FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER, 25, 2015
CONTACT:  Paola M. Ferrer, 617-208-1518; pferrer@jmschc.org
Jerry Berger, 617-667-7308; jberger@bidmc.harvard.edu

JOSEPH M. SMITH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER CELEBRATES OPENING
OF NEW CLINICAL FACILITY IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON

New building inaugurates new era for renamed Charles River Community Health

BRIGHTON A new, two-story state-of-the-art health care facility will enable the Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center (JMSCHC) to continue to expand service capacity and continue its mission of service to the Allston, Brighton and Waltham communities.

The Sept. 24 ribbon-cutting on the $26.5 million facility on the site of a former State Police Barracks on Western Avenue was enabled in part by a $1 million donation from Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, which has maintained a clinical relationship with the Allston health center since it joined BIDMC’s Community Care Alliance in 1997.

“Health centers are anchors of our community,” said Boston Mayor Marty Walsh. “This health center is a model of how we should deliver health care not just in Allston-Brighton but around the City of Boston.”

The LEED-certified clinic at 495 Western Ave. will allow the health center to consolidate services now housed in buildings at 287 and 300 Western Ave. and roughly double the 6,000 patients seen in Allston. The community health center also maintains a clinic at 564 Main St. in Waltham.

“The health center is starting a new chapter in its 41st year,” said David Norton, chairman of the board of the facility founded by Allston-Brighton civic leader Joseph M. Smith. “To honor his legacy while unifying our service area, the Joseph M. Smith Building will be the new home of Charles River Community Health,” which stretches along the river from Boston to Waltham.

“This new name is professional, forward-thinking, will strengthen our messaging, and connect with our patients and our community,” said Elizabeth Browne, JMSCHC’s Executive Director. “Despite the name change, we remain firmly committed to the concept of service to the Allston-Brighton community personified by Joseph M. Smith.

“We are also delighted that BIDMC has reconfirmed its commitment to the health center,” Browne continued. “Our partnership is critical to our goal of meeting specialty care needs for both insured and uninsured patients across the continuum of care.”

“Your name has changed but not your commitment,” said Kevin Tabb, MD, BIDMC’s President and CEO. “Our commitment to this health center and this community also remains unchanged.”
“This health center has been a staple of our community for over 40 years,” said State Representative Michael J. Moran of Brighton. “It is great to see in this day and age that the health center continues to grow and expand.”

The new building will include, a family medicine clinic, dental clinic, laboratory, behavioral health suite, administrative suite, vision clinic and retail eye glass shop, and a conference area for health center and community use. A retail pharmacy open to the public is expected to open in the near future.

As the gateway to the city, the Allston-Brighton neighborhoods are Boston’s most culturally and economically diverse areas. Charles River Community Health patients also speak many languages as does the staff, who provide care in 15 languages. Many new arrivals settle in Allston-Brighton and their visits to the health center may be their first exposure to primary and oral health care and the notion of preventive care.

In the communities of Allston, Brighton, Waltham and surrounding areas, Charles River Community Health is the medical home for nearly 12,300 patients who receive compassionate and patient-centered care through 61,000 visits each year. Since 1974, Charles River Community Health has encouraged and supported patients in their efforts to take charge of their own health, advocated for patients to gain access to appropriate specialty and hospital services, and collaborated with other organizations to link patients to a broad array of community services.

Charles River Community Health is committed to providing the highest-quality, comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and affordable primary healthcare to residents of Allston-Brighton, Waltham and surrounding communities, regardless of circumstance. For more information about the health center, visit www.jmshec.org.

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center is a patient care, teaching and research affiliate of Harvard Medical School and consistently ranks as a national leader among independent hospitals in National Institutes of Health funding.

BIDMC is in the community with Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Milton, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Needham, Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital-Plymouth, Anna Jaques Hospital, Cambridge Health Alliance, Lawrence General Hospital, Signature Healthcare, Beth Israel Deaconess HealthCare, Community Care Alliance and Atrius Health. BIDMC is also clinically affiliated with the Joslin Diabetes Center and Hebrew Rehabilitation Center and is a research partner of Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center and The Jackson Laboratory. BIDMC is the official hospital of the Boston Red Sox. For more information, visit www.bidmc.org.

###