

BMC clinic treats tot's growing pains



QUALITY CARE:

Jarolin Then, left, watches as daughter Jadelin, 2, gets a checkup at Boston Medical Center.

By **Katie Eastman**

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“No, no, no!” yells 2-year-old Jadelin Then from her little seat in a doctor’s office at Boston Medical Center.

Her mother, Jarolin Then, laughs, and tells us that’s her favorite word. And even though it’s tough to deal with a 2-year-old, her mom couldn’t be happier to hear all those noes.

“Jadelin is a very special case,” says her doctor, Megan Sandel.

Her visit isn’t a normal doctor’s checkup. Jadelin is in the Grow Clinic at BMC, a place where parents take children who show what the doctors call a failure to thrive.

“You don’t realize it, but in the city of Boston, we have kids that meet the same criteria for malnutrition that the World Health Organization sets out,” Sandel said. “And those are the kids that come and see us.”

When Jadelin was 4 months old, she threw up all the food she ate. Jadelin’s mom took her to many pediatricians, but they couldn’t figure out why she couldn’t keep food down.

Finally, a doctor recommended she try Boston Medical Center, where a team of doctors in the Grow Clinic provided medical, nutritional and social services to her family.

“So these are like medical emergencies,” Sandel said. “If these kids aren’t growing, they’re not on the growth curve, they’re not growing their bodies, they’re not growing their brains.”

The doctors at the Grow Clinic sent Jadelin to Spaulding Rehabilitation Center, where a tube was inserted into her stomach so she could take in food directly.

Her mom doesn’t want to think where her daughter would be without help from BMC. She speaks little English, so Sandel translated from Spanish.

“She could have developed diseases because she wasn’t going to have the appropriate nutrition,” Then said. “She wasn’t going to have the people that were in charge of her and watching her growth and nutrition.”

Boston Herald multimedia journalist Katie Eastman is running the Boston Marathon on April 15 for Boston Medical Center.



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