

## November is National Diabetes Month



According to the CDC, from 1980 to 2012 the number of adults with diagnosed diabetes in the United States nearly quadrupled, from 5.5 million to 21.3 million. In 2013, diabetes was the country's seventh leading cause of death. It is estimated that 9.3% of the US population have diagnosed or undiagnosed diabetes. About 8.1 million people with diabetes do not know they have the disease. There are few physical symptoms of type 2 diabetes and prediabetes. If you have prediabetes you can lower your chances of getting type 2 diabetes by talking with your doctor about diagnosis and mitigating its risk factors, such as lack of physical activity and diet.

Talk to your doctor to make sure you are being screened for diabetes and prediabetes. Untreated diabetes has very serious side effects including risk of heart disease, vision loss, and loss of extremities such as fingers and toes.

According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) the A1C and blood glucose tests are the best tools available to diagnose diabetes. The A1C test provides information about a person's of blood glucose, also called blood sugar, over the past three months. Because the A1C test does not require fasting, as the blood glucose test does, blood can be drawn any time of day. Experts are hoping it allows more people to get tested thus decreasing the number of people with undiagnosed diabetes and prediabetes.

If you are diagnosed with diabetes your best chance of living well is to engage in your healthcare plan. Communicate with your doctor, take medications as prescribed, exercise, and eat healthy.

The more you control diabetes with lifestyle changes such as exercising 30 minutes every day and eating healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables, the more you can minimize the need for medication. For example an oral medication might work to stabilize the effects of diabetes as opposed to an insulin shot.

### Five Exercise Tips for People with Diabetes

1. **Make a list of fun activities.** You have lots of options. Think about something you've wanted to try or something you've enjoyed in the past. Sports, dancing, yoga, walking, and swimming are a few ideas. Anything that raises your heart rate counts.
2. **Get your doctor's okay.** Let your doctor know what you want to do. They can make sure you are ready for it. They'll also check to see if you need to change your diet, insulin, or diabetes medicines. Your doctor can also let you know if the time of day you exercise matters.
3. **Carry carbs.** Always keep a small carbohydrate snack, like fruit or fruit drink, on hand in case your blood sugar gets low.
4. **Ease into it.** If you are not active, start with 10 minutes of exercise at a time. Gradually work up to 30 minutes a day.
5. **Strength train at least twice a week.** Strength training can improve blood sugar control. You can lift weights or work with resistance bands. Or you can do pushups, lunges, and squats, which use your own body weight.



Scott Trenti

## Executive Director Corner

### Collaboration is Vital for Well-Being

Since we are talking about diabetes in this fall newsletter, I wanted to take the opportunity to talk about the importance of the medical community and community based organizations like SeniorCare working collaboratively with each other. By the medical community, I mean hospitals, physician offices, nursing home rehabs, behavioral health providers, and other medical service providers. Often times, SeniorCare and medical providers are working with the same person, one in the medical setting and one in the community. It's so important to the person's overall well being that there is communication between both providers. When the right hand knows what the left hand is doing and there is coordination in the care provided, it lends itself to the likelihood of a more positive outcome for the person.

SeniorCare highly values the relationships we have with the nursing home / rehabs in our nine communities, Addison Gilbert and Beverly Hospital (and others), MD offices, mental health providers, and others. We strive to bridge the gap between the medical setting and home. We are both in an advantageous position to help each other to help the person.

There is much current emphasis at the federal, state, and local levels on the medical community and community based organizations working more closely together. One of the programs that SeniorCare has for people who are hospitalized, in rehabs, or other facilities is our care transitions program. Our care transitions program is an empowerment model to not only assist people to return to the community, but also to help them to stay out of facilities including emergency rooms. We utilize trained coaches who will see people in the facilities, work with their medical providers, caregivers, and others involved in their lives to get them back home. Our Coaches will follow-up and conduct home-visits aimed at assisting the person to take control of their medical conditions to the extent possible and to work with their medical providers.

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# Seniorcare Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsmen are volunteers that help to ensure quality of life for people living in nursing homes. They do this by visiting an assigned nursing home two to three times a month. They walk, talk, and observe during their visit. LTC Ombudsmen often act as facilitators between the staff and residents. They act as another set of eyes and ears in the nursing home, with a focus on ensuring quality of life for residents.

Quality of life includes quality of relationships, kind of food offered, spiritual care, types and frequency of activities offered, the opportunity to care for oneself, and care being given.

LTC Ombudsmen receive three full days of training and are on probation for a year after. They then become certified. Each volunteer is assigned to one home so they can get to know the residents.

LTC Ombudsmen only go to licensed Department of Public Health (DPH) nursing and rest homes. Each floor has a bulletin board with notice of who the LTC Ombudsman is for that particular home.

Volunteer LTC Ombudsmen are there for the residents, developing trust with each individual and acting at the behest of the resident. Family members may have issues and bring them up to the LTC Ombudsman, but ultimately the relationship is with the resident, and the resident is consulted before any intervention by a LTC Ombudsman. SeniorCare Inc. is very grateful to all of its LTC Ombudsmen.

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## Staff Highlight: Meals on Wheels Driver



Mel Hanauer has been a driver for Meals on Wheels the last 12 years. He enjoys connecting with people and learning about their lives.

“I like meeting different people and finding out about their histories,” says Hanauer. When he first starting delivering Meals on Wheels he was told it was not like pizza delivery, that having a social connection with the person he delivered to was just as important as the meal being delivered.

“Sometimes people just want a meal,” says Hanauer. There have been many times when he would deliver the meal and the person didn’t seem to want to engage, but over time they open up.

Hanauer used to be a building supervisor who took care of two housing facilities. He realized during those years that everyone has their own fascinating lives. Socialization is a key component of Meals on Wheels. Hanauer has a lot of different interests and a natural curiosity about people, which makes it easy to open up to him.

Hanauer has been married 40 years to artist Lynne Cannastra and plays softball for the EMass Senior Softball League. He even played on the EMass Senior Softball League’s all-star team, winning the all-star tournament against other states.

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## SeniorCare Volunteers



Pictured are the KnitWits of Wahtera Road. These dedicated knitters are part of the SeniorCare's Project Warm Friends. This group of over 30 volunteers provide hand-made items to individuals and organizations in need. The recipients of these beautiful handmade items include people in homeless shelters, families and individuals in need, hospital patients, veterans, teens, young children, and newborns. This program keeps growing every year, and SeniorCare is grateful to be an integral part of such a great effort.

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Valentine's Day Breakfast Fundraiser**

**Friday, February 12, 2016**  
7:00—9:30 AM

The Gloucester House Restaurant  
63 Rogers Street ~ Seven Seas Wharf  
Gloucester, Massachusetts

Breakfast Buffet, \$10.00 per person  
Contact Paula Curley for more information

978-281-1750 ext. 560

[paula.curley@seniorcareinc.org](mailto:paula.curley@seniorcareinc.org)

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