

# The Wellness Committee

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TO KIOSK MENU



## Background/Problem

- Stress among hospital workers has been well documented
- Dedicated staff strive to provide excellent care
- However, limited resources and high demands lead to increased stress and burnout among hardworking, talented staff
- Many staff then become isolated, feel overworked and discontented, and either burnout

## Goals of the Wellness Committee

- Enhance the quality of work life among HCA staff
- Decrease the stress which staff experience
- Decrease the isolation/increase the connections between staff. This can improve the atmosphere in the work place and lead to enhanced patient care

## Methods

- Recruitment: Email, Word of mouth
- Reach out to all staff, including: Support Staff, MA's, CAA's, CRS's, Nurses, Pharmacists, Social Workers, Administrators and Physicians
- Activities are listed in the weekly HCA Calendar
- Pictures of previous events were often included in the HCA monthly newsletter
- Planning
  - Have an initial meeting to discuss ways to decrease stress and isolation
  - Initial focus was on nutrition and movement
  - Focus shifted to ideas about stress reducing activities which staff might enjoy and during which time they could connect with others
- All ideas were welcomed and discussed

## Funding

- Received a 1 year Linde Family Grant (October 2017 – September 2018)
  - Funding removed the financial impediment which could have discouraged staff from joining an activity
  - Funding allowed for activities outside the hospital which would not have been possible otherwise
- Funding resulted in the ability:
  - to purchase books for members of the book group
  - to pay for outside venues
  - to reimburse staff for supplies used in activities

## Results

- There were 77 activities (included weekly Meditation groups) offered
- There were 547 participants between all the groups and activities
  - Some participants participated in more than one activity and would be counted more than once
- Activities included:
  - [Buddhist Practitioner Facilitated Weekly meditation](#)
  - [Nurse led blanket making](#)
  - [Nurse led Jewelry making](#)
  - [Monthly book group facilitated by Pharmacist](#)
  - [Crocheting taught by Community Resource Specialist](#)
  - Stretching Exercising
  - Walking Team
  - External Activities:
    - [Sur la Table Cooking Class](#)   - [Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum](#)
    - [Boston Chocolate Tour](#)   - [Clayroom Event](#)
    - [Boston Harbor Cruise](#)   - [Uncle Tony's Kitchen](#)
    - [HCA Movies](#)   - [Paint Bar](#)

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## Outcomes

A brief survey utilizing Survey Monkey confirmed that the goal of the Wellness Program was met

- Received 24/65 responses (37% response rate)
- Responses included strongly agreed or agreed
- Results indicated:
  - Decreased stress (91%)
  - Increased interaction between staff (100%)
  - Improved communication (100%)
  - 100% of respondents stated they would participate in a Wellness Committee activity in the future
    - Responses from participants
      - It was the best part of last year
      - I tried things I never did before
      - I met staff I'd only known the names of before
      - I like having an activity to look forward to
      - It's wonderful to have such a great way of socializing with people at work! A blessing!
      - Please make sure this continues in HCA, absolutely needed for staff wellness
  - Staff who were unable to participate indicated that they are glad to know these activities occur and they hope to join in the future.
- *Unintended Outcomes*
  - Given the multidisciplinary and multicultural background of the participants, the program often increased understanding between different cultures and backgrounds
  - Staff increased their leadership skills by developing and implementing a project or activity, which they may never have done before
  - HCA interacted with other departments in the hospital including Spiritual Care, the BeWell Center, and Catering, who were supportive of our efforts and loaned us their expertise

## Lessons Learned

- Decreasing the stress which staff experience is vital to boost employees' perceptions of work life and subsequently improve patient care
- Participation in, and benefit from, the activities is highest when the ideas originate from the staff involved
- The very issues that prompted the formation of the Wellness Committee also were the impediments to staff's participation - not having time allotted during the day kept the staff who often felt most stressed from joining an activity
- May need to be addressed on an institutional level
- Perhaps each staff could have a specified amount of time available/week to engage in a Wellness Activity (similar to having a lunch time)

## Next Steps

- To expand the program to include more staff and occasionally include family members
- We will need to continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the program on a regular basis including increasing response rates
- To determine best ways involve more staff members
- It is imperative that funding remain available so that more staff can participate in stress reducing activities
- We hoped to have the program become sustainable. We are delighted and grateful to learn that the hospital has agreed to pick up the funding for the program and the Wellness Committee activities will continue. We are looking forward to another good year.

**THANK YOU!**

Many thanks to all those who supported, developed, and participated in the Wellness Committee activities. It's been an incredible experience and could not have happened without the help of the whole community. We would not have been able to proceed successfully without the generous funding from the Linde Family Grant. Special thanks for their ongoing help to Nisha Basu, Blair Bisher, Whitney Griesbach, Claire Exaus, and Tsering Lama Yodsampa.

# Buddhist Practitioner Facilitated Weekly meditation



One of the foundations of the Wellness Program was Meditation.

Available to all staff on a voluntary basis

- No fee, no registration required, and no experience necessary

Meditation was presented at all team meetings so staff could have a sample of what was involved

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# Monthly book group facilitated by Pharmacist



Another mainstay of the Wellness Program is our monthly book group.

Suggestions about what to read come from the staff.

Staff choose if they want to join the group each month, often dependent on what we are reading.

Our Pharmacist prepares discussion questions and leads our delving into the book.

The conversation continues to issues including culture, race, family, resilience, tragedy, forgiveness, relationships and all else comes to mind. A thoughtful discussion ensues. Staff get to know and respect each other in new ways.



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# Blanket making led by Nurses

A couple of our nurses recommended making fleece blankets, which could be raffled off, or developed for a special occasion

A special occasion included a medical assistant who was expecting twins and whose family was in another country



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# Jewelry making led by a Nurse



Our staff are also quite talented in areas outside of providing excellent patient care. Working on a crafts project (in this instance, making beautiful earrings) was fun, light hearted and created a bonding experience



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# Crocheting taught by Community Resource Specialist



Another craft project was led by our Community Resource Specialist. She shared her talent and her sense of humor as she guided us through learning how to crochet. She has agreed to continue to teach us more about this in the future.

# Paint Bar



Going to the Paint Bar was one of our first events outside of the hospital. It was a great success which members enjoyed and wanted more of. Those who didn't get there wanted to join next time. We may return there next year.



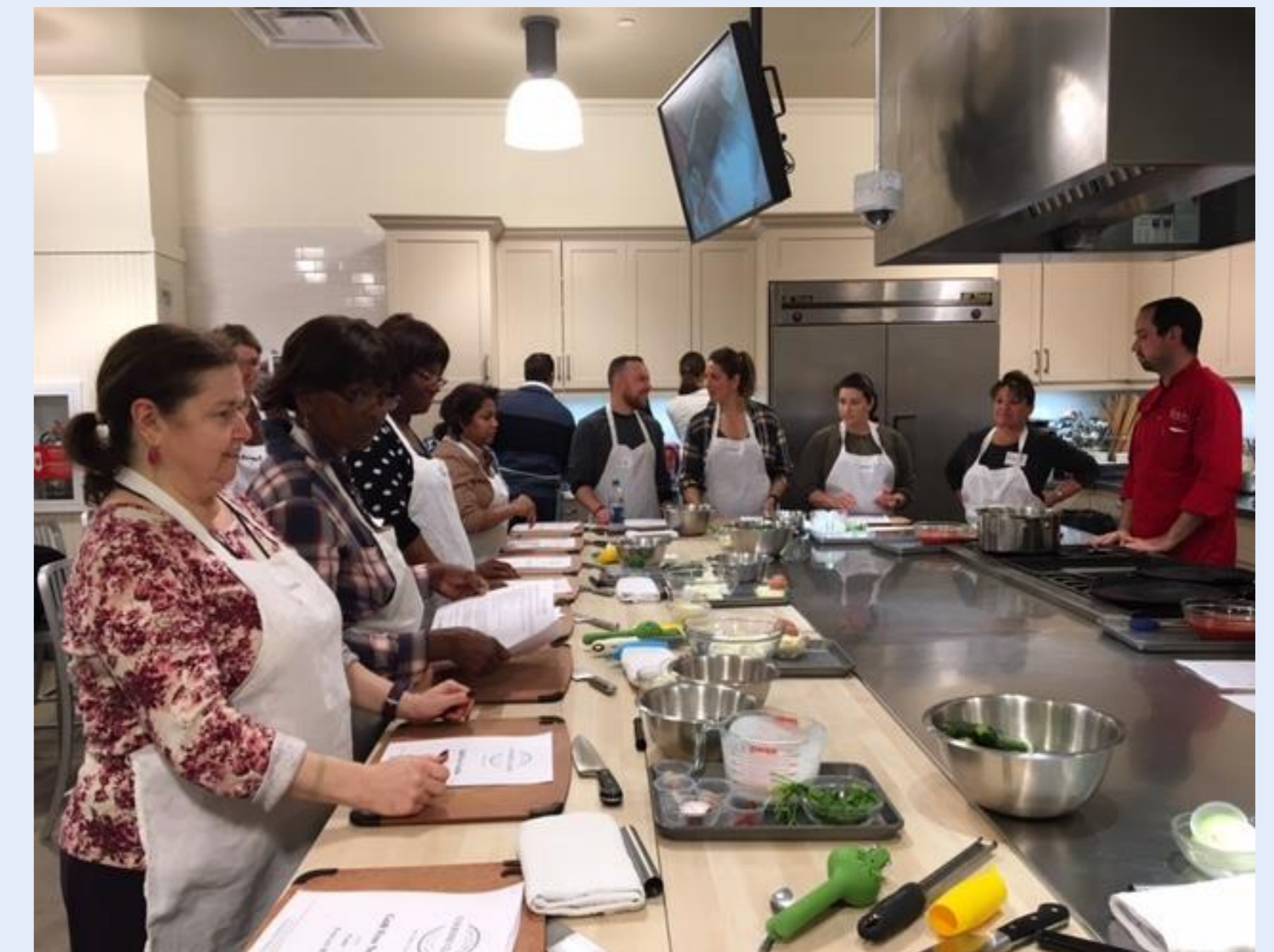
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# Sur La Table



A cooking class was highly sought after. Staff learned how to make 'Guilt Free Noodles' using a method of spiralizing. Class size was limited by the size of the venue we used and unfortunately many staff who were interested in this event were not able to attend



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# Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum



A night at the museum was requested and many of us enjoyed the beauty of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Some staff had never been there before, and plan to return there again. Trips to other museums are also being considered

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# Chocolate Tour



The chocolate tour of Boston was another favorite. The forecast was for rain, but everyone showed up. We learned about Boston's history of chocolate and got to enjoy samples of the finest chocolate. Delicious!!



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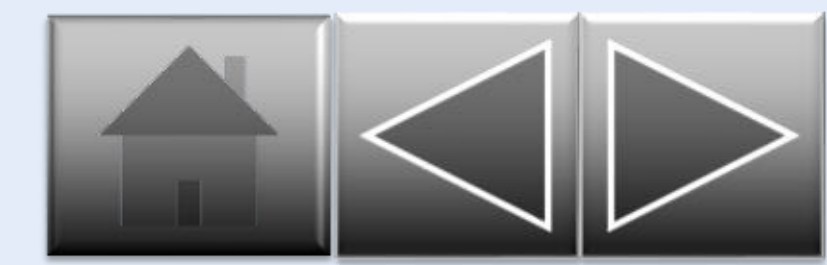
# Clayroom Event



We made some beautiful plates, cups, candle holders – each one individually designed and each one reflective of the staff member who created it. Not shown is the delicious pizza which was also provided for us

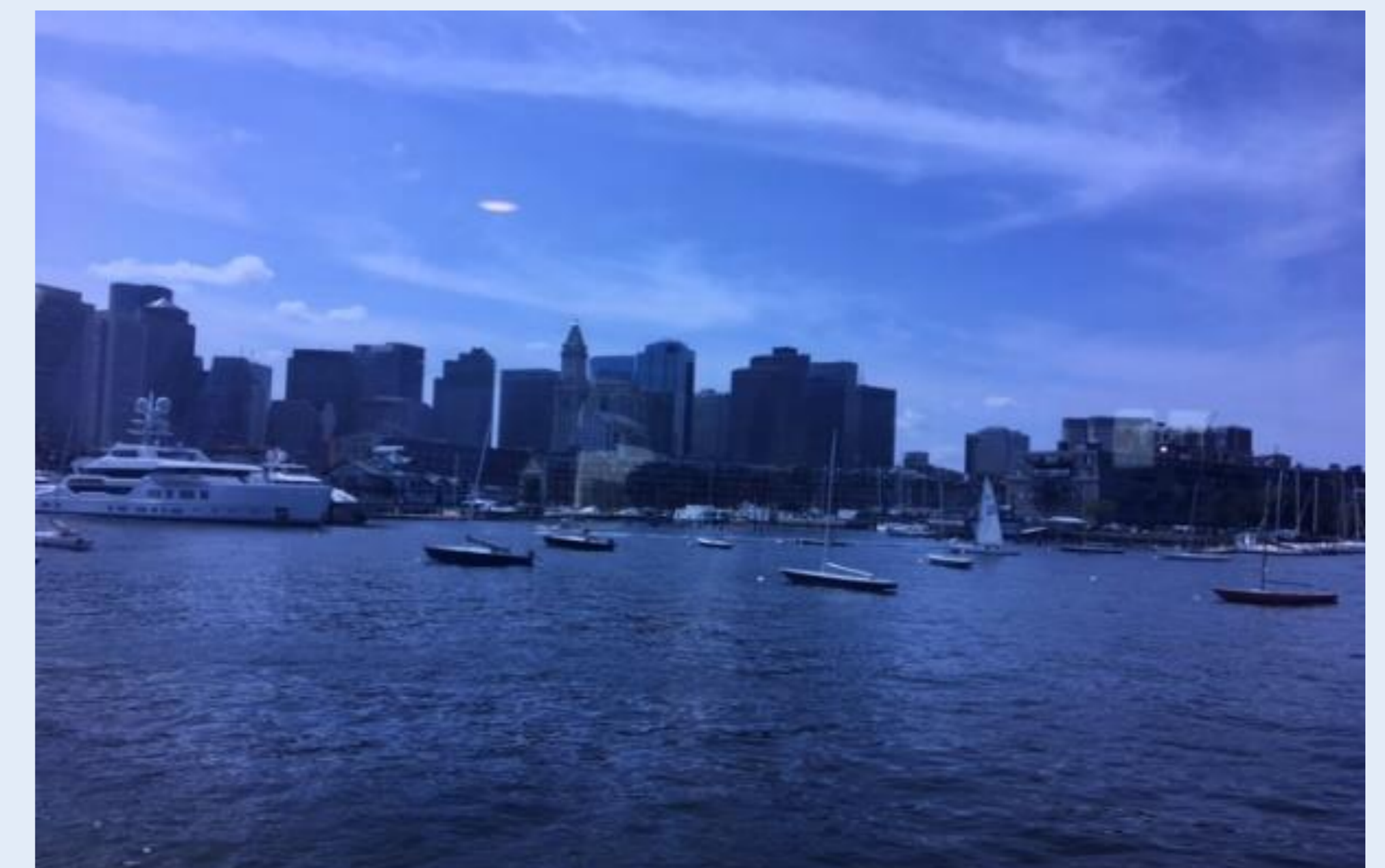


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# Harbor Cruise

The historical Boston Harbor Cruise was fun, informative and interesting. Many requested taking a longer cruise with staff members in the future.



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# Uncle Tony's Kitchen



This was developed by one of our lead Medical Assistants who is also a talented chef and entertaining presenter. A recipe is demonstrated, staff help with preparation, and then a delicious meal is shared by all. It was so popular that we already did this activity twice and there were many requests for 'Uncle Tony's Kitchen – Part 3'



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# HCA Goes to the Movies



When Ocean's 8 came out, it seemed a fitting movie to end a stressful work week. Staff got to lounge in large comfortable seating in the theater, share popcorn, and enjoy time with each other.



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