

WEATHER

TODAY
A shower this morning; otherwise, cloudy

53/37

WEDNESDAY
Cloudy

57/44

THURSDAY
A little morning rain; mostly cloudy

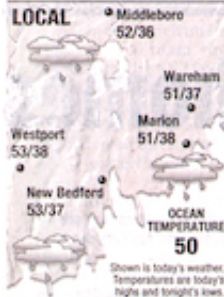
51/42

FRIDAY
A thick cloud cover with a little rain

54/47

SATURDAY
Cloudy with a passing shower

62/48



SUMMARY: A passing shower in the morning; otherwise, cloudy today. Winds east-northeast 6-12 mph. Mainly cloudy tonight. Winds light and variable. Cloudy tomorrow.

ALMANAC

New Bedford through 6 p.m. Monday
TEMPERATURE
High 58
Low 38
Normal high 61
Normal low 43
Record high 80 in 2017
Record low 29 in 2001
COOLING DEGREE DAYS
An index of energy consumption indicating how many degrees the average temperature was above 65 degrees for the day.
Yesterday 0
Month to date 0
Year to date 0
Normal year to date 0
PRECIPITATION
2.2 hours and 0.1 in. in May

GNB Community Health Center to take part in opioid research study

By Aimee Chiavarelli
acliavarelli@s-t.com

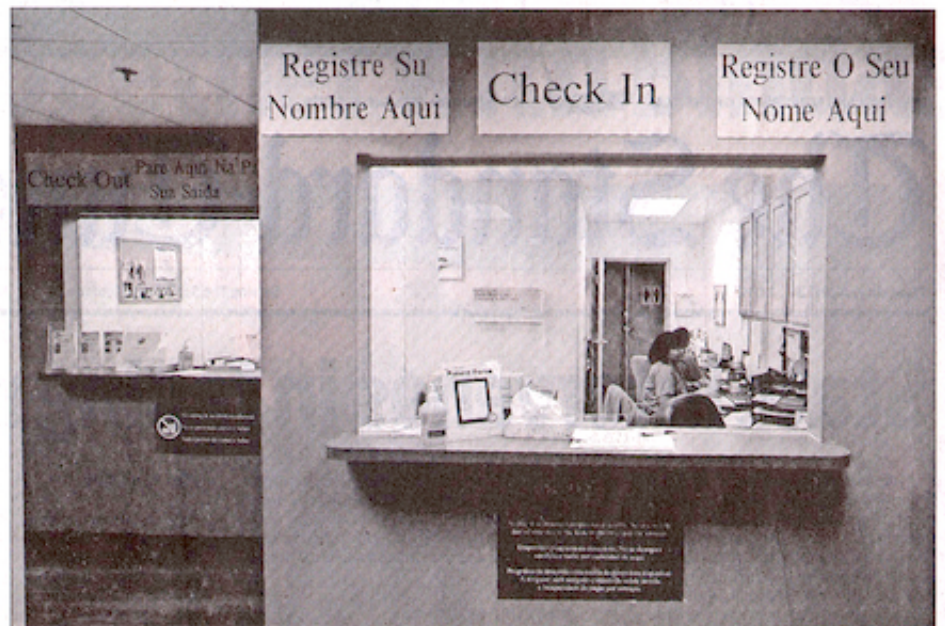
NEW BEDFORD — The Greater New Bedford Community Health Center will be involved in a research study led by Boston Medical Center with the goal of reducing opioid deaths by 40% in some of the most heavily impacted Massachusetts communities in three years.

The approach of the study will be to partner with 16 urban and rural communities to test the impact of Office-Based Addiction Treatment (OBAT) and the deployment of additional interventions. Other research sites outside of the state include the University of Kentucky, Lexington; Columbia University, New York City; and Ohio State University, Columbus.

Rural communities were chosen in Bristol County: Berkley, Dighton and Freetown.

Boston Medical Center was awarded \$89 million in funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, part of the National Institutes of Health to lead the study. The study is part of the NIH HEAL (Helping to End Addiction Long-term) initiative, "a bold, trans-agency effort to speed scientific solutions to stem the national opioid crisis," according to a news release.

Eight sites will implement OBAT and eight will implement OBAT along with additional programs, such as community education, accelerated access to medication during hospitalization, jail,



File photo of the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center in downtown New Bedford. (PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES)

and detoxification and prevention and intervention programs in communities, schools, and doctor's offices. "The opioid crisis in Massachusetts has been devastating, as it has been across the country," said Jeffrey Samet, chief of General Internal Medicine at BMC and a professor at Boston University School of Medicine, in a news release. "This research study is a major step forward. We will take

what we've learned at Boston Medical Center and across Massachusetts over the past 20 years and work with our partners to bring those initiatives together to make a serious dent in the overdose death rate. It means pulling out all the stops." The health center was selected as the anchor agency to serve the Bristol County cluster because it uses OBAT, said Colleen LaBelle, a registered nurse and founder and

director of Boston Medical Center's OBAT Clinic, the largest of its kind in New England, and is part of the research team. The goal is to get people on evidence-based medication to reduce overdose deaths, she said. The health center already uses Suboxone for treatment. The cluster area doesn't really have those resources, LaBelle said, so this can get more people treatment and expand access. It's also about

decreasing stigma, and hopefully impacting people's lives and changing outcomes, she said. "I think people know there's a lot of need in this area," said Cheryl Bartlett, chief executive officer of the health center. "The more resources we get, the better we can serve the community" she said. Follow Aimee Chiavarelli on Twitter @AimeeC_SCT.