

# Cape Cod MAGAZINE

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## Staying True to the Mission

*Karen Gardner*

CEO of Community Health Center  
of Cape Cod



Karen Gardner first started working at the Community Health Center of Cape Cod 15 years ago when it was known as the Falmouth Free Clinic and located in the basement of Falmouth Hospital. When it opened its doors in 1998, the clinic served 600 patients in the first year. Today, the center serves 15,000 and offers primary care, dental, vision, behavioral health, addiction programs, family planning and an onsite pharmacy, all under one roof. "Through all the craziness in the health care world and reimbursement, we have always been able to stay true to our mission of providing compassionate and affordable health care to all, regardless of their ability to pay,"

says Gardner, who also serves in the military as a reserve advisor to the U.S. Airforce Surgeon General. In 2006, the health center received designation as a federally qualified health center, and in 2008, the 10,000-square-foot facility opened in Mashpee and was later expanded to 22,000 square feet in 2012, which allowed for a new pharmacy, walk-in and imaging services.

The Community Health Center of Cape Cod is celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2018 with a gala on June 22 at The Cape Club in Falmouth. For more information, visit [chcof-capecod.org/anniversary](http://chcof-capecod.org/anniversary)