



Western Pennsylvania

Guide to Good Health

Health News You and Your Family Can Use

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FALL 2020



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**Everything
You Need
to Know
About
Flu
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**Give Your
Immune
System
a Boost**

**Child Development
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Important?**

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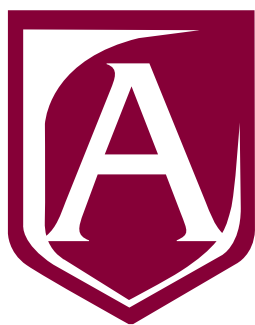


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7 Myths of Physical Therapy

By Lois Thomson

Lauren DeFilippi, Physical Therapist and Facility Director at UPMC Centers for Rehab Services, recently addressed seven common misconceptions about physical therapy:

For example, many people believe that they need a referral or prescription to see a physical therapist. DeFilippi explained that in Pennsylvania, Direct Access permits physical therapists to evaluate and treat patients for 30 days without a referral for most insurances. This means that people who are experiencing weaknesses and/or pain can schedule an evaluation directly with a Direct Access Certified Physical Therapist, just by calling the office.

Physical therapy is painful, but DeFilippi contends, "Everyone is different in terms of how they respond to pain. PTs are highly skilled professionals and we work within a patient's pain threshold to maximize their recovery outcomes."



Lauren DeFilippi

Many people believe that therapy is only for accidents or injuries. DeFilippi stated that although these are common, PTs examine the whole person and often identify potential problems before they develop. In addition, physical therapists can work with many other issues, including balance disorders, headaches, chronic pain, and even incontinence. "Because our evaluation is designed to identify potential barriers for healthy living and recovery, you don't necessarily need to be injured to see us."

Any health care professional can perform physical therapy. DeFilippi disagrees. "Physical therapists are highly skilled and well-trained medical professionals who complete a rigorous curriculum that includes graduate studies. It's imperative that consumers seek out licensed professionals in order to receive the expert care that provides maximum benefit."

Fifth on the list is that physical therapy isn't covered by insurance, but DeFilippi points out that most insurance plans in Western Pennsylvania cover physical therapy services.

A sixth misconception is that surgery is the only option. DeFilippi reports that outcome-based research shows that physical therapy can often delay or reduce the need for surgery related to mild osteoarthritis, low back pain, rotator cuff injuries, and meniscal knee pain. In addition, ongoing studies consistently find that physical therapy is helpful in reducing the need for other common and costly surgeries.

Myth number seven is that you need to go to therapy three times a week. Not so, says DeFilippi. "Every patient's plan is individualized based on a thorough examination provided on the first visit. Our therapists often prescribe a specific set of activities that can be performed at home between therapy sessions, which helps to expedite recovery." She also added that, "You will get out of therapy what you put into it."

DeFilippi concludes by saying, "A lot of folks don't know how to take control of their own situations, so we strive to educate and provide resources to empower them. We're all so passionate about what we do, and we want to share the value of physical therapy with everyone."

Lauren DeFilippi treats at UPMC CRS – Moon Township, 412-269-7062

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UPMC Centers for Rehab Services is offering a video visit option to help you meet your therapy needs during the COVID-19 outbreak.

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Dr. Ellen Saridakis Phillippi on **Flu Shots**



ABOUT THE EXPERT:

ELLEN SARIDAKIS PHILLIPPI, D.O. is a Family Medicine physician associated with Washington Health System Primary Care – Lakeside in McMurray, PA. Dr. Phillippi is board-certified in Family Medicine under the American Board of Family Medicine and the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians. Dr. Phillippi has a passion for preventative medicine and patient wellness.



Dr. Ellen Saridakis
Phillippi

Why should I get a flu shot this year?

The flu shot can help protect you against getting influenza (the flu), a respiratory infection caused by the influenza virus. Influenza can range from mild to severe illness, sometimes leading to hospitalization and/or death. The flu shot can help protect you against getting the flu or having to go to the hospital for illness. If you do get infected by the flu, but you have had the flu shot, the course of your illness is often less severe. You can also limit the spread of the flu to vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, pregnant women and those that have chronic medical conditions, by having immunity with the flu shot.

Who should get a flu shot?

Everyone six months of age and older should get the flu shot. Women who are pregnant can also get the flu shot. Those with severe or life-threatening allergies to any ingredients in the flu shot should avoid this vaccine.

Are there flu shot alternatives for those with specific allergies?

Those with severe allergies to eggs are still able to receive the flu shot but should be vaccinated in a medical setting under the supervision of a healthcare provider. Those who have had a severe reaction (anaphylaxis, shortness of breath, angioedema) to the flu shot, should not receive further flu shots.

Should I get a flu shot if I'm sick?

If your illness is mild, yes, you can still get the flu shot. If you have suspected or confirmed COVID-19, you should delay getting the flu shot until you are able to come out of isolation.

How effective is the flu shot this year?

At this time, we do not know the effectiveness of this year's flu shot. The viral strains used for this year's flu shot are based on trends from last year's flu season and current research about the most common flu virus strains predicted to circulate the United States. Flu activity has been low thus far so it is too early to see how effective the flu shot is.

Can I still get the flu even if I get a flu shot?

Yes, you can still get the flu even if you get the flu shot. Although, the flu shot does not cause the flu, as the vaccine is composed of inactive pieces of the influenza virus. The flu course with the flu shot is often milder with less severe symptoms. The flu shot can take about two weeks to take effect so if you are exposed to the flu within that window, you are at risk of contracting the infection. Also, the flu shot protects against three to four of the most likely infectious strains of the influenza virus but other strains exist, which can cause the flu.

Why is the nasal spray being recommended as an option this year when it has been shown to not be effective in past flu seasons?

The ingredients of the nasal spray flu vaccine have been adjusted over the past couple of years to be more effective. The nasal spray vaccine is only recommended for non-pregnant people ages 2-49 years old.

Will the flu shot protect me from COVID-19?

The flu shot will not protect against COVID-19 as the influenza virus and the SARS-CoV-2 virus are different viruses. The flu shot can reduce the chance you are infected by flu and therefore reduce the chance of having to be hospitalized for illness. Reducing hospitalizations for flu can save valuable resources that can be used for those infected by COVID-19, which does not have a vaccine.

How does the flu shot compare to the COVID-19 vaccine?

The flu shot only protects you against influenza. Since there is no COVID-19 vaccine at this time, we are unable to compare the flu shot to the COVID-19 vaccine.

When is the best time to get a flu shot?

Early fall or before the end of October is the best time to get the flu shot. This allows for coverage against influenza from early fall through the end of March, which is often the peak time for infection. If you miss getting the flu shot this fall, there is still benefit to getting the flu shot this winter.

Where can I get a flu shot?

You can receive the flu shot from your primary care doctor's office, your local pharmacy or the health department.



➤ For more information about the flu and the flu shot, visit the Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov. You can reach **WHS Primary Care – Lakeside** at (724) 969-1001 or visit www.whs.org. Their office is located at 1001 Waterdam Plaza Drive, McMurray, PA 15317.

Panther Chiropractic and Functional Medicine Can Restore Your Good Health Naturally

By Nancy Kennedy

Would you like to change your body in order to feel better and function more effectively, both now and in the future?

If you are suffering with a chronic medical condition, constant pain, stress and anxiety, gastrointestinal problems or other medical conditions, you have an option that can help you take control of your health, relieve stress and improve your quality of life. That option is functional medicine, and it is available to everyone at Panther Chiropractic and Functional Medicine, where Danielle L. Marra, DC, offers individualized, holistic treatment plans that balance the body naturally and alleviate or improve a number of medical conditions. Nutrition, supplements and botanicals are often part of the treatment plan, along with patient education and support.

"If your digestive system isn't in a good place than your immune system suffers. If you're the type of person that gets sick all the time, it's a good idea to consult a functional medicine practitioner to help determine the root of your frequent illnesses."

-Dr. Danielle L. Marra



Panther Chiropractic and Functional Medicine has been at the forefront of the functional medicine movement for years and is one of the only true functional medicine practices in the greater Pittsburgh area. "Functional medicine looks at the root of a condition instead of just focusing on symptoms," Dr. Marra explains. "We look at the body as a whole, not at a single organ or system, and we consider both external and internal factors to determine the best course of care for you. I look at your environment and lifestyle as well as nutritional status and blood work when deciding on a plan. It's not a

one size fits all approach; it's customized to you and everything is based on your individual bloodwork results. We do hormone panels, saliva and urine testing, and cortisol levels in addition to standard bloodwork."

At Panther Chiropractic and Functional Medicine, Dr. Marra has a special interest in hypothyroidism, Lyme disease, digestive disorders and allergies, but functional medicine is useful for many medical conditions:

- Adrenal Fatigue
- ADHD
- Allergy & Food Sensitivity
- Arthritis
- Autoimmune Disease
- Blood Sugar Issues
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Depression & Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Fibromyalgia
- Gastrointestinal Disorders
- High Cholesterol
- Infertility
- Menopause
- Thyroid Dysfunction
- Weight Gain

More often than not, Dr. Marra says, the root of these issues occurs in the digestive system. "The digestive system has been found to house many components of the immune system. If your digestive system isn't in a good place than your immune system suffers. If you're the type of person that gets sick all the time, it's a good idea to consult

a functional medicine practitioner to help determine the root of your frequent illnesses."

Hypothyroidism, Dr. Marra, says, is a common condition but is underdiagnosed. "I see many people who are 'pre-thyroid' - meaning that they still have normal bloodwork but their symptoms suggest otherwise. They always feel cold, they have brain fog, hair loss, fatigue, weight gain, dry skin and other symptoms of hypothyroidism. The thyroid controls everything - if you have symptoms, and the bloodwork looks fine, I usually work with you as if you have a thyroid issue with nutritional supplements and dietary changes. Most patients will do great if they follow their personal plan."

Dr. Marra is a graduate of Logan College of Chiropractic in Chesterfield, Missouri and has been in practice for twenty years. She is one of a select few to have completed a 26-month diplomate program in chiropractic internal medicine from the American Chiropractic Association. Other staff at Panther Chiropractic include two massage therapists and a thermography technician.

"My work is positive and rewarding," Dr. Marra states. "I love it when my patients come in after they have been making changes. I love to see them progressing. They tell me, 'I couldn't wait to come and see you!' We are the last place people stop, when they have exhausted every other avenue, and we offer solutions that go beyond addressing symptoms. We find the problem and help to balance the body to correct imbalances. If you suffer from a digestive issue, hypothyroid symptoms, anxiety or any other chronic symptoms, give us a call. We'll be happy to schedule a consultation."

To schedule a consultation, call **(724) 387-1014** or visit www.pittsburghhealthpro.com.

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Dr. Danielle Marra has nearly 20 years experience helping patients regain their health through conservative and holistic approaches utilizing functional medicine, chiropractic, diet modifications, and nutritional support. She has attended over 500 hours in post-graduate nutritional training and is trained to not just treat symptoms but to find and fix the cause of the problem. She is currently eligible to be only the 7th doctor in the state of PA to obtain the DABCI Diplomate degree.



Dr. Danielle Marra, DC

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How You Dry Your Hands Matters!

Everyone knows by now that washing your hands correctly is essential to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. But did you know that there is a proper way to dry your hands too? Experts say that drying is every bit as important as washing. This is always important, but especially in public restrooms. Drying your hands well with a paper towel is ideal - it helps to remove virus particles, and then you discard it, so it is removed from the environment. Using an air dryer works well, but a jet air dryer can do the opposite - it is so forceful that it may actually spread virus particles as it blows water droplets off your skin.

What to Do (And What Not to Do) When the Scale Won't Budge



By Erin Pover, MS, RD, CSOWM, LDN

Many of us have been there: standing on the scale after making some healthy changes and looking at the number, disappointed it hasn't moved in the direction we were anticipating. What is the next step? Here are some tips when you meet this cross-road in your weight loss journey.

- **Avoid the "slippery slope" of catastrophic thinking.** This is an easy trap to fall into; thinking all sorts of negative, unrealistic thoughts when your weight loss habits don't immediately produce results. While we can't avoid all negative thoughts from popping into our heads, we can choose realistic and positive thoughts. For example, if the first thought that pops into your head is, "I'm a failure, I will never lose weight," you could counteract those thoughts with more realistic thoughts such as, "Weight loss is a journey that will take time; I'm not going to let this one weight derail all the positive changes I've made."

Another strategy is to ask yourself what you might say to a friend or family member in this situation and apply that same kindness and encouragement to yourself.


- **Shake up your exercise routine.** Over time, our muscles become very efficient (translation: fewer calories burned) with exercise if we perform the same routine each day or each week. Surprise your muscles with a new cardio or strength training routine. If you haven't been doing strength training as a part of your workouts, this may be the perfect time to start.



- **Track your meals and snacks.** Tracking what you eat can be a great way to add accountability to your day-to-day routine. Recording your food intake can give you instant feedback on what you eat and be a way to learn about the foods you are using to nourish your body.

- **De-emphasize the scale and focus on non-scale victories.** Although the first thing we look for with any weight loss journey is a number change on the scale, try listing the other positives you are noticing from the healthy changes you are making. Perhaps you feel more energetic, maybe you are seeing positive results in your blood work, or you find that your clothes are fitting better. Write down these positives and review them often. You can also look back on old pictures to really see some changes. This can help to keep you moving forward, despite the number on the scale not meeting your expectations.

- **Call on your support system.** Having a network of supportive people is always important when you are on a weight loss journey. This group can range from a spouse, friend, family, online support group, a healthcare professional, or all the above. They can speak words of encouragement when you are finding it difficult to do so yourself.

 Erin Pover is a Wellness Coach for Highmark Inc.

Eating in Season: Winter Squash

By Kate Safin, East End Food Co-op

Winter squash provide a wide spectrum of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and macronutrients that offer comprehensive health benefits. Enjoy winter squash and boost your intake of fiber, omega-3s, vitamins A, C, K, B2, B6, B3; folate, pantothenic acid, and carotenoids.



You can also get vitamin E from the seeds of winter squash, which can be lightly roasted: Just scoop the seeds out, rinse them, and place them on a single layer on a cookie sheet and roast at 175 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

Winter squash tends to be mild and sweet with bright orange or yellow flesh (thanks to their abundance of antioxidant carotenoids). Popular winter squash varieties include: butternut, acorn, kabocha, buttercup, blue Hubbard, and delicata. Winter squash can be prepared in a variety of ways: baked, steamed, mashed, roasted, sautéed, even microwaved! They are delicious in soups, sauces, salads, and quick breads. Spaghetti squash can be used in place of pasta for a gluten-free and lower carbohydrate dish. Once roasted, the flesh of spaghetti squash separates into threads that resemble spaghetti (hence its name).

You can find these tasty and healthy seasonal delights at farmers markets and grocery stores. Select squash that are firm with glossy rinds and that feel heavy for their size. Whole winter squash can be stored for up to 6 months when they maintain a temperature range of 50-68 degrees, so you can stock up on these while they are in season and enjoy them for many months to come!

 For a guide to winter squash and a list of recipes, visit www.eastendfood.coop/wintersquash.



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Introducing

UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center Opens at WHS Washington Hospital

By Kevin Brown

Parents in Washington County now have the convenience of pediatric specialists in their community with the opening of a new UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Specialty Care Center at WHS Washington Hospital.



Located in the UPMC Children's Express Care Center next to the WHS Washington Hospital Emergency Department, the Specialty Care Center's grand opening was held on Sept. 1 and the first patients were seen on Sept. 3.

"UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Specialty Care Centers are established to offer convenient access to highly skilled pediatric specialists that provide outpatient services, diagnostic evaluations and follow-up care," says Michael J. Comunale, UPMC Children's executive administrator, Ambulatory and Physician Services.

"We recognized the need to provide nationally-ranked pediatric services in Washington and the surrounding counties since many of our patients travel from southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia to see our specialists," he explains. "It was a natural fit to be located in the WHS Washington Hospital, as UPMC already has strong partnerships there through our arrangements with UPMC Children's Express Care and the UPMC Hillman Cancer Center."

"Even before the pandemic started, patients were looking for quality healthcare close to home," says Brook Ward, president and CEO of Washington Health System. "Bringing specialists to our area, especially for pediatric patients, is important to the health of our patients and our community. So, extending our UPMC Children's relationship to bring pediatric specialists to the Washington County area was an easy decision on our part. As a result, we are able to provide great patient care to our pediatric patients while hopefully making life just a little bit easier for parents."

Specialists in endocrinology, gastroenterology, and neurology are available to see patients by appointment at the Specialty Care Center Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with more specialists expected to be added later. Video visits are also available for most pediatric specialties allowing patients to have a virtual consultation with a provider from home without the need to come to the center in-person.

Parents who feel their child needs to be seen by a specialist at the center can get a referral from their pediatrician or they can make a self-referred appointment, according to Comunale. "After the appointment is scheduled, patients and families will arrive and be greeted by UPMC Children's

staff and medical assistants who will complete the registration and rooming processes. Depending on what specialty the patient is seeing, a pediatric registered nurse may be a part of the visit along with advanced practice providers, and physicians. They will receive a thorough evaluation and diagnostic assessment and, any follow-up care if needed, will be ordered at the time," he says.

Comunale notes that follow-up care or diagnostic assessments such as lab, radiology, ultrasound, etc., could be done at WHS Washington Hospital. "We look forward to growing in this location and partnering with the Washington Health System and the community in Washington," says Comunale.

UPMC Children's Specialty Child Care Centers are also located in Erie, Johnstown and Sharon.

UPMC Children's Express Care will continue to provide services at WHS Washington Hospital for after-hours care of minor injuries and illnesses. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday from noon to 8 p.m., and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Doctors of the UPMC Children's Specialty Care Center - Washington



Kristen Critelli, M.D.
*Gastroenterology
Pediatric
Gastroenterology*



Amy Jean, M.D.
*Endocrinology,
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Endocrinology
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> More information about the new **Specialty Care Center - Washington** is available at www.chp.edu/locations/specialty-care-center-washington. To schedule an appointment at the center, call (412) 692-7337 or toll-free (877) 545-9361.

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By Nancy Kennedy

At Valley Brook Dental, LLC, Joseph Gurecka, D.D.S., can help you find something precious that you may have thought was lost to you forever: your beautiful smile.

Dr. Gurecka has been placing dental implants at Valley Brook Dental, LLC for the last 15 years. He is passionate about how dental implants can help patients connect with something that they lost: a confident smile, the ability to chew, or missing teeth. To accomplish this in the facial esthetic zone requires a degree of expertise that only comes from experience. Dr. Gurecka utilizes some of the most advanced techniques for dental implant placement and bone regeneration to achieve lasting results while simplifying the procedure and increasing the reliability of the treatment. Sometimes a patient with a broken tooth or a fractured root can have the tooth removed and the implant placed at the same time, even with a temporary crown to fill the space in their smile.

By using the most advanced dental implant systems on the market, Dr. Gurecka provides new opportunities for patients who, because of poor bone levels, were not candidates for dental implants. His office also uses Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP), or Platelet Rich Fibrin (PRF). This technique uses a by-product of your blood which contain growth factors and stem cells, to initiate and accelerate the healing process. PRF/PRP have been used for years by Orthopedic surgeons to accelerate the body's own healing process. Dr. Gurecka applies the same PRF technique for bone and gingival grafting to improve healing and success rates.

The office uses optical digital scanning and Cone Beam Vertical Tomography to render accurate 3D images of the implant sites and to fabricate surgical guides that help in precise implant placement. Our advanced

imaging and digital impressions allow for the crafting of restorations that fit comfortably and look natural. Dental implants support several prosthetics including Crowns, Bridges, and Hybrid Dentures (All on 4). For patients with missing, broken, or decayed teeth, the All on 4 approach refers to a combined surgical prosthodontic procedure which replaces teeth with a fixed, full arch prosthesis supported by 4-6 implants often on the same day. The final life-like prosthesis can be acrylic or zirconia which is very strong, durable, and esthetic.

To keep up with this rapidly changing field Dr. Gurecka recently completed a 9 month Implant program at Augusta University in Georgia, home to the Georgia Dental School. There he was trained by some of the leaders in Dental Implant Education and completed almost 400 hours of continuing education through the American Association of Implant Dentists (AAID). Last year he passed the written AAID Fellowship Exam and an oral examination; in September he was inducted as an Associate Fellow in the AAID.

Dr. Gurecka lives in Upper St. Clair with his wife Helen and daughter Diana, who attends Seton LaSalle High School where she plays Lacrosse. Helen works at PNC Financial Corporation at their downtown offices. Dr. G can often be seen on the Montour Bike Trail or out fishing with his big yellow lab "Murphy" who loves to greet everyone.

Dental implants can be life-changing. Your smile, self-esteem or confidence can be restored to you through the expertise and artistry of Dr. Joseph Gurecka and the staff at Valley Brook Dental.



For more information, call (724) 942-8982 or visit valleybrookdental.com.

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Introducing

Washington Health System Welcomes Home Dr. Julie Ann Corcoran

By Daniel Casciato

Earlier this summer, Washington Health System welcomed Julie Ann Corcoran, DO, a talented general surgeon to its Washington Physicians Group. Dr. Corcoran returns home to Western Pennsylvania after spending time at Blount Memorial Hospital in Tennessee, where she served as chairman of the department of surgery and the chairman of trauma.

A graduate of John Carroll University and Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, she is experienced in many aspects of general surgery, trauma, minimally invasive surgery and robotic assisted surgery. Dr. Corcoran chose general surgery because she describes herself as a person who really likes to build and repair things.

“Being able to help people in the sense of repairing a problem or remov-



Pictured (L to R) Charlotte Budzik, Nurse Practitioner with WHS General Surgery, Julie Ann Corcoran, DO, Surgeon with WHS General Surgery

ing something that needs to be taken out is really a draw for me,” she says. “I’m also very curious as to why and how things work. I like problem solving. Trying to work up a diagnosis and figure out the mystery to help someone is very intriguing to me and something I’ve always been drawn to.”

One of the advantages to having robotic assisted surgery is the wide variety of advanced instruments. As opposed to standard laparoscopic surgery, the ends of the instruments are actually wristed—similar to the actual wrist on your hand. This means that the instrument end rotates in a 360 degree circle. It can also bend, twist, and

extend. Laparoscopic instruments do not have this same versatility. Dr. Corcoran says. “It cannot move in all the same directions as a robotic instrument. Robotics mimics open surgery more because of that wristed ability, which acts more like your hands.”

Another benefit to robotic assisted surgery is that the camera is a 3D camera which gives surgeons a more realistic view of the procedure instead of viewing it on a flat screen.

“With robotics, you’re going to have smaller incisions, a decreased risk of hernia and a decreased risk of infection compared to open surgery,” Dr. Corcoran adds. “Also, with robotic surgery, in most cases you have less pain and a reduced recovery time, which gets you back to work and your normal activities faster. An added benefit is the reduced need for pain medication.”

What Dr. Corcoran enjoys most about being a general surgeon is the ability to meet and help people while getting to learn a little bit about them and their personality.

“I think the social aspect of being a physician is very important. I try to understand my patient’s perspective, so I can make sure to answer all of their questions, prepare them for surgery, do the best I can to prepare them for the post-op course, and make sure they are fully aware of what to expect,” she says. “I really enjoy getting to impact people’s lives and make their lives better.”

Breast health is another key focus of Dr. Corcoran’s practice. Since October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, she encourages women to get screened and have a mammogram.

“Over the years, with amazing advancements in medicine, we have determined ways to prevent and detect things like cancer, in early stages,” she says. “If you can prevent or find illnesses and cancers early, you can decrease the number of procedures you may need, decrease the severity of treatment, decrease your medical bills and you increase your chance of survival. Mammograms have come a long way and the technology is better than ever. The abnormalities that they can find are so small, it’s amazing! Plus, if you can stop something before it progresses, why wouldn’t you?”

She also stresses the importance for men to get checked too.

“I always make a point of reminding people that men get breast cancer too,” she says. “Often in breast cancer people forget that men have breasts and they can get breast cancer. We want to make sure that men talk to their physician and bring it to someone’s attention if they have something that doesn’t seem right.”

➤ For more information, visit <https://whs.org/>.

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Dr. Michael Brown Named Medical Director of Greater Pittsburgh Vascular's New Washington Location

By Nancy Kennedy

Residents of Washington County with heart and vascular disease can find preventive care, state-of-the-art diagnostics and the most advanced treatment for their problems at Greater Pittsburgh Vascular Associates' brand new location in Washington, PA. Michael Brown, M.D., a board-certified interventional cardiologist, is the medical director of the highly specialized service, and he is excited to bring GPV's high quality, personalized care to the region. His areas of expertise include complex coronary interventions, structural heart disease such as aortic stenosis, treatment of peripheral vascular disease and venous disease.

Dr. Brown wants to offer solutions to people with heart and vascular problems, so that they can feel better, function more effectively, and preserve their health and mobility. The key to quality of life, healthy aging and longevity, he believes, is a healthy heart and healthy legs. "Heart health and limb health are inseparable, and are serious matters. If you can keep people walking, you directly impact their mortality. There are major health consequences to being sedentary. When you preserve the limbs, the person can walk and that helps keep the heart, blood vessels and lungs healthy. Preserving the limbs has a huge impact."

Interventional cardiology, ex-

plains Dr. Brown, is a sub-specialty within cardiology that treats heart disease with minimally invasive, catheter-based procedures. "We perform a cardiac catheterization in our Cath Lab with high tech imaging of coronary arteries that are blocked or narrow, preventing blood from flowing to the heart muscle and potentially causing a heart attack," he says. "We work directly on those arteries, fixing them by placing stents inside. A stent is a tiny, hollow tube, like a straw, that opens up the artery and holds it open so that the blood can flow and nourish the heart with oxygen. Stents are very effective and the technology is constantly improving; we are on the third generation of stents now."

Dr. Brown also has expertise in treating circulatory issues of the lower extremities, especially peripheral arterial disease, or PAD, and venous insufficiency. "PAD means that you have blockages in the arteries in your legs, and this threatens the health of your legs," he says. "PAD is a serious condition and left untreated, can lead to stroke, infection and loss of a limb. Venous insufficiency is the opposite problem: in this case, the blood pools in the lower limbs and has a hard time getting back to the heart. It causes swelling, skin ulcers, pain and an uncomfortable heaviness that makes walking difficult. We also treat varicose veins and deep vein thrombosis.

Medical Profiles



Dr. Michael Brown

"PAD is a serious condition and left untreated, can lead to stroke, infection and loss of a limb. Venous insufficiency is the opposite problem: in this case, the blood pools in the lower limbs and has a hard time getting back to the heart."

"Don't wait to come in if you have symptoms. It's a frustration for us that people wait until their symptoms are severe. They hope it will go away or get better on its own, and that won't happen."

Dr. Brown completed a fellowship in Cardiovascular Disease and Interventional Cardiology at Allegheny General Hospital and has been practicing Cardiology in the Pittsburgh, Washington and Wheeling area since completing his fellowship. He has been with GPV for one year. He grew up in rural Kentucky, where his father was a physician, and knew in high school that he would follow in his father's footsteps. He attended Bellarmine College where he attained a B.A. in Biology and then attended Medical School at the University of Louisville. He completed a combined Internal Medicine and Pediatrics residency at the Medical College of Ohio. Upon completion of his residencies, he practiced Pediatrics and Internal Medicine at

Womack Army Medical Center, Ft. Bragg N.C. His time in the Military included a deployment as Battalion Surgeon for the 82nd Airborne Division in Support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Dr. Brown is married to Dr. Stephanie Brown, an OB/GYN who practices in Upper St. Clair; they have two children. He enjoys golf, water skiing and paddle tennis.

Health is essentially about paying attention to the basics, he says: Don't smoke, watch your weight, get regular exercise, eat less meat and more vegetables, and practice portion control.



GPVA is part of Jefferson Cardiology Association. To learn more about the services provided in the new office, visit the website, www.GreaterPittsburghVascular.com. To contact Jefferson Cardiology Association and Greater Pittsburgh Vascular Associates, call (412) 469-1500.

St. Clair Hospital Appoints Maxim D. Hammer, M.D., MBA as Chief of Neurology

St. Clair Hospital has appointed noted neurologist Maxim D. Hammer, M.D., MBA, as its new Chief of Neurology. Dr. Hammer joins St. Clair from UPMC, where he held numerous titles, including Vice Chairman, Clinical Affairs, Department of Neurology; Clinical Director of Neurology; and Director of Stroke Services at UPMC Mercy Hospital, where he helped develop the Stroke Clinic. Dr. Hammer founded and directed the Neurosonology lab, which provides outpatient and inpatient services, using carotid duplex and tran-

scranial ultrasonography.

Dr. Hammer earned his medical degree at Albany Medical College, Albany, N.Y., and completed his neurology residency at Cleveland Clinic, where he was elected chief resident. He also completed a Vascular Neurology Fellowship at UPMC. Dr. Hammer holds an executive healthcare master's degree in business administration from the University of Pittsburgh Katz School of Business. He is an associate professor, Department of Neurology, at University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Dr.

Hammer is board-certified in neurology, as well as in vascular neurology.

"We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Hammer to St. Clair," says John T. Sullivan, M.D., MBA, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer at St. Clair. "He brings substantial clinical and programmatic expertise in the management of stroke patients."

"Joining St. Clair," says Dr. Hammer, "is an excellent opportu-



Dr. Maxim D. Hammer

nity for me to be part of a health system that is so supportive of neurology." Dr. Hammer practices with Southwestern PA Associates in Neurology, part of St. Clair Medical Services, and is seeing patients at St. Clair Hospital Out-



patient Center – Peters Township. To contact Dr. Hammer, please call (412) 942-6300.

Best-Made Shoes Has Offered Relief for Your Feet for 3 Generations!

By Lois Thomson

If you are like many people, it probably hasn't been too long since you complained about your aching feet, especially if your job requires you to be on your feet all day, or if you have a health condition like diabetes. But if you decide that it's time to do something more than just complain, you might want to check out Best-Made Shoes in Bloomfield.

This third-generation store was founded in 1977 by Gene Rosen, and his son Marc joined the business in 1995. As Gene simply states, "What we do is basically help people who have foot problems, or people who just want shoes that fit well." They do that by making custom-made shoes and orthotics that can help everyone from diabetics, to those who have misshapen feet, swelling, edema, or a host of other issues.

Along with custom-made shoes, which may take about two months to make, Gene and Marc are able to make adjustments to ready-made shoes, such as some of their best-selling brands like Birkenstock, New Balance, and Alegria. "Sometimes we give you ready-made, orthopedic-type shoes, then do modifications," Marc said. "We can add arches or cushioning. If one leg is shorter than the other, we can add build-ups." Modifications may take anywhere from a day or two, to two weeks for custom orthotics.

While having comfortable, well-fitting shoes is everyone's desire, for diabetics it is imperative. As Marc explained, "They can get sores easier than (non-diabetics), they can get rubbing or irritation, they can have more complications if they have don't have a shoe that fits properly." Gene concurred. "If they don't have a shoe that fits well it can lead to amputation. That's why you want to make sure everything fits properly and has the right cushioning."

Marc pointed out that he and his father are certified pedorthists, and their company is a nationally accredited facility. "We're board-certified,

which means we're trained to know about the anatomy of the feet and biomechanics. We can modify or make custom-made shoes or inserts." He said that some pedorthists have the training and may do prescriptions, but many of them don't actually make the shoes or inserts. "We do everything right here in the store! And with being an accredited facility, we are a provider for Medicare, UPMC and Highmark insurances for diabetic shoes."

Best-Made Shoes even does shoe repair on the premises. Gene said, "There aren't many shoe repair places left," and Marc added, "We're the only ones who really do everything." As part of their service they also make house calls – to hospitals, nursing homes, and even private homes.

"It's a fun business, helping people feel better," Gene said. "They come in here with aches and pains, and then most of the time they walk out with a smile."

> For more information, call (412) 621-9363, or visit www.bestmadeshoes.com.



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BREAST CANCER

Delayed Breast Cancer Screenings Due to COVID Fears Will Likely Increase Cancer Deaths

By Nancy Kennedy

Women across the U.S. are not getting their routine screening mammograms for breast cancer in 2020 due to anxiety about contracting COVID-19, and the consequences could be profound.

Healthcare professionals who specialize in cancer care are greatly concerned about the negative impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having on vital cancer screenings, including mammograms. Fear of exposure to the virus in medical settings has led millions of American women to cancel or delay their routine annual screenings for breast cancer, and this is likely to result in delayed diagnoses and an eventual increase in breast cancer deaths. Early detection is the key to breast cancer survival, and the delayed detection that is a collateral consequence of COVID-19 will mean that breast cancers will not be diagnosed until they are in advanced stages, which translates to worse prognoses. Breast cancer is the second most common cancer



"Screening mammograms save lives. They reduce cancer mortality by one-third. A delay of even a few months can make a difference."

Dr. Tara L. Grahovac

among women in the U.S., after skin cancer.

Tara L. Grahovac, MD, a board-certified breast surgeon at St. Clair Hospital, says that at this point, no one knows exactly what the full impact will be. "It's a difficult thing to predict, but the National Cancer Institute does prediction modeling, and they estimate that there will be an excess of 10,000 deaths from breast and colorectal cancer over the next ten years, as a result of the COVID pandemic. Fewer cancers are being diagnosed, but the incidence of cancer has not decreased, according to the NCI report; in fact, these estimates may be conservative.

Dr. Grahovac says that breast cancer screenings, which includes

mammograms, breast MRIs and breast ultrasounds, have plunged by nearly 50% in some parts of the country since the beginning of the pandemic; at St. Clair, it was closer to one-third between February and May/June. At first this was due to the restrictions that the CDC ordered hospitals to implement when the virus began to spread, and at that time this was the appropriate action. But when hospitals resumed operations, with strict, comprehensive safety precautions in place to protect patients from exposure, many women still opted to cancel their appointments or delay scheduling them.

At St. Clair Hospital, breast cancer screenings are available in a safe environment, with all necessary

protections as recommended by the CDC and Pennsylvania Department of Health in place. St. Clair's Breast Care Center has the most advanced diagnostic imaging technology and women can feel confident that they will receive care that is sensitive, personal and of the highest possible quality.

Cancer screenings are elective procedures, but they are also critically important to the early detection and treatment of cancer. The timing of diagnosis and the start of treatment greatly impact prognosis: the earlier the cancer is detected, the better the odds of survival.

"Screening mammograms save lives," Dr. Grahovac states. "They reduce cancer mortality by one-third. A delay of even a few months can make a difference."

> Full imaging services are available at the **Breast Care Center at St. Clair Hospital's Outpatient Center** in Bethel Park and Peters Township. To schedule your appointment, call **(412) 942-8150**.

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At Wilson's Pharmacy, You Can Find Substantial Savings on Prescription Drug Costs

By Nancy Kennedy

Did you know that you can save a lot of money on prescription drug costs by filling your prescriptions at a smaller, independent pharmacy like Wilson's Pharmacy in Pittsburgh?

If you are having difficulty managing your prescription drug costs, you need to know that there is a little-known alternative approach that can make a big difference, and that alternative is available at Wilson's Pharmacy. At Wilson's Pharmacy, patients have the option of paying cash for lower cost generic drugs, and that cash price may be lower than your co-payment would be if you paid in the traditional way, with your Medicare or other health insurance plan.

"It's entirely possible to get many prescription drugs for far less than your co-payments by switching to



Jeffrey Wilson

generics and paying cash," explains Jeffrey Wilson, RPH, owner and pharmacist at Wilson's Pharmacy. "This is a little known truth but it can make an enormous difference in your healthcare costs."

That includes your future healthcare costs. For prescriptions that are filled on Medicare Part D, the total amount paid (what the patient pays in co-payment plus the amount your health insurance company pays) goes toward the coverage gap that is often termed "the donut hole" - a gap in your Medicare prescription coverage that temporarily limits what most Medicare Part D drug plans pay for prescription

costs. It's a threshold that you reach when your spending on co-pays reaches a certain amount. While you are in the gap, you will have higher costs. Not everyone falls into the gap but the danger is that for many people, the higher costs are unmanageable and thus they stop taking essential medications. They may find it impossible to get "across the gap" to the next phase of coverage, catastrophic coverage, when costs become lower.

"It may well be in your best interests to pay cash instead of paying with your health insurance. By paying for the lower cost generics, you avoid falling into the donut hole and that ultimately saves you a lot. At Wilson Pharmacy, we offer a 180-day plan that asks the customer to pay strictly cash and that payment does not go towards the donut hole. It's between my customers and me," Jeff Wilson says. "With generics, which cost us less, we can pass the savings on to the customer. There may be a drug that costs \$5 for the generic and \$100 for the name brand - and both are made by a single company."

Wilson's Pharmacy provides first-class, professional customer ser-

VICES, including free same day mailing of medications. The system is simple: your doctor sends the prescriptions to the Pharmacy electronically, and all you have to do is pay by phone.

If it all sounds too good to be true, it is in fact simply excellent business and high quality healthcare, which have been the signature values of Wilson's Pharmacy for 80 years. Wilson's is located in Lawrenceville and was opened in 1940 by Jeff Wilson's grandfather, Harry Wilson. Although it began as a neighborhood pharmacy and is a Lawrenceville institution, Wilson's now serves an enormous "neighborhood" throughout the Pittsburgh region.

A third generation pharmacist and a graduate of Duquesne University, Wilson is deeply committed to meeting the needs of his customers. "We care about the people we serve. My customers think of me as "my pharmacist" - it's a relationship. They know my name and I know theirs. The pharmacist is the most easily accessible of all the healthcare professionals - we're right here, available to answer ques-

Continued on following page

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PROMEDICA SENIOR CARE

The Dangers of E-Cigarettes for Youth and Young Adults



By Tiffany A. Royalty, MPA, CTTIS

E-CIGARETTES AND YOUTH

E-cigarettes are very popular with youth, and their use is growing dramatically. Today, more high school students use e-cigarettes than regular cigarettes, and the use of e-cigarettes is higher among high school students than adults.¹

According to the National Youth Tobacco Survey, e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth since 2014.² FDA Commissioner, Dr. Scott Gottlieb, believes this issue to be so serious that he has declared e-cigarette usage among teenagers “an epidemic” and states that “the disturbing and accelerating trajectory of use we’re seeing in youth, and the resulting path to addiction, must end.”³

WHAT IS IN AN E-CIGARETTE?

E-cigarettes are devices that heat a liquid (usually containing propylene glycol, glycerin, water, nicotine, and flavorings) into an aerosol that the user inhales into their lungs. You may have heard other terms used when it comes to using e-cigarettes such as vaping or Juuling. What many kids and parents don’t realize is that this liquid is not water, and it is not safe. Not only is the nicotine in e-cigarettes highly addictive, the e-liquid (also called juice) also contains harmful ingredients such as:

- ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs
- flavorants such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease, and
- heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.

RISKS TO THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

Youth and young adults are uniquely at risk for long-term, long-lasting, effects of exposing their developing brains to nicotine. These risks include mood disorders, life-long addiction, and permanent lowering of impulse control. Nicotine also changes the way synapses are formed, which can harm the parts of the brain that control attention and learning.⁴

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT E-CIGARETTES

You have the power to influence your children’s decision about whether to use e-cigarettes. Be clear that you don’t approve of them smoking or using e-cigarettes, and that you expect them to live tobacco-free.⁵ Here are some tips:


1. Know the facts
2. Be patient and ready to listen
3. Set a positive example by being tobacco free

Substantial Savings on Prescription Drug Costs

Continued from previous page

tions and give guidance. We are the true front line of healthcare.”


Wilson’s Pharmacy is committed to the community. In the past, Wilson and his staff have provided flu shots to seniors at health fairs, but due to COVID-19, they had to find a new way to meet that need. Instead of health fairs, they will go to senior high rises and visit, with essential precautions, the individual apartments to see anyone who wants a flu shot. “This is what patient centered means; service is what we know and what we provide,” Jeff Wilson says. “Let us help you save money on your prescription medications. Generic alternatives are often available and result in surprising savings. We provide a free service called Prescription Drug Cost Analysis, in which we review your list of medications and develop a plan for reducing your costs.”

 A Prescription Drug Analysis is available on the website www.wilsonpharmacy.org or you can call (412) 621-6471 or stop in.

If you’re currently using tobacco, quitting is the best thing you can do for your health, and the health of your family members. For free help, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Youth who are vaping or using tobacco products should text “Start My Quit” to 855-891-9989, or call to talk with a coach who can provide information, help, and support.

ABOUT TOBACCO FREE ALLEGHENY

 Tobacco Free Allegheny’s mission is to change the community norms surrounding tobacco, making it uncommon to see, use, or be negatively affected by tobacco or tobacco smoke pollution (secondhand and third-hand smoke). Learn more at www.TobaccoFreeAllegheny.org.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). National Youth Tobacco Survey 2011-2015. Retrieved from

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/surveys/nyts/index.htm

² Bach, L. (2018, June 19). Electronic Cigarettes and Youth. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Retrieved from <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/assets/factsheets/0382.pdf>

³ U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (2018, September 12). Statement from FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D., on new steps to address epidemic of youth e-cigarette use. FDA Statement. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm620185.htm>

⁴ U.S. Surgeon General and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health. (2018). Know the Risks: E-Cigarettes & Young People. Retrieved from <https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/knowtherisks.html>

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health. (2018). Talk with Your Teen About E-Cigarettes: A Tip Sheet for Parents. Retrieved from https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipSheet_508.pdf

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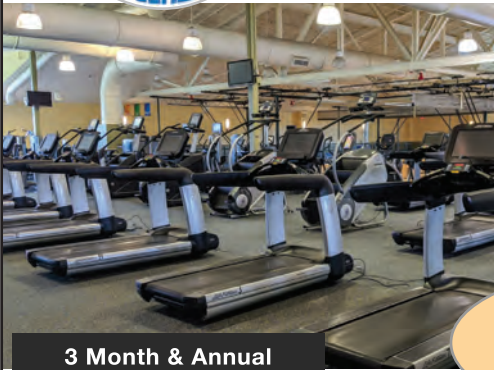
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CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Child Development Can't Wait for COVID-19

At teli, our patients and our families come first as we have worked to ensure that your child can receive vital Early Intervention support in a safe and secure manner, during these uncertain times. Since Early Intervention in-home services are not possible at this time, teli has been delivering our services through contactless virtual interaction. Our teli staff of physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech and language pathologists, and developmental instructors have been providing Early Intervention through teletherapy to insure children get the necessary help at this important time in their young lives.



Over these past months, we have encouraged parents to continue well child visits and discuss their child's development concerns with their health-care provider. Once approved for Early Intervention and after teli has been selected as your provider, our staff will contact and confirms a time that works for you. Dependent on your child's needs, the appropriate therapist or therapists will be ready to begin to help. No special toys or space, just you and your child in the comfort of your home. Have your device of choice be it an iPhone or iPad through FaceTime or Zoom on laptops, charged and ready!

Much like in-person therapy, our therapists spend time getting to know you and your child virtually, as if you were in person, but instead you and your child are face-to-face through your device. Our therapists have worked with families to demonstrate early intervention strategies to incorporate into their child's routine using toys and other objects that were in their home. This integration of strategies into the day, from getting ready to go out, to having play time is at the core of Early Intervention. teli has been using a Home Based Coaching approach, as it lends itself well to the teletherapy that has been needed while families are staying safe at home. A child will practice early intervention activities more often when it is part of their routine which will in turn increase their potential to learn important developmental skills. What better place to learn an activity and new routine than at home!

A child's vital developmental needs should not wait! teli teletherapy is just a video phone call away! In our current environment, we are pursuing creative solutions in new and different ways to deliver our essential service.

> If you would like to consider teli early intervention teletherapy, just give us a call at **(412) 922-8322** or go to our website at **www.telipa.org**.

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CORONAVIRUS

UPMC: Making Progress in COVID-19 Battle

By Kevin Brown

UPMC continues to fight the COVID-19 pandemic along with other health care providers throughout our region and around the world. At a press briefing on Sept. 3, UPMC officials provided an update on their progress in the treatment of patients with COVID-19 along with research into effective treatments to better manage COVID-19.

UPMC officials speaking at the briefing included Donald M. Yealy, M.D., senior medical director and chair of the Department of Emergency Medicine at UPMC; Oscar Marroquin, M.D., UPMC's chief healthcare analytics and data officer; and Derek Angus, M.D., M.P.H., UPMC's chief healthcare innovation officer and chair of Critical Care Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Dr. Yealy spoke about the importance of learning to adapt to COVID-19 to better care for patients. "As we've been saying for many months, COVID-19 came to all the communities that we serve here at UPMC. And it's not going away. Everyone, that's all of us in our communities, including the medical professionals, is learning how and adapting to living with this virus, something that we will continue to do for many months."

Based on what has been learned about COVID-19 by health professionals, progress is being made to better manage patient care. "Why are we seeing the better results today compared to what we saw in March and April? Well, first, we have better treatments, including steroids, and more effective clinical protocols," Dr. Yealy said. "And, we know better how to use all of the care steps for patient care, including positioning and breathing support. We are seeing from our own data, as well as data from other locations, that suggestions exist that the virus is changing in important ways. People are now experiencing less frequent bouts of severe virus impact. Perhaps that means that the virus is less virulent than we once thought or experienced."

Dr. Marroquin reviewed several key data indicators about testing for COVID-19 and the positivity rates of those being tested. "We are, in fact, testing 2.5 times more COVID patients per day in the last two months compared to the prior period, and this positivity rate is only slightly higher at 5.28 percent currently compared to this spring, which was 4.94 percent, suggesting that the people we serve are mostly taking the right precautions to protect themselves," he said.

He also reported that, while testing has grown dramatically, the number of hospitalized patients has not. "The average daily number of patients hospitalized with COVID-19 since July is approximately 2.8 times higher than in this spring," he said. "But, daily discharges are three times higher. Our discharges are outpacing our hospitalization rates. Patients are getting better. And they're getting better faster, at least a day faster as a matter of fact, than before. The best news of all is that in-hospital mortality rates are trending down."

Dr. Marroquin explained that the reason, in part, is in the way they have changed care for these patients. "As Dr. Yealy noted, our data show that more than half of patients since the end of June have received dexamethasone or other steroids, while the use of remdesivir has declined. And we are more judiciously using mechanical ventilation," he said.

Dr. Angus spoke about UPMC's participation in the REMAP-CAP global trial studying the use of corticosteroids for

treatment of COVID-19 patients. A report released on Sept. 2 in the Journal of the American Medical Association announced that the trial found a week-long course of intravenously-delivered hydrocortisone, a corticosteroid-like dexamethasone, provided a 93 percent better chance of improvement for critically-ill ICU patients compared to patients who did not receive it. REMAP-CAP stands for "Randomized Embedded Multifactorial Adaptive Platform – Community-Acquired Pneumonia" and is a specialized type of trial that is highly effective in testing multiple therapies at the same time.

"We have found a commonly available, inexpensive class of drugs called corticosteroids considerably reduces the odds of adverse outcome, death and or duration on life support in critically-ill COVID-19 patients," Dr. Angus said. "This is only possible because of a global community of physician scientists coordinating across different languages, different countries, working together and sharing data at a speed and a level that I think has been unprecedented in order to generate definitive answers," Dr. Angus said. "I feel incredibly proud that UPMC and the University of Pittsburgh were absolutely the center of that initiative." In a further scientific development, UPMC announced on Sept. 13 that University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine scientists isolated the smallest biological molecule to date that completely and specifically neutralizes the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is the cause of COVID-19. This antibody component, which is 10 times smaller than a full-sized antibody, has been used to construct a drug—known as Ab8—for potential use as a therapeutic and prophylactic against SARS-CoV-2.

"Ab8 not only has potential as therapy for COVID-19, but it also could be used to keep people from getting SARS-CoV-2 infections," said co-author John Mellors, M.D., chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases at UPMC and Pitt. "Antibodies of larger size have worked against other infectious diseases and have been well tolerated, giving us hope that it could be an effective treatment for patients with COVID-19 and for protection of those who have never had the infection and are not immune."

Researchers from a number of other universities in the U.S. and Canada participated in the research study, including teams from the Galveston National Laboratory, University of North Carolina, University of Saskatchewan, and the University of British Columbia.

"The COVID-19 pandemic is a global challenge facing humanity, but biomedical science and human ingenuity are likely to overcome it," Dr. Mellors said. "We hope that the antibodies we have discovered will contribute to that triumph."

For more information about UPMC and COVID-19, visit www.upmc.com, or call 1-800-533-UPMC.



"Our discharges are outpacing our hospitalization rates. Patients are getting better. And they're getting better faster, at least a day faster as a matter of fact, than before."

-Dr. Oscar Marroquin



"We have found a commonly available, inexpensive class of drugs called corticosteroids considerably reduces the odds of adverse outcome, death and or duration on life support in critically-ill COVID-19 patients."

-Dr. Derek Angus

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-Dr. Donald M. Yealy



"The COVID-19 pandemic is a global challenge facing humanity, but biomedical science and human ingenuity are likely to overcome it."

-Dr. John Mellors

CORONAVIRUS

St. Clair, Mayo Clinic Team Up for Town Hall Meeting Addressing COVID 19 Concerns

By Lois Thomson

Several months have passed since COVID 19 burst into the world, but there are still almost as many questions as there are answers. With that in mind, and to help observe the fourth anniversary of St. Clair Hospital becoming a member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network, the two groups recently sponsored a free town hall Zoom meeting in Mt. Lebanon to answer questions by the community.

Participating on the panel, which was moderated by KDKA-TV Health and Medical Editor Maria Simbra, M.D., were: St. Clair physicians Stephen M. Colodny, M.D., Chief of Infectious Disease; John T. Sullivan, M.D., MBA, Senior Vice President and Chief Medical Officer; and Ruth Christoforetti, M.D., Family Medicine/Primary Care physician; as well as Mayo Clinic physicians Stacey Rizza, M.D., FIDSA, Executive Medical Director for International Academic Affairs; and Andrew D. Badley, M.D., Professor of Medicine and Molecular Medicine, Chair – Molecular Medicine.

The panel members first spoke about their general areas of exper-

tise, then answered questions that had previously been submitted by the online attendees.

Dr. Sullivan pointed out that at the beginning of the pandemic, elective medical activities were curtailed. However, because there is still a fear of going to health care facilities, some people are delaying getting routine screenings, and that is a cause for alarm. Using mammograms as an example, Dr. Sullivan said the number has decreased by as much as one-third in this area (50 percent nationwide), and he is concerned that we will therefore see an increase in the number of deaths from breast cancer. "I implore everyone to think about their routine health care needs," he said, "and I want to reassure them that people are receiving (screenings) safely."

One attendee question asked if a person can contract the virus a second time. Dr. Badley said select individuals can get it again, but it's not known how common that is. As to why it happens, he said it could be the second virus is not the same as the first, or that the levels of immune response can wane over time.

The question of whether or not children should be attending



"I implore everyone to think about their routine health care needs and I want to reassure them that people are receiving (screenings) safely."

-Dr. John T. Sullivan

schools in person has no right or wrong answer, according to Dr. Christoforetti. She said being with others increases the possibility of contracting the virus, although diligent cleaning and the chance for students to be outdoors helps. However, no situation offers "zero" possibility.

Additionally, Dr. Colodny replied to a question that there is not much data yet as to whether the virus has a high transmission rate in schools because students have just started to go back. Further, Dr. Christoforetti mentioned the importance of monitoring mental health in both children and adults, saying that depression and anxiety are on the rise, and it's important to help and support each other, and seek professional care if needed.

Dr. Colodny also spoke up about the flu vaccine, urging everyone to get a shot. He said it will help health care professionals determine if symptoms may be related to the flu or the COVID virus, particularly if flu cases are prevalent in an area.

A question from an attendee asked that when a vaccine is developed, what is the chance that the virus could then mutate into something else. Dr. Rizza replied that nobody knows yet, and "we still need to find a vaccine that will

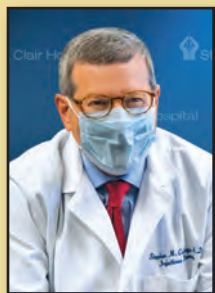
work." She said it may be that people will need to get a yearly vaccine, as with the flu, or just one shot may be sufficient. "It's too early to know."

Dr. Rizza also answered a question about the effectiveness of steroids, saying patients who are severely ill and are on ventilators seem to benefit from steroids; but otherwise, there is no evidence that steroids help earlier cases, or help prevent the disease.

One question wanted to know if, once a vaccine is available, would it be better to get it right away, or wait to see if a subsequent one comes along that is better. Dr. Badley said it's hard to determine because more information will be available only after a vaccine is approved.

Another question was asked if there is data that shows long-term impacts of the virus. Dr. Sullivan replied that nobody knows for sure because we've only been into this for six months, but said in some patients it has severely weakened heart muscles.

The bottom line is that, after months of dealing with the virus, even the experts still don't have all the answers.



Dr. Colodny also spoke up about the flu vaccine, urging everyone to get a shot. He said it will help health care professionals determine if symptoms may be related to the flu or the COVID virus, particularly if flu cases are.

-Dr. Stephen M. Colodny

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A beginner's Guide to Essential Oils

Ask an EXPERT

By Nancy Kennedy

WANDA FANNING is a woman with a passion for essential oils, and she believes that their beauty and power can enrich one's life in multiple ways. As an essential oils expert and a Wellness Advocate, Wanda has personally experienced the benefits of essential oils and has helped hundreds of others to do so, by sharing her experience and expertise. In this edition of Ask the Expert, The *Guide to Good Health* presents questions and answers about the benefits of using essential oils to improve your health, quality of life and environment. "Every drop of essential oil is a garden full of life giving properties," says Wanda.



Wanda's daughter uses No Guard Essential Oil from Doterra to help oxygenate her blood and boost her immune system after wearing a mask all day.

What is essential oil?

Essential oil is the essence of the plant, and may be extracted from the roots, bark, wood, seeds, flowers and leaves. The oils give the plant its scent. Essential oils are highly concentrated and highly potent. Essential oils keep the plant healthy, assist it with pollination and provide other benefits. They benefit humans with healing effects on the body and mind.

How long have people been using essential oils?

Human beings have used essential oils for centuries, especially in Asia and Europe. They have long been believed to have medicinal and therapeutic effects, as well as aesthetic effects. They have become popular in modern times as part of natural health and wellness.

How did you get involved with them?

My life was riddled with trauma, sickness and injuries. In 1990, I was a single mother and experienced a horrendous car accident. Afterwards, I met a French woman who had moved to my Idaho hometown to open a shop selling essential oils. She actually picked me out of a crowd and gave me oils that she prepared specifically for me. I went to her classes, and it changed my life.

How do essential oils work?

Essential oils are a form of aromatherapy, a type of complementary care that uses scent to achieve certain results. The oils are applied to the skin, inhaled or ingested to reduce stress, promote relaxation, elevate mood, and

refresh. The use of essential oils is not a medical treatment and there has not been research to verify the effects, but plenty of users can testify to the benefits. I always say that there is an oil for everything.

How are essential oils applied?

The plant essence is extracted and then combined with a carrier oil like coconut oil. Essential oils are used in lotions, deodorants, soaps, aftershave, shampoo and other products. To get the best effect, you must use them consistently.

Here are the methods of application:

- **Aromatic** - this means through smell and includes any application method that helps you experience the aroma of the oil. Try using them in a diffuser; or apply a drop to your hands, rub your hands together, then cup your hands and hold them over your mouth and inhale. You can also wear essential oil as a personal fragrance.
- **Topical:** On your skin. "Topical" application of essential oils allows the oil to absorb into the skin. Massage into targeted areas and rub in.
- **Internal:** Ingesting certain essential oils allows the oil to be transported throughout your body, using capsules with drops of oil. Essential oils are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, so use caution.

What makes essential oils so effective, in your experience?

I have found essential oils to be literally life changing. They can help you manage your health. They produce feelings of relaxation and calm. People tell me that once they try them, they can't stay away from them!

What are your personal favorite essential oils?

I love the following essential oils - Rose, Jasmine, Deep Blue, Wild Orange and Lemon.



Wanda Fanning, Independent Wellness Advocate, can be reached at askwandwhisper@gmail.com

Peoples Continues ProgramFinder, an Online Enrollment Tool for Energy Assistance Eligibility

Again this heating season, applicants for Peoples' customer support programs including LIHEAP, CAP and Dollar Energy have a convenient way to figure eligibility and provide enrollment information on the Peoples website. Instead of having to go to multiple websites or call several different agencies, Peoples' new, online ProgramFinder tool allows a one-stop approach to finding confidential help with heating bills.

"The biggest benefit of the ProgramFinder is its availability 24/7," explains Rita Black, Director of Customer Relations for Peoples. "Our programs serve customers who are in many seasons of life. We have adult children who are looking for help for their aging parents and often don't have time to research these topics until after the work day is over and the children are off to bed. We have working parents who are struggling to make ends meet, many of whom work multiple jobs or shifts. Having the flexibility to self-screen in a private way to see if help is available any time day and any day of the week will fill such a critical need for them."

Customers can simply enter income and other basic information to be screened for eligibility, and can do so confidentially if privacy is a concern.

If you know of someone who need might need assistance, please have them use the ProgramFinder online at www.Peoples-Gas.com/Programs, or call 1-800-400-WARM.



The biggest benefit of the new ProgramFinder is its availability 24/7.

-Rita Black

Give Your Immune System a Boost



By **Kate Safin, East End Food Co-op**

A healthy immune system is your best defense against colds, flu, and viruses. Proper nutrition, exercise, and rest are vital to keeping your immune system in top shape.

Health professionals widely recommend vitamin D, Vitamin C, Zinc, and a daily probiotic for maintaining a strong immune system, but supplements alone will not provide you with optimal health. Make sure you are eating well and drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Eat fresh, whole foods, and avoid lots of salt, sugar, fat, and excessive caffeine.

Find an activity that gets you moving and doesn't feel like a chore. Some activities that provide exercise while also easing stress include taking a walk, tidying the house, weeding, and gardening. Yoga and biking can also offer a range of low or high impact exercise.

If you're having trouble sleeping, you may benefit from herbal teas like chamomile or tulsii. Melatonin and Ashwagandha can help you fall asleep and stay asleep by easing restless minds. You can also try meditation and deep breathing exercises.

Here is a simple three-part breathing technique that is easy to follow:

1. Take a long, deep inhale
2. Exhale and focus on relaxing your body; Repeat a few times.
3. Slow down your exhale so it is twice as long as the inhale. Repeat.

Stress bogs down our immune systems, so try not to focus too much on your worries. Develop a positive affirmation that you can recite to yourself when you begin to feel overwhelmed.

Here are a few examples, but you can also make up your own:

- "My thoughts are calming down."
- "I am thankful and grateful for the good in my life."
- "I am relaxed and calm."

And remember, you can't control everything that happens around you, but you can control how you react to your circumstances.

East End Food Co-op is the last natural foods co-op left in Pittsburgh from those original, back-to-nature stores. The Co-op offers all of the products of a full-service grocery store, but with a natural and local touch. For more information, visit www.eastendfood.coop.



By **Bethany Narey, CCT**

When it comes to your health there shouldn't be any surprises, and especially not the kind that can be avoided. A brand new state-of-the-art technology called thermography now allows women to detect cancer far earlier than traditional testing.

Breast thermography, also known as infrared imaging of the breast, is a pictorial representation of the infrared emissions of the breasts.

A heat-sensing imaging device is used to detect subtle cell changes up to 10 years before other diagnostic tools. Thermography is also non-invasive, painless, and has NO radiation.

Today one in eight women are diagnosed with breast disease; however, traditional practice is for a woman to have her first mammogram between the ages of 40 and 50. This leaves a dangerous void for young women.

Until now there have been no options available for women too

young to receive a mammogram, or those who find them uncomfortable or do not care to expose themselves to radiation. Thermography provides a safe alternative and earlier detection for ALL women.

Breast thermography scans are able to detect the very first signs that cancer may be forming - up to 10 years before other traditional procedures and long before a tumor is dense enough to be seen with mammography.

Early detection can lead to earlier diagnosis and better treatment options. Annual thermograms are just like going to your primary care doctor or your OBGYN physician yearly. Your annual thermograms allow you to monitor your breast health and changes that occur year by year.

Women today are more health conscious than ever. We know the benefits of detecting disease at an early stage. Thermography is one the latest tools available to enhance the well-being of women in our community.

New Medical Imaging Tool

Thermography is a radiation-free, painless medical imaging tool that requires no contact with the body.

THERMOGRAPHY APPLICATIONS:

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Programs at the Upper St. Clair Community & Recreation Center



THE COMMUNITY & RECREATION CENTER

AT BOYCE MAYVIEW PARK

By Kevin Brown

If you're looking to shed those few extra "pandemic pounds" or just want to get out of the house, look no further than the Upper St. Clair Community and Recreation Center. Registration is now open for Fall programs at the 90,000 square foot fitness, aquatics, recreation and community center, located along Mayview Road in Upper St. Clair.

Although it was closed from mid-March to July 1 due to the pandemic, the Center has been up and running since then with a few exceptions, according to Melissa Lindberg, marketing/membership services supervisor.

"We've actually seen a lot of our members coming back and we've also had new memberships," Melissa says. "People are starting to realize how essential these services are in their life, whether it's for fitness or just for recreation with the family. Our park has seen the highest usage I think I've ever seen." The surrounding 475-acre Boyce Mayview Park offers walking and nature trails, among other outdoor amenities.

In spite of the spring closure, the Center saw one of its most successful summers ever, according to Melissa. "We were one of the few recreation departments in the area to offer a full summer camp option. Our seven-week camp, Camp St. Clair, started in June. "We felt we could safely provide opportunities for kids in Upper St. Clair and surrounding communities to go outside and socialize in a way that we could control," she explains. Melissa adds that the outdoor pool opened at the end of June and served nearly 450 members and residents per day during the summer weeks.

Although some changes have been implemented due to COVID-19 precautions, the Center is focused on moving forward. Melissa encourages members to resume workouts and participation in favorite programs and activities. "We understand there may be some hesitation due to COVID-19, but we want to support our members and help them get back to normal routines," she says.

"We are offering as close to our full range of amenities and services as possible," Melissa says. "The only facilities that aren't open currently are our basketball courts. We are also using a reservation system for the indoor



The surrounding 475-acre Boyce Mayview Park offers walking and nature trails.



Visitors to the Center will notice changes such as a new fitness area in the lobby.



The Recreation Center is using a reservation system for the pools for social distancing.

and outdoor pools for social distancing."

Visitors to the Center will notice changes such as a new fitness area in the lobby. "We split our fitness center into two separate areas. We removed half of our cardio equipment from the upstairs fitness area and replaced our lobby furniture with fitness equipment, so we now have two designated areas for fitness. Instead of closing off equipment or taking equipment away, we just found a better use of space," Melissa notes.

Like most facilities and businesses, the Center put in place precautions to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. "We want to keep all our members as safe as possible, so we ask them to wear masks when indoors," Melissa says. "We also encourage frequent use of hand sanitizer and hand-washing and have added more hand-sanitizing stations throughout the building. We also placed directional signage on the floors to encourage social distancing and one-way traffic through our entrance and exit points. All the fitness equipment is distanced apart."

In addition to switching to a stronger disinfectant to clean equipment, the Center implemented new cleaning standards. "We have our fitness attendants on a continuous cleaning schedule and we encourage our members to help us as much as they can by cleaning equipment before and after using it," Melissa notes.

Any current member or prospective new member who is worried about COVID-19 precautions can take a personally-guided tour with a Center team member. "We invite any member or non-member who is considering joining to walk through the Center with us to show them the precautionary changes that we have made," Melissa says.

The Center's Fall programs are divided into sessions. Session two will be starting in November. Visitors to the Center's website can find the session one program guide along with a link to register for individual programs and activities. Here's a listing of the Fall session one programs:

TODDLER and PRESCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Little Hands, Big Art Ages 3-6 - Enjoy creative time with an adult caregiver.

Family Members & Me Dance Ages 3-4 - Move to the music and learn rhythm with a family member.

Hummingbirds Soccer Ages 3-5.5 - Dribbling, passing, trapping, shooting, and positioning taught through fun drills and non-competitive games.

Toddler Sports Age 2 - Socialize and develop hand-eye coordination.

Pre-K Sports Ages 3-5 - Experience sports-based activities using colorful, safe equipment.

Parent & Child and Preschool Swim Lessons Ages 6 months-5 years old - American Red Cross swim lessons focus on water adjustment and basic swimming skills.

YOUTH and TEEN ACTIVITIES

Ballet and Jazz Ages 5-7 - Learn a variety of movement styles, and grow self-confidence.

Strength & Conditioning Ages 12 and up - Develop agility, power, core strength, speed and improve flexibility.

Youth Swim Lessons Ages 6 and up - American Red Cross Learn-to-Swim Program

Babysitter Basics Ages 11-13 - Safely and responsibly care for younger children.

ADULT ACTIVITIES

Adult Learn to Swim Ages 16 and up - Beginners learn basic aquatic skills and intermediate swimmers improve stroke proficiency.

Watercolor Workshops Ages 13 and up - Learn watercolor painting techniques.

Fitness Swimming Ages 16 and up - Advanced workout class and stroke technique.

S.N.A.P. Ages 16 and up - Fun, socialization, and physical activity for individuals with special needs.

Lifeguard Certification Ages 15 and up - Recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies, and provide care for other medical emergencies.

Friday Afternoons in the Park Ages 62 and up - Meet up with friends (and make new ones) at this fun, social program for seniors

Group Exercise Classes - Hydro Strength, Pilates Reformer, Cycling, Cardio Boot Camp, Athlete's Workout, TRX, Power Flow Yoga, Dance It Out, Aqua Intervals, Total Body Sculpt, Mat Pilates, Boomer Bootcamp, Aqua HIIT, All Levels Yoga, and so much more.

NEW! Young Adult Group Ex Ages 16-23 Yoga, Pilates, Cycling, and Dance classes TBA soon.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

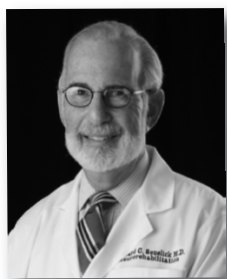
Family Art in the Park All Ages - Enjoy creative time together working on a family art project.

Coming Soon! C&RC Family Time

Play games in the gym or take an all-ages group exercise class. Details available this fall.

For more information and to register for all programs, activities and events at the C&RC, visit their website at www.twpusc.org/crc/registration and click on the image of the **2020 Fall Program Guide**. You can also reach the C&RC at **(412) 221-1099**.

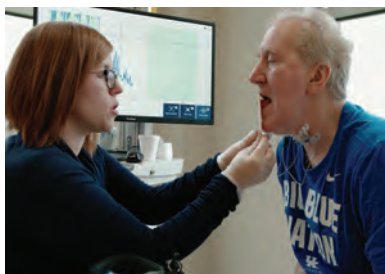
Why Rehabilitation Is Important



By **Richard C. Senelick, MD**

You never expected to get sick or injured, but now you find yourself in the hospital after experiencing a stroke. Your right side is weak, and your speech is a bit slurred. How will you ever get home and get your life back on track?

We never think we will need rehabilitation, yet there are more than 50 million people with disabilities in the United States. Rehabilitation is the key to getting back to your community and the activities you love.



Function matters

If you want to learn to play a piano, you need to practice on a piano and not just read about it. The same is true for rehabilitation. If you had a stroke and have lost the use of your right arm, you will need to do tasks and therapy that require the use of your right arm. Performing these tasks will help rewire your brain.

Know the guidelines

According to the adult stroke rehabilitation guidelines released by the American Heart Association, whenever possible, stroke patients should be treated at an inpatient rehabilitation hospital, such as Encompass Health rehabilitation hospital, rather than a skilled nursing facility.

By using an interdisciplinary team approach, which includes physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, physicians, case managers, pharmacists and dietitians, clinicians at Encompass Health rehabilitation hospitals work together to create a customized care plan designed with each patient's unique goals at the center.

Dr. Richard Senelick is a neurorehabilitation physician and editor of Encompass Health Press.

Just like school

Going for therapy and rehabilitation is kind of like going back to school later in life. You may have to relearn information that you had previously acquired. You may need to learn to walk again, speak clearly or improve your memory. Like school or learning a new skill, there are certain principles that make a difference.

Dose matters

When we take a medication for a medical problem, we carefully adjust the dose. Too little or too much antibiotic and the infection worsens or never goes away. The same is true of rehabilitation. The intensity and amount of therapy you receive matters. Typically, an inpatient rehabilitation hospital will provide at least three hours of therapy a day, five days a week.

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Dealing with Stress, the Amygdalae and World Peace

By Nick Jacobs



Like many people, I have always had a desire to do something significant to make the world better. After I left teaching and explored a few other career cul-de-sacs, I ended up in healthcare administration where I started a deeper search for my big impact opportunity. Then came research, and I realized there truly was potential to change the world. More importantly, I discovered some areas where those world changes really could be found.

Although not a scientist or physician myself, I started working with neuroscientists and psychiatrists who taught me about the amygdala which is, simply stated, a roughly almond-shaped mass of gray matter inside each cerebral hemisphere of the brain and involved with the experiencing of emotions. It's also the source of many of the world's challenges.

I've further learned that our brains have two amygdala sections, one on either side. For me, it was like finding out a bill I got was only half of the bill; now we'll have twice as much to deal with on our quest to change the world through amygdalae-control. (Or, if you prefer, stress management.)

Neuroscientists say the amygdala appears to be the source of our memory, decision making, and, most importantly for this treatise, emotional reactions. These include happiness, sadness, anger, fear, and aggression. It also seems to be a storage bin for memories that impact future decision making. Its

size determines our levels of aggression and physical behavior. It's also involved in our sexuality and sex drive. Oh, and for the record: The right amygdala appears to be the trouble maker.

Now, here's where things get a little more complex but also encouraging. The function of the frontal lobe's prefrontal cortex helps to control the amygdala. According to an article titled, "The Brain Made Simple," you use your prefrontal cortex to think and make decisions. This part of the frontal lobe is also where our personality is formed and where we can carry out higher mental processes. In addition, the frontal lobe is necessary to be able to speak. (Lot's going on in that relatively small space, right?)

Controlling the amygdala via the prefrontal cortex could be the good news, except for one very important thing: This part of our brain isn't completely developed until our early and sometimes even mid-20s. This explains why most teenagers and young adults can be noncompliant regarding the rules of society. It's this part of our brain that provides some reasoning skills to calm down the amygdala, but it doesn't do it either soon enough or often enough.

There are still more layers of influencers that contribute to how we act, and they can go back literally millions of years. There are genetic changes that have occurred over generations. Was your mom under stress while you were in the womb? Did your ancestors come

from a society where war was always part of their lives? Do you have other specific genetic mutations, or have you been subjected to abuse or early childhood trauma? Do you have higher levels of testosterone? All these variables can contribute to how you act and react.

Back to my opening sentence. Not unlike every Miss Universe, I really do want world peace. But it now seems clear to me that the only way to achieve that efficiently is to find the means to hijack the destructiveness and idiocy that sometimes emerges from the functioning of the amygdalae due to the lack of involvement from the prefrontal cortex.

What does all of this psychobabble have to do with stress?

Since most of our stress emanates from those little almond-sized portions of our brain, the question is: How do we control it? The answer? Mindfulness. The future of stress management.

The beauty of this is, it takes just minutes a day to get into the routine of slowing your mind down by focusing on single calming words or ideas, and thus shutting up that pesky amygdala. Focus, Focus, Focus. Use a mantra, or prayer, or stare at your nose as you breathe calmly, deep breaths, holding each just a few seconds longer than normal before exhaling. Stress management is absolutely tied to controlling your amygdala. Positive self-talk helps as well because the amygdala focuses on negativity, fear, irrational happenstances that

can include asteroids, famines, and pandemics . . . or what we now refer to as just another day in 2020.

Another good way to control stress is through humor, focusing on positivity, and not allowing yourself to be sucked into the black hole of woulda, shoulda, coulda living. Controlling the amygdala is no easy task. Controlling stress is even harder because there are reasons to feel stressful that are sometimes intended to protect us.

Some people who know me might say I'm the last person to lecture anyone on how to control stress. My old Italian grandmother taught me to worry better than almost anyone I've ever met, but I've survived quite a few decades, in large part because some people taught me about controlling my amygdala.

If you are interested in taking more control of yourself and your amygdala, there is much reference material on this subject, as well as meditation, stress management and practical uses of humor in everyday life. Give it a try—and maybe do your part to advance world peace!



Nick Jacobs is a partner with **SMR, LLC**, a senior leadership healthcare consulting firm.

He is a founder of the Academy of Integrative Health and Medicine, former board member of the American Board of Integrative Holistic Medicine and served on the Executive Committee. A former hospital CEO and founder of two genetic research institutes, Jacobs maintains a website, Healinghospitals.com.

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Monongahela Valley Hospital Installs New Nuclear Camera System

Monongahela Valley Hospital recently installed a state-of-the-art nuclear camera system from Siemens Healthcare as part of the health system's ongoing efforts to offer its patients the most cutting-edge medical imaging technology available.

The new system provides higher-definition images that increase physicians' ability to make confident diagnoses without the need for additional studies. In addition, MVH can now serve a more diverse patient population because the system can accommodate people weighing up to 500 lbs. It also provides easy access for people with limited mobility or in wheelchairs. The new technology uses a high-capacity patient bed, a 30% larger bore than previous systems and highly flexible detectors. These features provide comprehensive imaging configurations for general purpose, cardiology, gastroenterology, oncology and neurology studies.

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Curtis Pharmacy – Offering A Better Way to Manage Medications

By Kevin Brown

For pharmacist Erich Cushey, the “Aha!” moment came one evening five years ago when he received a phone call from his 88-year-old father. Erich’s mother usually organized his father’s medications so he could easily take them. With his mother in the hospital, his father was at a loss as to which medications to take.

“You’ve heard the expression, ‘The shoemaker’s kids have no shoes.’ Well, the pharmacist’s dad didn’t know which medications to take,” Erich says.

That prompted Erich and his wife, Tina, owners of Curtis Pharmacy in Washington and Claysville, to develop medication packs customized to each patient’s medication needs. When demand for the individualized medication packs increased, they purchased an automated packaging system called RapidPakRx™ from the RxSafe company to create and label the pill pouches.

“If you are visiting your mom or dad once a week and laying out their pill boxes for them, we’re really doing that for you now with a much more robust system,” Erich says. “The pills are packaged in individual pouches that can be labeled morning, noon, evening, lunch, supper, or they can be dated if you want. It really allows us to help you manage your medications.”

Keeping to a regular medication schedule and taking the proper dosage are essential for maintaining health. An older adult on multiple medications can become easily confused about which pills to take and when to take them, leading to serious health complications.

“The nice thing about these pouches is, if you are going away for the weekend, you can simply rip off those days’ packets and take them with you as opposed to packing all your bottles or whatever else you need to take your medications while travelling,” he says.

Anyone who is on multiple medications understands that managing the refills can be difficult since prescriptions don’t necessarily start and end at the same time. The medication management system from Curtis Pharmacy takes care of that for you with medication refill synchronization. That simply means a customer’s refills are timed to be filled on the same day each month.

“We work hard to know when you should be due for your medications based on the last time you received it,” Erich explains. “Let’s say, for instance, you take a generic blood pressure pill or cholesterol pill and you have an inhaler. So, we’ll use the inhaler - we know that’s 30 days - and we may give you 14 days of the blood pressure pill and 20 days of the cholesterol pill to get you caught up all together. And then moving forward, based off that inhaler, we’ll know when everything is due.”

Erich says that, as a rule, Curtis Pharmacy patients almost never have to



Medical Profiles

call their doctors for refills. “That’s a nice thing about us because we call customers a week to 10 days out. If there’s a medication they need refills on or an issue they need to talk to the doctor about, we’ll let them know at that point,” he says.

An additional benefit is the regular contact with customers. “People tend to talk to their pharmacist more than any other health care provider,” Erich notes. “One of our pharmacists or staff members will reach out, talk to the patient about the medications, make sure they are on track and taking what they are supposed to be taking and letting them know we are getting their next month’s medications ready. We find a lot of folks just like getting the phone call.

It’s a nice touch to be able to talk to patients on a regular basis.”

Doctors appreciate the medication service from Curtis Pharmacy as well. “We get phone calls from doctors’ offices saying ‘Mr. Jones is having a really hard time taking his medications. Can we help him get set up with your program?’ We take over from there. It’s a nice tool to help doctors’ offices maintain their patients’ compliance,” Erich says.

With the COVID-19 restrictions in place, Curtis Pharmacy offers free, contactless home delivery throughout Washington County. Their pharmacy locations at 575 Henderson Avenue in Washington and at 305 Main Street in Claysville are open to customers.

> To learn more about the medication management system and other services they offer, visit **Curtis Pharmacy** online at www.curtispharmacy.com, stop by one of their convenient locations, or call them at (724) 209-1582 in Washington or at (724) 245-3520 in Claysville.



Virtual Home and Community Based Services: A Response to COVID-19

Continued from page 30.

stances. With the added stress and limitations put in place because of Covid-19 and having to quarantine, Travis was even more isolated from the community and others outside of his immediate family. Lori was able to talk with Travis about eating healthy and using the microwave for heating up his meals. Healthy eating and practicing using small appliances are some of Travis’s habilitation goals. Lori and Travis discussed the importance of following CDC guidelines such as hand washing and wearing a mask when out in public. This was a way that Lori encouraged Travis to work on his goal of remaining safe and healthy. Travis benefited immensely from his virtual communications with Lori and stated that he really enjoyed using his iPad to see her and talk with her.

> For more information about **Arc Human Services**, visit www.archumanservices.org.

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LIVING WITH A DISABILITY

Virtual Home and Community Based Services: A Response to COVID-19

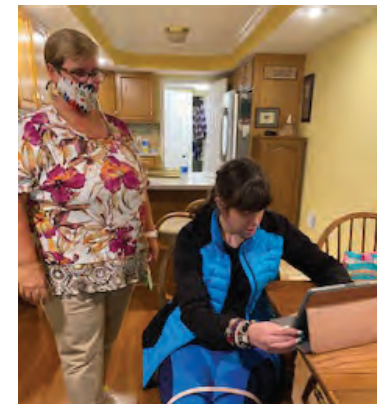
It seems an understatement to say that Community Based Services (CBS) are incredibly important programs available to individuals within the intellectually disabled population. These services provide a way for those that may not have the same opportunities as others, to engage in their local communities and participate as active members of society. They provide outlets for those served to gather in groups, explore creative avenues, and expand upon everyday life skills; all the while, building social connections and broadening independence.

With the onset of a sudden world-wide pandemic and the creation of a new household word, "social distancing", Community Based Services were undeniably hit hard. In-Home and Community Habilitation, Companion Services, Community Participation Supports, and Employment Services are among those programs that were impacted the most. It became

evident that the world of social services was yet again called upon to get creative and find a way to still engage our CBS individuals, while maintaining the health and safety of all those involved. No small task to say the least, considering "community based" is in the name, and the community was essentially shut down.

And yet, Arc Human Services found one way to accomplish this seemingly impossible task, with the help of the Office of Developmental Programs and Technology. Virtual visitation/communication was one solution that allowed for safe engagement between individuals and staff during the height of COVID-19. Individuals could see and talk directly to their support staff using Google hangouts, Skype, FaceTime, Zoom, or any other video conferencing software. Arc Human Services lent iPads to those individuals that wanted to participate, but did not possess an iPad of their own.

One of Arc Human Service's Independent Support Staff, Sharry, works for the In-Home team at Arc as a companion staff to Maria. Sharry and Maria are very close and have been working together for over 15 years. Maria's relationship with Sharry is one of the most valued and important connections in her life and the same is true for Sharry. They utilized virtual visitation almost every day when it was not safe to be together in person. Sharry said that Maria would have to go into her room to have privacy during their visits. It was very important for Maria to have her own time and space and maintain her independence during her conversations with Sharry. This was one way they worked toward Maria's goal of increasing her independence during their virtual visits. The technology was very user friendly and something Maria was able to use without assistance, which also provided a way for Maria to maintain her indepen-



dence goal. Maria was able to virtually see Sharry and her family, and knew that Sharry was safe during the pandemic. This provided a sense of relief and normalcy for Maria during an uncertain time. According to Sharry, Maria benefited greatly from this new way of Companion service delivery.

Travis also receives In-Home and Community Habilitation support from his In-Home staff, Lori. Travis is familiar with his own iPad and was excited about the idea of being able to still interact with Lori in some way during the pandemic. Travis's mother helped him set up his own email account so that he could use Google Hangouts to participate in virtual visitations with Lori. Travis is limited in his mobility which makes it difficult to leave his home under normal circum-

Continued on page 29



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MEDICARE



Aetna Medicare Solutions: A Total, Connected Approach to Health

By Daniel Casciato

Aetna Medicare Advantage, the largest Medicare Advantage company in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania with over 200,000 members, offer its members a total, connected approach to health. Their plans often include prescription drug coverage and extra benefits and many feature an affordable plan premium.

“Medicare Advantage premiums are the lowest they’ve been in

14 years,” says Bob O’Connor, Vice President and Chief Medicare Officer of Aetna Medicare for the Keystone Market, which covers Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Delaware. “They’ve actually been falling over time. People are paying less and they’re getting more because so many of these plans now include coverage for dental, vision, hearing, and over the counter medications—things people look for.”

The plans also include several items that you may not necessarily look for to help keep you healthy such as additional care management programs and non-emergency transportation for doctor office visits.

Some people have both Medicare and Medicaid which means you are “dual eligible.” That’s where dual special needs plans (DSNP) — or “dual” plans — come in. Each of Aetna’s DSMP members has a case manager, and the case manager will see if they qualify each year.

“There are a number of enhancements that we’re making in our DSNP program,” says O’Connor. “One of them is for people with chronic conditions. They’ll receive a healthy foods debit card, which is \$25 monthly allowance toward the purchase of healthy and nutritious foods and produce.”

Another new program is called PAPA, a social needs benefit which provides companion support.

“It helps resolve social isolation with very carefully screened college students, many who have a healthcare background,” explains O’Connor. “They provide companionship. Usually, it’s meant to be in person, but it can be virtually too. And it might be simple things such as playing a game, but it could also be helping buy groceries or figuring out little things around the house. It’s for up to 10 hours a month, for a person who qualifies.”

This year, Aetna also increased its dental allowance to \$4,500. It covers not only the traditional cleanings, x-rays and fillings, but it also covers items like crowns, root canals, dentures, endodontics and periodontics.

“This is an expansion of a very robust dental program,” adds O’Connor. “In addition, our quarterly over-the-counter health allowance has increased to \$330. Members can receive a catalog in the mail or go online, and order \$330 of items per quarter—items to help them with mobility, to help them keep healthy, so many things that we all use now or are now over-the counter instead of necessarily prescribed.”



“Medicare Advantage premiums are the lowest they’ve been in 14 years. They’ve actually been falling over time. People are paying less and they’re getting more because so many of these plans now include coverage for dental, vision, hearing, and over the counter medications—things people look for.”

Bob O’Connor, Vice President and Chief Medicare Officer of Aetna Medicare

O’Connor notes that the DSNP plans include a robust model of care, where they put together an integrated care plan for each member, in conjunction with the patients’ doctors.

“Our case manager works closely with their different health care providers,” he says. “We partner with the person to reduce barriers and

help solve their problems.”

Aetna has also made some really significant program improvements to its MA only plan—a plan that covers medical only, not medication.

“There are thousands of people, locally, here in Western Pennsylvania, who are either getting their medications from the VA or other program,” says O’Connor. “This is a program that wraps around medical care and has inexpensive medical copays. It also has a lot of terrific supplemental benefits, like a \$3,000 dental plan, transportation, where we’ll take people to the VA. This is a plan that is very strong and attractive. Anybody who needs a medical only plan, needs to take another look, because we made some really strong improvements to that plan.”

If you’re interested in an Aetna Medicare Advantage plan or any other plan, O’Connor recommends to call first.

“We can find out how they want to learn more and/or enroll,” he says. “We’re also doing many virtual seminars this year. People can go and take part in a virtual seminar, where they can see the person presenting who will go over the different products and plans. Give us a call, and we’ll find a good virtual seminar for somebody to do.”

They are scheduling one-on-one visits for people who are comfortable with that option. “Of course, we are socially distanced and wear the proper protective equipment,” he says. “Frankly, that varies, and people have different levels of comfort. We can meet with people either in person, by video, or by phone. We have local company employees and agents who are trained on these products, and this is their full-time job—to know all about these products. So, there’s an opportunity to work with a local person who’s an expert.”



If you’d like more information visit www.aetnamedicare.com.

Aetna Medicare is a PDP, HMO, PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Their SNPs also have contracts with State Medicaid programs. Enrollment in their plans depends on contract renewal. See Evidence of Coverage for a complete description of plan benefits, exclusions, limitations and conditions of coverage. Plan features and availability may vary by service area. ©<2017> Aetna Inc.

“Our case manager works closely with their different health care providers. We partner with the person to reduce barriers and help solve their problems.”

This year, Aetna also increased its dental allowance to \$4,500.

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MEDICARE



UPMC for Life Offers Affordable Medicare Advantage Plans With Broad In-network Access to UPMC Doctors and Hospitals

UPMC Health Plan is pleased to offer UPMC for Life, the largest individual Medicare Advantage plan in Western Pennsylvania. In 2021, UPMC for Life will include enhanced benefits that aim to expand our members' ability to receive the highest quality health care services in the most affordable way.

UPMC for Life was awarded 4.5 out of a possible 5 Overall Star Rating for its HMO and PPO plans for 2020 according to ratings released by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Every UPMC for Life plan provides members with a patient-centric model of care that focuses on delivering quality by caring for the "whole person," attending to both the physical and emotional health of members in all settings, whether in person or through virtual care in the comfort of their homes.

"In 2021, UPMC for Life will continue to place the health and well-being of our members as our top priority, offering them access to the best doctors and hospitals, affordability, quality services, and protections in place, like no cost preventive care and clinical management programs, to help members manage their health and avoid large, unexpected medical costs," said April Golenor, Chief Medicare Officer for UPMC Health Plan. "We understand that out of pocket costs are as important as monthly premiums, so we want to give our members maximum value in terms of benefits and services, like telehealth, low costs for medications, an allowance to buy health care products, and dental and vision care. We know that keeping costs low for these services is important to our members as they try to stay within their monthly budgets."

Reducing Out of Pocket Costs

In addition to disease-related stress, UPMC for Life understood the many financial stresses that the pandemic created during 2020, and worked to alleviate those stresses by waiving deductibles, copays, and other cost-sharing for coronavirus testing and treatment. UPMC for Life also increased member access to medications by waiving early refill limits on prescriptions. In 2021, UPMC for Life will continue that commitment to reducing the financial stresses on members when accessing the health care system through the following:

- \$0 Monthly Premium Plans
- Access to UPMC
- \$0 Preventive Care Visits
- \$0 Telehealth Copays
- \$0 Preferred Generic Prescriptions
- Cost-Savings for Diabetic Prescriptions
- Additional Donut Hole Coverage for HMO Rx Members
- Dental Services
- OTC Allowance

Virtual Enrollment Help and Support

UPMC for Life has expanded their weekly Staying in Touch events to help members understand their benefits changes for 2021. Members will have the opportunity to participate by phone or online from the comfort and safety of home to get all the details on their new and improved benefits. Members can go to upmchp.us/medicare-intouch to see a complete list of event details. For members who want personal help, the award-winning Health Care Concierge is on-hand to answer questions and provide exceptional customer service.

Enrollment Details

The 2021 Annual Election Period is Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, 2020. Medicare beneficiaries can add or drop Part D prescription drug coverage, switch their current plan, or change to a Medicare Advantage plan, or change to Original Medicare. Changes in coverage will be effective Jan. 1.

Medicare beneficiaries who are interested in UPMC for Life can get information online at www.upmchealthplan.com/medicare or by calling UPMC for Life toll-free at 1-877-381-3765 seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. TTY users should call 711.



For more information about UPMC's best doctors and hospitals, go to www.upmchealthplan.com/best.



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For more information about UPMC's best doctors and hospitals, go to upmchealthplan.com/best.

*Our hours of operation change twice a year. You can call us October 1 through December 31, seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. From January 1 through September 30, you can call us Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

UPMC *for Life* has a contract with Medicare to provide HMO, HMO SNP, and PPO plans. The HMO SNP plans have a contract with the PA State Medical Assistance program. Enrollment in UPMC *for Life* depends on contract renewal. UPMC *for Life* is a product of and operated by UPMC Health Plan Inc., UPMC Health Network Inc., UPMC Health Benefits Inc., UPMC Health Coverage Inc., and UPMC *for You* Inc.

UPMC Health Plan¹ complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

¹UPMC Health Plan is the marketing name used to refer to the following companies, which are licensed to issue individual and group health insurance products or which provide third party administration services for group health plans: UPMC Health Network Inc., UPMC Health Options Inc., UPMC Health Coverage Inc., UPMC Health Plan Inc., UPMC Health Benefits Inc., UPMC *for You* Inc., Community Care Behavioral Health Organization Services Inc., and/or UPMC Benefit Management Services Inc.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-381-3765 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-877-381-3765 (TTY: 711)。

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MEDICARE



How to Prepare for Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period

Medicare's Annual Enrollment Period (AEP) is right around the corner, so it's time to get ready. You should explore your options each year, since it can ensure that your Medicare plan fits your needs and saves you money. Preparing for AEP allows your search to be as stress-free as possible.

Evaluate Your Plan Usage and Upcoming Medical Needs

Before you begin looking for your next plan, you should evaluate the one you already have.

Looking Back

First, look back at the last year for how your plan covered your medical needs. Did it cover the services you needed and used the most or were there gaps you're hoping to fill? Did you use out-of-network services or spend more out of pocket than you planned? Asking these questions and more will help answer whether your plan covered your needs last year.

Looking Ahead

Next, think about how your plan will cover you in the future. Getting an annual checkup is a good start. There, you can ask about any developing medical conditions or concerns to plan for. Will you need joint replacement surgery next year or a new medication that may not be covered by your current plan or is very expensive? These are a few of the medical circumstances that may make it worth changing your plan.



Explore Your Enrollment Options

After evaluating your current plan, you should see what's available in your area. Using a tool like Medicareful's Plan Finder can show you Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare Part D plans, and Medicare Supplements near you and compare your favorites. Medicare Star Ratings can tell you about how well a plan performs at a glance. However, your options for the upcoming plan year will only be available when they're announced around the start of AEP for the current year.

Talk with an Agent

If you're struggling to choose a plan, we suggest connecting with a licensed insurance agent. Finding a great insurance agent isn't hard, and you don't need to pay a dime for an agent to help you choose a plan. You can easily get in touch with a licensed sales agent using the Medicareful Plan Finder or in your neighborhood, either by searching online or at a specific insurance company.

If you're unprepared for Medicare's AEP, you may find yourself getting stressed out or giving up your search and keeping your current plan, even if it's not a great match. By taking a little time before October 15 to evaluate, explore, and talk with an expert, you can be better prepared for the start of AEP and more likely to make a good choice for you and your situation.

> For more information on the Medicareful's Plan Finder, call (412) 910-1588 or visit medicareful.com.



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MEDICARE



MEDICARE 911 – When You Have Questions That Need Immediate Answers

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Medicare Advantage plans are expanding the availability of extra services, particularly for the 73 percent of beneficiaries who have chronic health conditions. These benefits range from meals at home to transportation to health appointments to nutrition counseling to safety improvements to your home. Not all MA plans are offering these benefits, so look carefully at their coverage descriptions on the plan-finder site.

Medicare Fraud

Medicare fraud is unfortunately becoming more common, and there are many ways that you can become a victim:

- People using your Medicare or health plan member number for services
- People calling to ask for your Medicare or health plan member numbers
- People trying to bribe you to use services you do not need
- People going door-to-door or on email, to sell you healthcare items or services you don't need

If you note anything suspicious that could be fraudulent billing, report it to Medicare by calling the phone number on your ID card or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You are not required to identify yourself when reporting a suspected fraud. If your suspicion is confirmed and leads directly to the recovery of Medicare money, you may get up to \$1,000 as a reward.

Medicare and Covid-19 Testing

Covid-19 testing is covered by Medicare.

Medicare and Preventive Care Services

Medicare DOES pay for preventive care, including screenings such as mammograms and colonoscopies, and immunizations. You should stay up-to-date on all the recommended cancer screenings and other exams such as annual physical exams and blood pressure checks. Hospitals and health-care facilities have strict safety practices to protect you during a visit for medical care, screenings or testing.

The Donut Hole

The donut hole is a gap in Medicare prescription coverage that temporarily limits what most Medicare Part D drug plans pay for prescription costs. It's a threshold that you reach when your spending on co-pays reaches a certain amount. While you are in the gap, your drug costs will be higher. Not everyone falls into the gap but the danger of it is that the higher costs can be unaffordable; as a result, people may stop taking essential medications. There is an option, though, to self-pay for prescriptions, because those costs will not be counted toward your total. You may be able to find lower costs at independent drug stores. You do not have to use Medicare Part D to pay for your prescriptions.

Getting a Replacement Medicare ID Card

You can request a replacement Medicare card by contacting Social Security at www.ssa.gov. To make your online request, you will need your:

- Name as it appears on your most recent Social Security card
- Social Security number
- Date of birth

Your Medicare card should arrive in the mail in about 30 days.

If you prefer, or if you are unable to use the online request to obtain a replacement Medicare card, call Social Security at 800-772-1213 (TTY 800-325-0778).

Telemedicine and Medicare

Perhaps your doctors have offered you the option of a virtual visit, or a telemedicine visit. Medicare is covering telemedicine visits FOR THE TIME BEING – during the pandemic – but has not yet decided if this policy will be extended long term.

Medicare and Flu Shots

Medicare does pay for flu shots. This is more important than ever this year, because we are already at risk of contracting the COVID 19 virus. Flu viruses change every year, so you need a flu shot every flu season. You can get your flu shot from your PCP, at a senior center, a pharmacy or from another healthcare provider.

If You Have Difficulty Paying for Your Medications

You can apply to the Extra Help program, which provides Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage at low or reduced cost for people with incomes under a certain level. You can also ask your pharmacist for guidance – he or she may know of options or may be able to find lower cost alternatives for you.

Medicare and You

Every year, Medicare enrollees receive a handbook that details Medicare coverage and explains any changes for the coming year. You can choose a paper copy or an electronic copy.

Medicare Does Not Cover:

- Most dental care and dentures
- Cosmetic surgery
- Hearing aids and exams for them
- Routine foot care
- Eye exams related to prescriptions for glasses



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MEDICARE



Enrolling in Medicare?

Learn How Medicare Specialists of Pittsburgh Can Help

By **Daniel Casciato**

As we get closer to the Medicare open enrollment period, there are several changes coming in 2021 which includes budget updates, reduction in drug prices, and more. This year's enrollment period begins on October 15 and ends on December 7.

It's important to familiarize yourselves with these changes heading into open enrollment because that may have an effect on whether you change your current Medicare plan.

Thankfully, you can turn to someone such as John Wells, president of Medicare Specialists of Pittsburgh, an Independent Insurance Agency representing many different companies for your insurance needs. Medicare Specialists carefully selects its carriers in order to provide clients with the best level of service, price and coverage.

One of the biggest concerns that clients have is COVID-related issues, according to Wells.

"Many people are concerned about having to go out to review their plans in person," says Wells. "The approach we're taking is to be exceptionally flexible. We could meet in person, here at the office or at someone's home just to stay out of restaurants and coffee shops. We can also do Zoom meetings or hold discussions over the phone with email follow-ups. Whatever our customers feel comfortable with, we should be able to do."

As a bricks-and-mortar business, Wells explains that have taken precautions for clients who prefer to come into the office and speak face-to-face. For instance, they installed plexiglass panels around the desks and everyone wears a face mask. Temperature checks are also required. No matter which option you choose to meet with Medicare Specialists, a

meeting would take approximately one hour.

One way that Wells and his team can help you is to cost out your prescription drug plan that you are currently on.

"We could cost those out with all the variations and different plans available so that you will have hard numbers on your anticipated drug costs," says Wells. "We'll also have a general discussion, as far as what needs you have coming up in regards to overall healthcare, vision, and dental."

Since they often have a new people signing on to Medicare each year, one of the top questions is when to sign up.

"Timing is always on the top of everyone's mind," says Wells. "When should I sign up? Do I need to sign up? I'm continuing to work, so what happens when I'm 67? I didn't have Medicare last year, because I was still working under a group plan. What do I do?"

These are always the types of questions we get."

If you happen to miss the enrollment period this year, Wells recommends contacting their office to discuss other options.

The two main areas of coverage for a client would be Medicare or Medicare with a supplement. You can also convert your coverage over to a Medicare Advantage Plan.

"We'll discuss how that decision can affect your coverage down the road because at some point, once you choose to go to an Advantage Plan, going back to a supplement is not guaranteed," Wells adds. "We can also help clients with Medicaid and other low income subsidies, PACENET, and entitlements. We can help them assess their current financial situations and find the right plan so they can be sure to afford healthcare."



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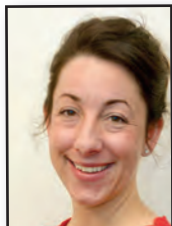
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Senior Guide

- Senior Living Options • Senior Resources • Home Care
- Hospice • Services that Support Independent Living

Hospice Helps Patients Remain at Home Instead of the Hospital



By **Evalisa McClure**

Facing a life-limiting diagnosis is rarely simple. When patients are ready to focus

on comfort and quality of life, they may not want an expensive stay in the hospital or skilled nursing facility.

Hospice offers an alternative—particularly during COVID-19's heightened risks and restrictions.

Whether the patient has decided the side-effects of their current treatment plan outweigh its benefits, or their care provider has recommended end-of-life care, VITAS Healthcare makes transitioning to hospice care easy and safe for patients, families, care-

givers, and physicians.

Hospice transitions begin with a team of specialists who confirm the patient's hospice eligibility with a short assessment. Questions are asked and answered, and VITAS supports the patient's and family's informed decisions about their preferences for end-of-life care. The patient's needs and goals come first, and reasonable efforts are made to care for the patient wherever they're most comfortable. In most cases, this means home.

The VITAS team—physician, nurse hospice aide, social worker, chaplain, and volunteer—then develops a personalized plan, including any equipment and supplies the patient may require. Patients leaving a hospital or skilled nursing facility can still benefit from any specialized medical equipment they may have used in

their care facility—right from the comfort of their home. Medicines that improve quality of life are delivered as well.

At home, hospice patients receive day-to-day care from a family caregiver with plenty of assistance and training from the hospice team, either in-person or via telehealth. Each week, team members visit on a schedule designed to meet the patient's needs. Hospice patients also face fewer restrictions at home than in a facility, so families can work out a visitation plan that's best for them.

If symptoms flare up and additional support is needed, VITAS offers Intensive Comfort Care® with 24/7 support from a crisis nurse until symptoms are back under control. Even as levels of service change, Medicare or private insurance continues to cover the



cost of care 100%.

Most patients with advanced illness want to be home near the end of life. VITAS has the expertise, resources, and personnel to make that happen.

> Evalisa McClure is general manager for **VITAS Healthcare in Pittsburgh.** For more information about end-of-life care services, call the nation's leading provider at **(866) 759-6695** or visit **VITAS.com**.

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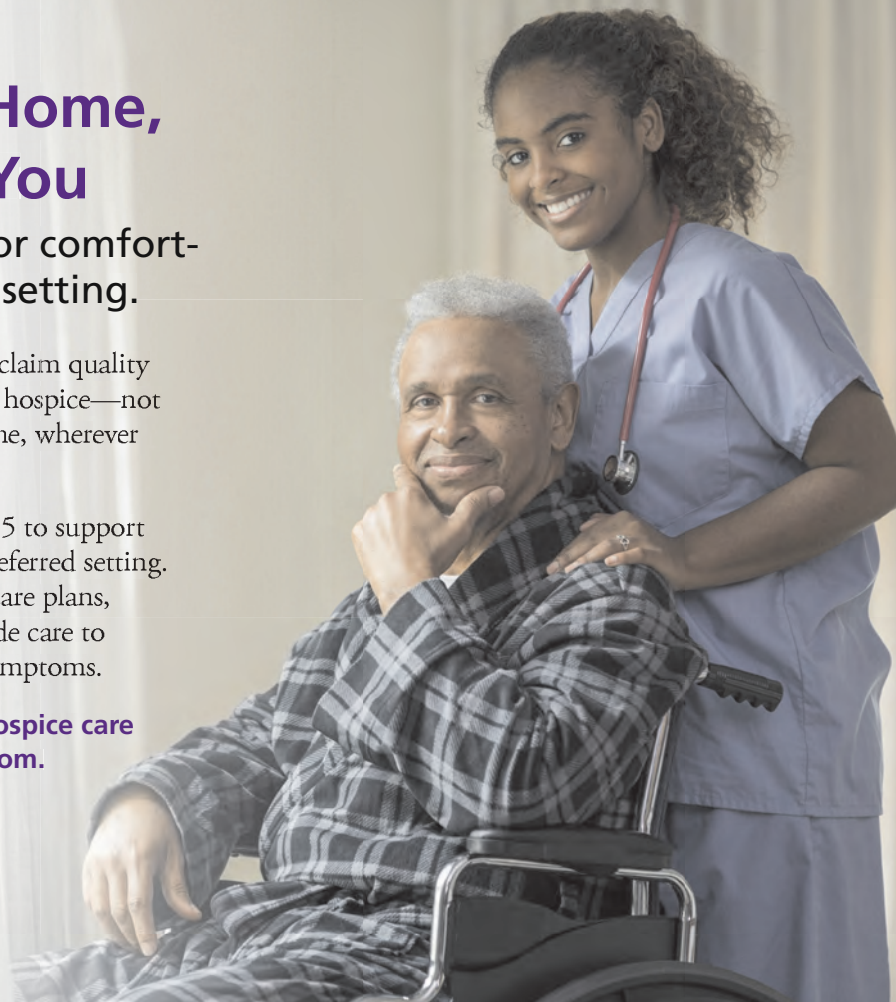
When you or your loved one are ready to reclaim quality of life while living with an advanced illness, hospice—not hospital—offers comfort and dignity at home, wherever home may be.

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Senior Guide

PACE Preserves Independence at Home

By **Randy Hebert, MD**

The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) is a model of care focused on maintaining the ability of our most vulnerable citizens to live in the community. The model is founded on the belief that the well-being and dignity of seniors with chronic illness is maximized by preserving independence in their homes for as long as possible.

To qualify for PACE, a person must be age 55 or over and be certified by the state as needing nursing home level of care. The typical participant is 80 years old, has eight chronic medical conditions, and limitations in three activities of daily living. In addition, most are low income and enrolled in both Medicare and Medicaid (i.e. dual eligible). Nearly half have been diagnosed with dementia. Nonetheless, despite these high care needs, 90 percent of participants are able to live in the community.

PACE can successfully provide care because the care team focuses on a small number of people (e.g. a national average of approximately 110 participants per medical provider) while using the expertise of a multidisciplinary team to anticipate and address the continuum of participants physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and practical needs.

Services include:

Health and Wellness Center: PACE programs are often centralized in a center that houses a medical suite, pharmacy, day center, a dining area, showers for participants, and laundry facilities.

Medical Care: is coordinated by a primary care provider with expertise in the care of the frail elderly, with the support of nursing, physical and occupational therapy, home

health care, hospice, audiology, dentistry, optometry, podiatry, and specialist services as needed.

Social services: key members of the interdisciplinary team include social workers, transportation staff who drive participants to the center and medical appointments, day center staff, clergy, recreational therapists, and music therapists.

These services come together in a “typical day” for a participant who will be picked up at home by a PACE van and driven to the day center. When at the center, the participant will have meals and laundry provided as needed. They will spend some time socializing with other participants, may see physical and occupational therapy who will assess and develop a plan to maximize their ability to live safely in the community, and see the medical providers and other team members as needed and on a scheduled basis. When not in the center, participants will be called and/or seen at home by staff. This model of care is associated with fewer hospitalizations, readmissions, and nursing home placements at

lower costs than seen in comparable patient populations. Finally, the PACE model has certainly not been immune from the effects of COVID-19. Our day centers, therapy gyms, and dining areas are operating at much less than full capacity. As a result, all team members are doing more home visits and are newly using telehealth technology to care for participants. However, our mission is unchanged—to provide the full continuum of care necessary to allow participants to enjoy their lives to the fullest.



Dr. Randy Hebert is Medical Director at **Community Life.**

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Senior Guide

JEVS Care at Home: Preserving Independence with Exceptional Care

By Daniel Casciato



Maryann Ludwig

JEVS Care at Home takes immense pride in knowing the non-medical home care services and programs it provides to its clients are exceptional.

One of those programs is the Music and Memory program, an evidence-based music therapy program for people with dementia, depression, and related cognitive issues. JEVS Care at Home is one of only two home care agencies in Pennsylvania that offer this to their clients at no cost.

Maryann Ludwig, Chief Strategy Officer, for JEVS Care at Home, fondly recalls the impact this program had on one of its clients. The client had advanced stage Alzheimer's and her caregiver reached out to JEVS Care at Home for support.

The client was mostly nonverbal and could be combative at times. JEVS Care at Home's nurse met with the family to gather information about the client, what she enjoyed when she was younger and the type of music she preferred.

"Through our Music and Memory program, we do a pre-assessment of the person's behaviors, their level of cognition and then download a playlist onto an iPod," says Ludwig. "We train the caregiver on how to run the program, when to play the music and then document any changes in behavior"

A week after they introduced the program to this client, Ludwig received a call from the daughter of the client who said, "I cannot believe the difference the music has made in my mom's life. As soon as they put the music on her eyes lit up, she started tapping her feet, waving her hands and vocalized a little bit, like she was singing along with the music."

"They told me it has made such an unbelievable difference in her behaviors," says Ludwig. "She seemed happier, had less episodes of being argumentative, and was more aware of what was going on around her. The effects lasted for hours after the music was removed. It was emotional for them to see that change in their

mother's personality."

There are several other ways that JEVS Care at Home distinguishes itself from the competition, according to Ludwig. The first one is that it's a non-profit.

"Any surplus funding that we have goes back

into our caregivers and our programs. We have quite a few value-added programs that other organizations don't offer such as the Music and Memory program. Not only do we offer them, but we don't charge our clients for them."

In addition, JEVS Care at Home also has a dedicated nurse on staff.

"She actually runs the Music and Memory program," says Ludwig. "She does post-hospitalization visits with patients. She will also go out to someone's home—whether it's by request or if we are notified that there might be a potential hazard in the home—to assess the home, to find any hazards such as bad lighting, clutter or fall and trip hazards. She'll go out, provide an assessment, and then prepare a report of her findings and provide recommendations for safety improvements."

JEVS Care at Home also provides free specialized trainings for its caregivers. Some other agencies either don't offer them or they charge the caregivers a fee.

"We will certify them in first aid and CPR as well as dementia training," adds Ludwig.

With the current coronavirus pandemic, there have been some special challenges for home care services throughout the state. One of biggest issues has been access to personal protective equipment (PPE). But Ludwig says they have been fortunate in being able to secure PPE for their staff.

"Supplies are very limited," she says. "So, we are supplying all of our caregivers, clients, and their families with free PPE, including gloves, hand sanitizer, face masks, face shields, and gowns to put over their clothing."

To accommodate its clients during this time, JEVS Care at Home has implemented a telehealth platform so their nurse can conduct face-to-face visits, if necessary.

Continued on page 45



Preserving Independence with Exceptional Care

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Senior Guide

Hospice and Nursing Roles During a Pandemic

By Meghan Anderson, MSW, LCSW

So what is it like to provide end of life care during a pandemic? In the eyes of Gallagher Hospice nurses, it is caring as usual, and they are proud to be part of such meaningful work.

The aim of Gallagher Hospice is to provide exceptional care to our patients and their families. In addition to clinical expertise, we listen to people's needs. During the pandemic this has mattered even more. Families have been separated by quarantining, keeping safe physical distance, and by restrictions on visitors due to COVID-19 precautions. This increases fears, isolation, and anxiety which may already be heightened at the end of life. We look for ways to share joy while giving patients the care they need.

Hear from our nurses what they like about being a hospice nurse, and specifically why they like working for Gallagher Hospice.

What I like about being a hospice nurse...

...*"Is being there for families in the most precious and delicate time and aiding them when their loved one is dying."*

...*"Providing support and education to patients and families to help them with one of the most difficult journeys in life"*

...*"The honor and privilege it is to be welcomed into patient's lives at such a difficult time"*

...*"Changing people's preconception of dying and death and the word hospice"*



...*"Making the dying process easier to understand with education, caring and support. To make this time in life just a little easier."*

Why I like working at Gallagher Hospice....

...*"The support we have at all levels from the owners and physicians to my nursing peers and aides"*

...*"The awesome group of co-workers that I am honored to work with. Our main focus is centered around our patients and families"*

...*"The support from managers and co-workers, we are truly a team"*

...*"Gallagher Hospice is a family working together to provide the best possible care for our patients."*

...*"Working at Gallagher Hospice has been the most rewarding because of the support from everyone from the owner to the office staff to my fellow employees. It feels like a family more than a place of employment and I am proud to be a part of the Gallagher family"*

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Meghan Anderson is Executive Director of Gallagher Hospice. For more information, visit www.gallagherhhs.com.



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Senior Guide

Making Choices While Choices are Available

By Marilyn Walsh

The majority of people change gradually as they age. Over time, we experience changes in family dynamics, activities and interests, abilities and health. When changes occur slowly, their impact is minimal; we are given an opportunity to reinvent ourselves, and make choices as we pass landmarks in time. When we have the benefit of time, we adapt to our new lifestyle as inevitable changes happen in our lives.

Sometimes, however, change can happen more abruptly. In that instance, choices can become limited, and decisions may need to be made quickly. Healthy aging requires us to adapt to change—whether it happens abruptly or more gradually. The stronger and more resilient we are, the better able we are to maintain our physical and emotional health, whatever the age and circumstance. Being prepared in advance, knowing your options, and making choices for your future before they become necessary changes can make all the difference.

Baptist Homes Society is a leader in senior living and care that offers many older adults many choices in the services we provide. With two campuses—Baptist Homes and Providence Point—and services such as skilled nursing, memory support, personal care, affordable housing, and Life Plan Community options, we can help families understand their Medicare and Medicaid options, VA benefits, and options



for transitioning between senior living, assisted services, and end of life care.

The key to successful aging is being prepared for the care that may be needed. Having legal documents and financial preparations ready in advance can mean a world of difference. Explore your options, look at locations, compare quality of care, services provided and lifestyle. Senior living communities vary greatly. Providence Point and Baptist Homes both offer educational programs, high quality and nutritious menus, opportunities in wellness to support physical and mental health.

The important thing is to have a plan, and Baptist Homes Society can help you with that as well. You can be prepared with the knowledge and understanding of your available choices, the costs and preparations needed. Then, in a crisis, you will be able to move quickly if necessary.

> To start your planning, we recommend you call the Baptist Homes Society Community Liaison at slauer@baptisthomes.org or (412) 350-9654.

JEVS Care at Home

Continued from page 42

“She can also schedule telehealth visits with the patient’s primary care physician,” says Ludwig.

Another result of COVID has been staffing challenges. If someone tests positive for COVID, especially if it’s a caregiver, Ludwig says that as long as the client does not test positive, they will find another caregiver.

“We are constantly looking for

caregivers that can supplement a usual caregivers and this has been somewhat of a minor barrier for us, but we have not missed any shifts with clients because of it,” she says. “We’ve been able to have a full staff at all times.”

> For more information, visit jevsathome.org.

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Baptist Homes and Providence Point are sponsored by Baptist Homes Society, a faith-based not for profit organization serving seniors of all faiths since 1910.

Senior Guide

Rays of Sunshine Keeps Families and Residents Connected at Presbyterian Senior Care

Keeping everyone safe is paramount during these unsettling times. However, it's important to take a holistic approach with respect to ongoing efforts to ensure health and safety.

Early on, Presbyterian Senior-Care Network recognized the negative impact that state-imposed visitation restrictions would have on the social, emotional and physical health of our residents. That spawned much creative thinking and we appealed to the public to send cards, notes, or other non-perishable mailed items that could brighten a person's day through a campaign called "Rays of Sunshine." From school children and churches to businesses and family members, the "Rays of Sunshine" mail, which the national experts deemed not a surface that would transmit COVID, began to pour in. Not only did it brighten

the residents' days, but it also put smiles on the faces of our team members, who also were feeling the strain of these unpredictable times both at work and in their personal lives.

In fact, the team at our specialized dementia care community, Woodside Place of Oakmont, decided to take it to another level by involving the residents in creating their own Rays of Sunshine to promote the campaign to their families. First, residents helped to prepare a sunshine backdrop that was used as the background for a photo of themselves. Second, family members were sent these photos, which included the resident



holding a sign that said "I've Got Sunshine on a Cloudy Day #RaysOfSunshine." The positive feedback and new mail prompted our team to continue to innovate. For the second set of pictures, we encouraged residents to paint suns for the backdrop. The residents were excited by this concept. They were eager to get their pictures taken to show their family they are staying positive! We continued on with taking pictures of the residents with the Easter bunny, in front of a rainbow backdrop, with "stained glass" hearts, a Disney World backdrop, and a butterfly backdrop!

Our twist on Rays of Sunshine

was a fun way to involve the family and residents and keep them connected beyond other opportunities such as video chats and window visits. All of this helps to reinforce the overall health and well-being of the residents in addition to all of the standard precautionary measures such as screening, proper mask usage, good hygiene and surface sanitation, and social distancing.

 Follow us on Facebook for updates and other opportunities to be a **Ray of Sunshine** @PresbyterianSeniorCare or learn more at www.SrCare.org/RaysOfSunshine.



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Palliative Care and Hospice Care: What's the Difference?

By Dillon Stein, DO

PALLIATIVE CARE IS A GROWING SPECIALTY, AND WITH THAT GROWTH HAS COME PLENTY OF QUESTIONS (AND SOMETIMES CONFUSION) REGARDING WHAT IT IS AND WHO SHOULD BE ASKING FOR IT.

Palliative care is a team-based medical specialty focused on caring for patients with serious illness to help them to live life fully. It is often delivered by a team of health care professionals including physicians, nurses, social workers and chaplains that have expertise in managing both physical and emotional symptoms of illness. Palliative care can be delivered at any point of a serious illness with the goal to optimize comfort, provide support for patients and their families, and help patients make ongoing decisions about their healthcare. Palliative care is most frequently offered alongside curative and life-prolonging treatments.

Palliative care is often confused with hospice, but it is different. While both palliative care and hospice focus on comfort and support for individuals and families, the primary difference lies in the goals of the treatment plan. Because palliative care can be offered alongside active treatment plans, individuals often continue to receive treatments such as chemotherapy for cancer, cardiac interventions for heart failure, or rehabilitation for strokes. However, there does come a time when individuals prioritize com-



fort and quality of life above further aggressive means of medical care; and when that occurs often hospice can be the most helpful plan of care. Hospice is a specialized type of care for people whose life expectancy is 6 months or less, and at which point life-prolonging or curative treatments may no longer align with the person's healthcare goals. Hospice will continue to focus on goals such as comfort, the setting of care, and preparation for the end-of-life.

Palliative care specialists can help patients make decisions that align with their hopes and values by focusing on the individual. Understandably, decisions made today may be different than those decisions made for a person's future. For this reason, it is important to discuss topics that are often difficult to talk

about such as advance directives, and answer questions like "what if my health worsens?" or "what are my hopes for the future?" Palliative care can also assist with these types of important conversations.

When it comes down to an individual's care, it needs to be personalized. It should focus on not only the medical needs of the person, but also the supports necessary to meet goals and to promote quality of life along a journey with serious illness. While palliative care and hospice may be different, their focus is the same: the individual.



Dr. Dillon Stein is Co-Director, Division of Palliative Care at Butler Health System.

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www.lifepittsburgh.org 412-388-8050 TTY:711

LIFE Pittsburgh is an all inclusive program for individuals 55+ who want to stay in their home, but need supportive services. Our coordinated plan of care includes medical, social and daily living support. At LIFE Pittsburgh, older adults are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. LIFE Pittsburgh goes beyond simply "treating medical problems" to actually improving the quality of life for most of our Participants.



Your neighborhood is your home, and that's where you'll find us.

With locations throughout Pittsburgh's neighborhoods, offering a variety of floor plans, many pricing options, and all levels of care, you'll find just what you need.

At UPMC Senior Communities, you're part of a world-class health care system. Find the right community for you. Call 1-800-324-5523 or visit UPMCSeniorCommunities.com.

Independent Living:

Asbury Heights** - Mt. Lebanon
Avalon Springs Place** - Mercer
Beatty Pointe Village - Monroeville
Cumberland Woods Village** - Allison Park
Hampton Fields Village - Hampton
Lighthouse Pointe Village at Chapel Harbor** - Fox Chapel
Seneca Hills Village** - Penn Hills
Sherwood Oaks** - Cranberry Twp.
Strabane Trails Village - Washington
Vanadium Woods Village - Bridgeville

Personal Care:

Asbury Heights* - Mt. Lebanon
Canterbury Place - Lawrenceville
Jameson Place - New Castle
Sherwood Oaks* - Cranberry Twp.

Assisted Living:

Cumberland Crossing Manor - Allison Park
Seneca Manor - Penn Hills
Strabane Woods of Washington - Washington
Weatherwood Manor - Greensburg

Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation:

Asbury Heights* - Mt. Lebanon
Avalon Place* - New Castle
Avalon Springs Place* - Mercer
Canterbury Place* - Lawrenceville
Cranberry Place - Cranberry Twp.
Heritage Place - Squirrel Hill
Jameson Care Center - New Castle
Seneca Place - Penn Hills
Sherwood Oaks - Cranberry Twp.
Sugar Creek Station* - Franklin

*Memory Care Also Available

**Continuing Care Retirement Community and monthly rental options available 

UPMC | **SENIOR COMMUNITIES**

DIRECTORY

In order to choose a health professional who is right for you, you need information. The following guide is a good place to start.



ACCESS PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Independent Mobility
412-449-0013
Access Ramps, Stair Glides, Residential and Commercial Platform Lifts and Elevators

CANNABIS

Medical Marijuana Specialists
833-667-4665
www.getyouridcard.com

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Concordia of South Hills
412-294-1411
www.concordiacareers.org
LPN, RN, Certified Nursing Assistants and Nursing Assistant Tuition Reimbursement

JCVS Care at Home

412-742-4033 • jevsathome.org
See our ad on page 43.

CHILDREN, SPECIAL NEEDS, EARLY INTERVENTION

teli
412-922-8322 • www.telipa.org
Early Intervention for children and adolescents

WHS Children's Therapy Center

whsdocs.org

CUSTOM-MADE SHOES

Best-Made Shoes
412-621-9363
www.bestmadeshoes.com

DENTAL IMPLANTS

Valley Brook Dental
Joseph L. Gurecka, DMD
724-942-8982
valleybrookdental.com

DISABILITIES

Arc Human Services, Inc
www.aadvantageinc.org

Live-in Disability Solutions
412-704-5162
www.liveindisabilitysolutions.org

ESSENTIAL OILS

doTERRA Essential Oils
Brenda Confer • 724-448-2733
my.doterra.com/brendaconfer11

HEALTH, WELLNESS AND FITNESS CENTERS

The Community & Recreation Center at Boyce Mayview Park
412-221-1099
www.twpusc.org/crc/cre-home

HEALTHY EATING

East End Food Coop
412-242-3598 www.eastendfood.coop
Local, organic, fair trade, non-GMO
Gluten-free, vegetarian • Vitamins & Supplements • Smoothies and more!

HOSPITALS

Advanced Surgical Hospital
724-884-0710 • www.ashospital.net
A Physician Owned Hospital
Orthopedic Surgery Hospital
5x Winner Guardian of Excellence,
Patient Satisfaction (Press Ganey)
Awarded Outstanding Patient
Experience 6 Consecutive Years
(Healthgrades). Onsite MRI and PT/OT Services

HOSPITALS

St. Clair Hospital
412-942-4000 • www.stclair.org

WHS The Washington Hospital
724-225-7000 • www.whs.org

IMAGING

Health Enhancing Thermography
1-855-254-4328 (HEAT)
www.heat-images.com

St. Clair Hospital Diagnostic Imaging Services

www.stclair.org
Diagnostic imaging services at the I; St. Clair Outpatient Center – Bethel Park and the St. Clair Outpatient Center - Peters Township; and the MRI Center on Broughton Road.

INCONTINENCE

Tri-Medical
800-541-0734
www.trimedonline.com

MASTECTOMY & WIG BOUTIQUE

K & J's Complete Woman
Monroeville: (412) 646-4661
McMurray: (412) 835-5093
www.kjcompletewoman.com
Breast Forms, Bras, Wigs
A Woman's Specialty Boutique
Our selection and 20 years experience will help you achieve a look that's right for you.

MATTRESSES/LIFT CHAIRS

Sleep Pittsburgh
412-462-7858
www.SleepPittsburgh.com
Guaranteed lowest prices on mattresses, futons, bunk beds, life chairs and more

ORTHOPEDICS

Advanced Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation
1-800-828-CAST (2278)
www.advancedorthopaedics.net

St. Clair Hospital Center for Orthopedics

412-942-4000 • stclair.org

WHS Orthopedics and Sport Medicine

724-206-0610 • whsdocs.org

MEDICATION MANAGEMENT PHARMACY

Curtis Pharmacy
Washington 724-245-3520
Claysville 724-245-3520
www.curtispharmacy.com

NATURAL HEALTHCARE

Panther Functional Medicine & Chiropractic
Murrysville and Greensburg
724-387-1014
www.pittsburghhealthpro.com

NATURAL HEALTHCARE

Panther Functional Medicine & Chiropractic
Murrysville and Greensburg
724-387-1014
www.pittsburghhealthpro.com

PEDIATRICS

AHN Pediatrics
AHNpediatrics.org

WHS Washington Pediatrics
724-250-6001 www.whs.org

PHARMACY

Curtis Pharmacy
Washington 724-245-3520
Claysville 724-245-3520
www.curtispharmacy.com

Wilson's Pharmacy

412-621-64771
www.wilsonpharmacy.org

PHYSICIANS

St. Clair Medical Services
www.stclair.org

Washington Physician Hospital Organization Provider Network
whs.org (See pages 25-28)

REHABILITATION

Advanced Orthopaedics & Rehabilitation
1-800-828-CAST (2278)
www.advancedorthopaedics.net

Encompass Health

Harmarville - Sewickley
www.encompasshealth.com
877-937-7342

Promedica Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitative Care Heartland • ManorCare

412-443-3126
www.hcr-manorcare.com

REHABILITATION

UPMC Centers for Rehab Services
1-888-723-4CRS (4277)
UPMC.com/4CRS

WHS Physical Medicine and Sports Rehabilitation

724-229-2700 • whsdocs.org=

SMOKING CESSATION

Tobacco Free Allegheny
1-800-QUIT-NOW
tobaccofreeallegheny.org

SPEAKERS

Laura Crooks, RN
www.YouBloomWellness.com
Wellness coach and speaker

Home Care / Hospice Directory

Find help when you need it.

Refer to our **Home Care / Hospice Directory** if you or your loved one needs assistance with daily living, nursing, physical therapy, hospice, or palliative care.



Caden Care Homecare
412-798-5320
www.cadencare.com

Gallagher Home Care Services and Gallagher Home Health Services
412-279-7800
www.Gallagherhhs.com
Medical or non-medical services.

JEVS
412-742-4033 • www.jevsathome.org

LIFE Pittsburgh - Living Independence For The Elderly
All inclusive Health Plan providing medical care, adult day, and home care at no cost to qualified older adults who wish to remain independent in their own homes.
412-388-8050 • www.LIFEPittsburgh.org

Next Evolution Healthcare, Inc
724-550-4474
www.nextevolutionhealthcare.com

Presbyterian SeniorCare at Home
Oakmont: 412-828-6686
Washington: 724-884-1300
www.SrCareatHome.org

SeniorCare at Home, an affiliate of Presbyterian SeniorCare
412-828-6686 or 724-884-1300
www.SrCareHome.org

VITAS Healthcare
800-723-3233
VITAS.com

SENIOR RESOURCES

Use this guide as a handy reference for long term use!



ADULT & SENIOR CARE

Washington Health System Internal Medicine

724-229-7570 • www.whs.org

MEDICARE

Aetna Medicare Solutions

1-855-327-6686 (TTY: 711)
AetnaMedicare.com

Medicare Specialists of Pittsburgh

412-343-0344 • www.medipgh.com

Medicareful

412-910-1588
medicareful.com

UPMC Health Plan

UPMC for Life
844-692-9141
upmchealthplan.com/medicare

SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS

Baptist Homes

412-563-6550
Mt. Lebanon
www.baptisthomes.org

Brightwood Plaza Apartments

4940 Brightwood Rd, Bethel Park
412-831-9454
brightwoodplaza@verizon.net

Christian Housing

412-646-5193
www.christian-housing.org
See ad inside this issue for list
of apartments.

CMS Housing

800-545-1833
www.cmshousing.com
See ad inside this issue for list
of apartments.

Providence Point

412-489-3550
Scott Twp. • www.providencepoint.org

UPMC Senior Communities

1-800-324-5523
UPMCSeniorCommunities.com
From independent living and personal care, to
assisted living and skilled nursing, we make
every resident feel cared for and at ease. Call to
schedule complimentary lunch and tour.

SENIOR SERVICES

Community Life

1-866-419-1693 - www.commlife.org

LIFE Pittsburgh

412-388-8050

SENIOR SERVICES

Presbyterian SeniorCare

877-851-1440 • www.SrCare.org
Oakmont: 1-877-740-2179
Washington: 724-566-5132
Care Communities offering Personal Care,
Rehab and Skilled Nursing; Continuing Care
Retirement Communities; Home and
Community Based Services, and Supportive
and Affordable Housing.

SKILLED NURSING AND REHABILITATION

Promedica Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitative Care

Heartland • ManorCare
412-443-3126
www.hcr-manorcare.com
ManorCare Whitehall 412-884-3500

Guide to Good Health

www.guidetogoodhealth.com

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PEOPLES-GAS.COM/PROGRAMS



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