers on the job for at least 10 years. He has taken many computer classes and spent time learning how to use the internet as a facility management tool. "I get a lot of information from it," he said. "It's quick and accessible, right from your desk top."

That knowledge led him to create a web page for the New Hampshire chapter, which he has served as president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The website lets members and potential members access the chapter's meeting schedule and minutes, educational agenda, membership information, and even a Latest Laugh.

He plans to design a NEHES web page.

"It will be a vehicle to share information and a way for onestop shopping for the engineer, to see a lot of the information sources that they would need to access. It will be a little more complex than the New Hampshire page, because different states will have different needs. It will take a year or two to get really used well. The internet really is the educational vehicle of tomorrow - we might as well start today."

Many NEHES members, he said, have joined to obtain professional education, and he is happy to be able to help them get that knowledge.

Steve, who lives in Swanzey, NH, likes to hunt and fish, and is a bee keeper.

Group in the Spotlight

Boston Hospital Plant Engineers Club

The Boston Hospital Plant Engineers Club, established in 1950, is the oldest engineering society in the U.S., and even pre-dates ASHE by six years and NEHES by eight years.

The Boston club is one of four Massachusetts engineering societies recognized by NEHES, and many of the Boston Club members are actively involved in ASHE and NEHES.

Joe Mona, director of Facilities and Engineering at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and past president of the Boston Club, said its 15 member institutions include some of the largest and most prestigious health care institutions in the country, such as Massachusetts General Hospital, Beth Israel Hospital, Children's Hospital, New England Medical Center, Shriners Burn Institute, and the VA Medical Center.

Julian Fredie, the director of Real Estate and Facilities for Blue Cross/Blue Shield, is the Club's current president. Each member institution of the Boston Hospital Plant Engineers Club hosts a monthly meeting. Joe stated that Club members are very dedicated and meeting attendance averages 90%.

"Members of the Boston Club," Joe said, "are all professionals, tops in their field, a most elite group of facilities experts." They maintain huge facilities - some with several million square feet - and often deal with problems associated with vintage-historical structures as well as state of the art buildings and equipment.

"Professionally, this group is an infinite resource for information," Joe said. "It gives me exposure to the experiences of some of the most progressive and knowledgeable facilities people in the country."

Member Recognition is New Public Relations Committee's Mission

Tom O'Sullivan and Don Garrison want NEHES members to "blow their own horns." If they won't do it for themselves, then Tom will.

Member recognition is critical, said Tom, who is heading a new Public Relations Committee. "Don feels engineers aren't recognized for their many contributions to NEHES, their healthcare facility, and their community. We'd like people to call us if they are getting recognized by their administration and senior management, and if they know of members' activities that even the CEOs of their organizations aren't aware of."

Tom plans to publicize the Healthcare Facility Benchmarking Survey and Joe Mona's professional award in the Boston Globe. He has sent the first of two brief articles to Today's Facility Manager.

Tom will send news featuring NEHES members to their local newspapers and to their CEOs. He cited the example of Jack McCarthy, Facilities Management director at the Hospital for Special Care (New Britain, CT). "He's in many community organizations and he is giving a lot back to the community."

Recognizing members also generates publicity for NEHES, Tom said.

NEHES as a society wants to recognize an Engineer of the Year, and will support an award for each chapter Engineer of the Year, to be determined by each chapter's criteria.

If you have news about yourself or another member to share, please call Tom O'Sullivan, manager of Maintenance Operations, Baystate Medical Center (Springfield, MA), at (413) 784-3771, or fax information to him at (413) 784-4773.
Plan to Attend Fall Seminar 1997 in Newport, RI

Rhode Island engineers started planning for the 1997 Fall Seminar October 7-10 in Newport, RI even before the 1996 Seminar was held, according to Bob Okerholm of Saint Elizabeth’s Home (Providence, RI).

Theme for the Seminar will be "Changing Tides," reflecting changes in the healthcare industry.

Organizers have reserved the Double Tree Islander Hotel on Goat Island for meetings and all-day vendor displays, and the Newport Officers’ Club for the annual meeting. A golf tournament is also planned.

Because the Seminar will fall during the Newport tourist season, many attractions will still be open.

Bob is vendor coordinator; vendor committee members are George Silva, Bradley Hospital (East Providence), and Ken Jancekovich, Rhode Island Hospital, (Providence).

Several vendors have already reserved space for next year.

Bob and Jim Gilmore, Newport Hospital, are co-chairing Program planning. Jim is also in charge of onsite details.

Peter Grafe, Rhode Island Hospital, will plan the golf tournament and other activities; Ed Rudegeair, State of Rhode Island Mental Health and Retardation, is handling program registration; Ken Soscia, South County Hospital (Wakefield), will do program content.

Registration packages will be mailed in the summer.

It's Off to Bermuda for Fall Seminar 1998

You may be seeing snow outside these days, but the New Hampshire Society of Healthcare Engineers wants you to think about ocean beaches, golf, and Fall Seminar 1998 instead.

For the first time ever, NEHES will hold the Seminar out of the country - in Bermuda, November 8-12, 1998.

It wasn’t that the New Hampshire group couldn't find a suitable facility, but members just wanted to do "something different." By the time many NEHES members drove to northern New Hampshire, they reasoned, their drive could take as long as eight hours. Someone asked about Bermuda - only a 90-minute flight from Boston - and the idea gained support.

Vendors and NEHES members surveyed at Spring Seminar also liked it. Most members preferred a five-day event, 99% would bring a spouse, and only "time, death, and cost," in that order, would limit their attendance, said Rick Bowen, director of Plant Operations at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital (Dover, NH).

Most vendors said they would attend, even for five days.

So far, according to Tom Humphrey, director of Engineering at Monadnock Hospital (Peterborough), the New Hampshire chapter - with NEHES board approval - has arranged the following details:

- All events will be held at Marriott’s Castle Harbour, a five-star resort with numerous pools, beaches, an 18-hole golf course, and other amenities;
- Plane fare will be approximately $200-$250 per person;
- Seminar registration fees will remain at $125 per person; daily hotel rate with oceanview room, use of all facilities, and two meals per day at the hotel's three gourmet restaurants will be $174;
- Daily rate includes meals at all of the hotel's three gourmet restaurants;
- Members can extend their Bermuda stay at the same daily rate for the weekend following Fall Seminar;
- Golf tournament will be November 8; the Seminar will be November 9-12.

"The cost is not going to be significantly different than for a normal show," Tom said. "We have been working very diligently to keep the costs down."

Watch future newsletters and mailings for more details.

Welcome to the Cyber Corner!

As part of my efforts as chairman of the NEHES Education Committee, I will be bringing you information in each newsletter about internet sites that can help us as healthcare engineers.

First, if you're not connected to the net, get plugged in! A couple of years ago, there was not a lot of relevant information available, but now there is so much out there you can't afford to ignore it.

Once you have access, a good place to start is the NHSHN Website. The address is http://top.monad.net/~sd/ctt/nhshe/nhshe.html. Once you've gotten there, bookmark it so you don't have to type it in again. Clicking on "Regulatory Agencies" will get you to a list of agencies such as JCAHO, NFPA, OSHA, etc.; selecting any of these will take you to their homepages.

Back at the front page there are also links to ASHE as well as engineering journals such as Energy User News, Heating, Piping and Air Conditioning (HPAC), and several others. Of course, don't miss the latest laugh!

I would recommend that you explore the HPAC link. You will first have to register (no cost), but then you have access to the HPAC Archive, a searchable and downloadable database of technical articles.

According to the editor, theirs are the original, unedited articles. There are also lots of other useful tools here, such as a searchable manufacturers' index, so be sure to check them out.

Well, that's all for now. I'll be back next issue with something new that I've found. If you have an Engineering- or a Healthcare-related site that you'd like me to visit, you can E-mail me at: scutter@cheshire-med.com.

See you in the surf!

Submitted by,
Steve Custer
Education Committee chair
The Cheshire Medical Center, Keene, NH
New NFPA Liaisons Give NEHES Double Coverage

Bob Thompson and Jack McCarthy, new NEHES NFPA liaisons, will keep watch over two committees this year - NFPA 99 (health care regulations - Jack) and Code 101 (life safety code - Bob). Their task is to report on any NFPA proposals relating to health care that could impact NEHES members.

For Bob, the assignment will mean an entirely different relationship with NFPA than when he was a staff member there many years ago. For Jack, it will mean a continuation of his involvement with NFPA committees which began in 1976.

Located in Quincy, MA., the NFPA was formed in 1896 and is an international nonprofit organization with more than 68,000 members. Its sole mission is to "reduce the burden of fire on the quality of life by advocating scientifically-based consensus codes and standards."

Bob, the Safety and Fire Protection engineer for the VA New England Healthcare System, US Department of Veterans Affairs, has specialized in health care fire and life safety for the past 17 years. His fire protection engineering background has spanned nearly 40 years.

In the 1970s, Bob served as NFPA secretary to the Committee on Life Safety. The approval process for proposed standards and changes is now much more complicated than it used to be, he said, with stages going from proposal and publication, then comment and publication, to possible amendment, then adoption. "It's a most complex and legalistic process," said Bob, who joined NEHES in 1995.

Jack, the director of Facilities Management at the Hospital for Special Care (New Britain, CT), joined NEHES last year and has been a Connecticut chapter member for 20 years.

He looks forward to seeing what "hot topics" are coming before the NFPA, and bringing that knowledge back to the NEHES board and members. Knowing what proposals are in front of the NFPA gives NEHES advanced notice of codes and regulations that might face change, he said.

He will report on activities of the NFPA 99 committee, which covers almost all of the NFPA codes concerning health care equipment and activities. "This is up for review in 1999, which means proposals to change the code must be submitted by June 1, 1997," Jack said. Members can contact him for more information at (860) 827-4804.

Thanks to Outgoing NFPA Liaison Norm Welch

Norm, director of Engineering at Springfield (VT) Hospital, has just finished six years as NEHES' NFPA liaison - five more years than he intended to serve.

"NFPA plays such a large part in the field of hospital engineering so going to the meetings just made it easier to keep up with the changes that I already wanted to know," Norm said. "We learned much from the experts who did the research or wrote the proposals."

He worked in the Health Care Section of NFPA as a member of the Membership Committee. He found the meetings of the Codes and Standards Review Committee to be very helpful. This committee reviewed suggested proposals and changes for their potential impact on health care.

"Over the years, two issues - changing chassis leakage current and smoke detectors in patients' rooms - stand out in my mind," Norm said. "The defeat of the smoke detectors created such an uproar that the Fire Marshal’s section withdrew their support of NFPA and this code writing process for about a year. The merits of these issues are still argued today."


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Education, Membership, PR High on NEHES Priority List

Top priorities for new NEHES President Don Garrison and his board are the education of members, recruiting and keeping new members, and recognizing members for their achievements.

Discussion of these topics and reaching these goals highlighted the annual board retreat December 7-8 at the Doubletree Islander Hotel, Newport, RI.

Attended by 19 officers and board members, the retreat gave NEHES leaders time to plan the year's priorities away from the daily distractions of their jobs.

"I thought it was just exceptional," Don said. "Every year seems to get better and better. People come focused and ready to work. We had no play time and the energy level of the participants was just exceptional."

He thanked John Crowley, former board member, for acting as the meeting facilitator and "keeping everybody on task and the discussion flowing in a positive way."

NEHES Treasurer Tom Whittaker called the retreat very productive. "This meeting is very important for exploring issues and opinions, and in setting new directions."

"I obtained a lot of insight into NEHES and ideas for Western Mass participation," said Pierre Richard, a new NEHES member.

"The ideas that come out of this retreat give us the agenda for the year," said Kurt Peterson, president-elect. "We've been at least 80 to 90 percent productive on what we come out with every year since we've been doing this. This helps the organization grow."

The board came away with "a tall work list for the year and a lot of objectives," said Bob Loranger, NEHES secretary. "It's critical that we pursue them in a documented manner and that we continue to refer to them in every board meeting coming up."

Highlights of the discussion included:

**Education:** Steve Cutter is chairing the Education Committee. His goals are to improve the education of all members via a NEHES internet web site, a member survey, and expanded educational offerings. Ideas for future seminars include coping with downsizing, the mindset of contract service, benchmarking, union negotiations, performance indicators, and many other topics.

**Membership:** Joe Mona will again chair this committee, which will work to increase membership. Recruiting ideas discussed were targeting longterm healthcare facilities, having a major membership drive, and exploring the idea of a joint ASHE/NEHES membership.

**Public Relations:** Tom O'Sullivan will chair this committee.

**Revenue:** Board members listed several possible income-producing strategies for the organization.
New NEHES Officers

Don't miss the list of 1997 NEHES officers and committee chair on the back of this newsletter

IMPORTANT NEHES DATES

March 1: Benchmark Survey Due
March 26: Spring Seminar
May/June: Workplace Violence Seminar
July 14-18: ASHE conference, San Antonio
October 7-10: Fall Seminar

New NEHES Officers

President
DON GARRISON
Dept. of Veterans Affairs
Togus, ME 04330
(207) 623-5720

President Elect
KURT PETERSON
Cooley Dickinson Hospital
30 Locust St.
Northampton, MA 01061
(413) 582-2311

Treasurer
TOM WHITTAKER
Baystate Medical Center
759 Chestnut St.
Springfield, MA 01199
(413) 784-5887

Secretary
ROBERT LORANGER
New England Medical Ctr.
750 Washington St.
Boston, MA 02111
(617) 956-5977

STATE REPS.
Connecticut
MARK ENGLISH
Hartford Hospital
80 Seymour St.
Hartford, CT 06102
(860) 545-2661

Maine
JEFFREY THOMAS
Mercy Hospital
144 State St.
Portland, ME 04101
(207) 879-3574

Massachusetts
Western Mass
PIERRE RICHARD
Baystate Medical Center
759 Chestnut St.
Springfield, MA 01199
(413) 784-4309

Boston
JOSEPH MONA
Spaulding Rehabilitation
125 Nashua St.
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 720-6568

Middlesex
CHARLES FEEONEY
Lawrence Memorial Hospital
170 Governors Ave.
Medford, MA 02155
(617) 396-9250 X-1480

South Shore
JACK KELLY
Deaconess Glover Hosp.
148 Chestnut St.
Needham, MA 02192
(617) 444-5600 X-1701

New Hampshire
STEPHEN SHAW
8 Prospect St.
Nashua, NH 03061
(603) 577-2911

Rhode Island
ROBERT OKERHOLM
St. Elizabeth Home
109 Melrose St.
Providence, RI 02907
(401) 941-0200

Vermont
DAN AYRES
Fletcher Allen Health Care
111 Colchester Ave.
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 665-5903

Executive Secretary
MARY LOU CROWLEY
Saints Memorial Med. Ctr.
1 Hospital Drive
Lowell, MA 01852
(508) 934-8440

SEMINAR CHAIRPERSONS
Spring Seminar
KURT PETERSON*

Fall Seminar/Scholarship
CO-CHAIRPERSONS
ROBERT OKERHOLM*

JAMES GILMORE
Newport Hospital
11 Friendship St.
Newport, RI 02840
(401) 845-1395

COMMITTEE CHAIRS
Education & Career Development
STEVE CUTTER
Cheshire Med. Ctr.
580 Court St.
Keene, NH 03431
(603) 355-2040

Membership
JOSEPH MONA*
Newsletter Editor
DAN AYRES*

Research
DAVID ASSELIN
Soldiers' Home
110 Cherry St.
Holyoke, MA 01040
(413) 532-9475

Steering & Bylaws Co-Chairperson
MARK CAPPELLO
Southwestern VT. Med. Ctr.
100 Hospital Dr. East
Bennington, VT 05201
(802) 447-5121

ROBERT LORD
Parkview Memorial Hosp.
329 Maine St.
Brunswick, ME 04011
(207) 729-1641

LIAISON PERSONS
ASHE
JACK GOSSELIN
Day Kimball Hospital
320 Pomfret St.
Putnam, CT 06260
(860) 963-6313 X-2353

JCAHO
KURT PETERSON*

NEHA
KURT PETERSON*

NEPA
JACK MCCARTHY, P.E.
Hospital for Special Care
2150 Corbin Ave.
New Britain, CT 06053
(860) 827-4804

ROBERT THOMPSON
Dept. of Veterans Affairs
498 Main St.
Lynnfield, MA 01940
(617) 687-3050

SPECIAL COMMITTEE
Public Relations
TOM O'SULLIVAN
Baystate Medical Center
759 Chestnut St.
Springfield, MA 01199
(413) 784-3771

*Employment listed above