

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### FREE AFib Info Event

Tuesday, April 25  
6:30-8 p.m.  
Wall Auditorium  
LVH-Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street  
Register: 610-402-CARE

### LVHN 5K Run/Walk

Health & Wellness Center  
at Hazleton  
Saturday, April 29  
Details: LVHN.org/calendar

### LVH-Schuylkill Spring Gala

Saturday, April 29 • 6 p.m.  
Seasons Restaurant  
Mt. Valley Golf Course  
Information:  
570-621-4242 or  
mary.bardell@lvhn.org

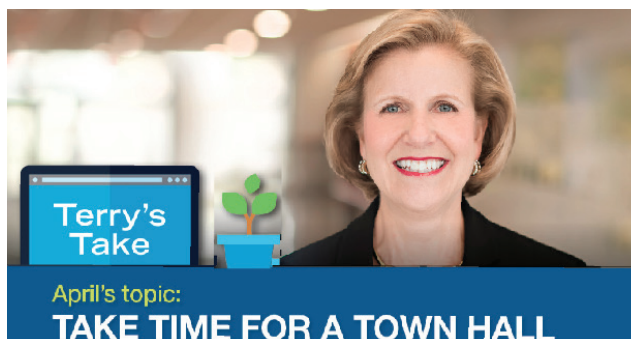
### LVH-Schuylkill

#### Skin Cancer Screening

Saturday, May 6 • 9-11 a.m.  
Outpatient Surgery Center  
200 Schuylkill Medical Plaza

### LVH-Schuylkill President's Town Hall Meetings

May 2017  
Watch for flyers and notices.



**Have you heard the saying, “Straight from the horse’s mouth?”** It means you’re getting news directly from the source. And in racing circles, you can’t get a better tip than the one you’ll hear from the jockey – or from the horse itself. LVHN leadership wants to give you the advantage of hearing about the issues and priorities facing the health network straight from the horse’s mouth too. That’s why our Communication Cascade includes live events such as Dr. Nester’s recent State of the Health Network Address and our new Town Hall meetings with our presidents.

Within the next few weeks, presidents at each of our campuses and LVPG will invite colleagues to attend a Town Hall meeting where you can learn about the global issues facing the health network, and the local ones impacting your corner of the world. Town Halls will occur twice a year after Dr. Nester’s State of the Health Network Address. They’re designed to keep you up to date and provide an opportunity for conversation so you can voice your ideas and feedback. They’re also a great place to get your questions answered and to snuff out rumors circulating around us. Good communication is more important than ever as we grow. Town Halls will allow us to deliver important news in a consistent way, so we can keep all colleagues informed, engaged and connected to our mission.

Town Halls aren’t the only way to learn what’s happening in the health network. Depending on your role, there are lots of ways to stay in

touch by attending leadership or department huddles, rounding, or reading this blog and other news through LVHN Weekly and on the intranet. The important thing is to keep your finger on the pulse of our health network, so you’ll understand why we’re pivoting on priorities or where we need to work harder to achieve our goals.

Staying connected gives you a window into the reasons for decisions we make associated with quality, operations or business results. It will also give you the insight to act as an ambassador for LVHN so you can share information about our services or provide referrals to your circle of influence.

**Making time for Town Halls** We’re all busier than ever. Making time to attend a Town Hall may seem like an impossible task. That’s why we’ll hold a minimum of two Town Halls at each location, at different times of the day. Managers will also share the content of Town Halls as part of the Communication Cascade at department or unit meetings. And you can always designate a colleague to take notes and share it with your group.

To be successful, we all need to be armed with the facts, understand why decisions are made and be part of the solution. At the end of the day, that’s what our patients need to get the best care possible. And it’s what we all need to be at our best.



Thanks to members of our IS Team for donating Easter Baskets for the 6th Street Shelter Program in Allentown. Baskets made up of personal care and activity items are collected as part of an annual Easter Egg Hunt.

From left: Amy Conley, Luke Rissinger, Palma Ruginis and Greg Hafer. Not pictured but participating are Kim Cromyak and Susan Mindler.



*Terry Ann Capuano*

**ABOUT ME:** My name is Terry Capuano, RN and I am the executive vice president and chief operating officer at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN). I have worked at LVHN for 30 years, serving as COO for the last five years. I greatly enjoy meeting colleagues, sharing stories and enhancing relationships throughout the network. [Learn More](#)

## WORKING TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE



*This column, written by LVHN President and Chief Executive Officer Brian Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, for [The Morning Call's LV Outlook](#), discusses ways LVHN is providing smarter health care for the people of our community.*

For years, when people talked about improvements in health care, they discussed the latest technologies, treatments and medications. As health care evolves, however, there is a call to action for health networks to do something more. To move health care forward we must pioneer smarter ways to care for our communities.

Delivering smarter care is more than the right thing to do. It's something we must do to ensure people can attain optimal health now and in the future. Smarter care also will help us overcome one of the greatest challenges health care providers face — caring for an aging population.

The number of people in the Lehigh Valley age 65 and older will increase 65 percent by 2030. They are our parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and they deserve the best care when they're sick. Unfortunately, our seniors are typically the sickest patients. They require the costliest care and are often facing financial challenges of their own.

As government programs such as Medicare and Medicaid tighten their belts, we must be resourceful in the way we care for our growing number of seniors and other vulnerable populations, including the poor and homeless. To deliver the care they and all members of our community expect and deserve, we must be inventive and creative.

Smarter.

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) is among the health care organizations nationwide that are providing smarter care by focusing on the Triple Aim – a framework that helps create better health and better care at a better cost. Achieving the Triple Aim isn't easy, but it is possible. It's based on the belief that quality care costs less. If you receive the care you need to stay well, you'll be healthier and avoid costly hospital stays, emergency room visits and tests.

At LVHN, smarter care also involves listening to our community and providing the health care services people need. Here are examples of how we're addressing our community's needs at LVHN and delivering smarter care for you.

► **Providing convenient access:** You're busy and don't have time to run from doctor to doctor, test to test. Our health centers provide the outpatient services you need under one roof. LVHN has 16 health centers with two more opening this summer in Northampton County, an area where there is great demand for outpatient care. Northampton County residents already account for more than 300,000 patient encounters in Lehigh Valley Physician Group practices each year.

► **Helping people who need care the most:**

Five percent of the population accounts for 40-50 percent of health care spending. At LVHN, we're identifying the people in that 5 percent, reaching out and giving them the care they need to avoid a serious illness, which is more costly to treat. To find them, we invested in advanced analytical and clinical technology that, for example, helps find patients who had a test or medication prescribed but didn't follow through. By encouraging those patients to get that test or fill that prescription, we can diagnose conditions at an earlier, more treatable stage and give patients the medication they need to manage their condition.

► **Deploying Community Care Teams (CCTs):**

Made up of a registered nurse care manager, pharmacist, behavioral health specialist and social worker, CCTs help patients with complex health issues manage their chronic diseases. In 2016, our CCTs cared for more than 17,000 unique patients. They also helped patients and caregivers gain food, shelter, transportation, insurance, and free or discounted medications. Their care resulted in a 36 percent reduction in ER visits and a 34 percent reduction in hospital admissions among these patients compared to their previous experience.

► **Partnering with community organizations:**

Caring for an entire community takes a team, and the road to wellness involves more than medical care. That's why LVHN partners with numerous community organizations. By working together to give people the services they need – whether it's a ride to the pharmacy or a regular meal – we're making a collective impact on our community's health.

For decades, countless industries have been exploring ways to work smarter, not harder. It's time the health care industry did the same. Smarter health care is what you and your family expect and deserve. My colleagues at LVHN are honored to provide it to you.



## Free AFib Info Event



### Innovative Treatments for Managing Atrial Fibrillation (AFib)

**Tuesday, April 25 - 6:30 p.m.**  
**LVH-Schuylkill E. Norwegian St. Wall Auditorium**

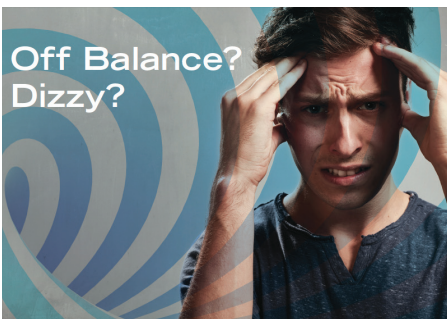
#### Learn about:

- Signs and symptoms
- When to see a cardiologist
- Treatments that improve symptoms and prevent stroke
- New, minimally invasive procedures for people with irregular heartbeat

#### Speakers:

Cardiologists Tariq Hafiz, MD, and Talha Nazir, MD

**Call 610-402-CARE to register.**



## Off Balance? Dizzy?

### FREE Community Lecture Wednesday, April 19, 6 p.m.

LVHN Rehabilitation  
Center-Schuylkill

300 Schuylkill Medical Plaza, Pottsville

#### Presenter:

Ron Ferrara, MS/PT

**For more information, call  
570-621-9500**

No registration is necessary.

## ADOPTING NEW HEART CARE TECHNOLOGY: FIRST, DO NO HARM



*This column was written by Ronald Freudenberger, MD, the medical director of LVHN's Chrin Heart and Vascular Center and Chief of the Division of Cardiology. The column, which discusses risks associated with the use of new dissolving heart stents, appeared in [The Morning Call](#) and [Lehigh Valley Live](#).*

As the U.S. population lives longer, the need for more specialized heart care technology continues to grow. It's an exciting and challenging time to be a cardiologist, as the number and kinds of tools in our medical toolbox keep growing.

But patients should be good consumers, and beware of the hype of the "first," "only," "latest and greatest" claims by medical manufacturers and eager providers. Not all tools are suitable for all patients, and some even may cause harm.

It's a lesson we were reminded of two weeks ago when the Food and Drug Administration sent a "warning" to heart specialists cautioning us about risks in the use of new dissolving heart stents that were approved just months ago.

The heart team at Lehigh Valley Health Network has been following the development of this new technology for more than five years. We and other experts in the field found the science behind these devices quite appealing, but had concerns about some of the data related to the benefits and possible harm of this new stent. We delayed adding the device to our treatment arsenal until we learned more and were satisfied with the science behind this device.

This FDA advisory warned us that, while this non-metal scaffold – which holds open heart arteries after fatty plaque has been pushed aside – has been approved by the agency, there are questions about the long-term risks of its use by physicians when not closely adhering to specified guidelines. The FDA specifically stated that skirting these recommendations could increase the risks of heart attacks or death in patients, rather than improving their cardiac health.

At LVHN, we take a cautious approach to early adoption of new technology just for the sake of bragging rights. We follow and are often involved in the research to bring new technology and drugs to patients. We zero in on the questions: Will this new device or medicine improve symptoms or outcomes significantly over the current standard of care? Will it burden our patients with an excessive financial cost?

You see, it often takes a long time between clinical testing and FDA approval of a new technology, and government or insurance approval to pay for it. The payers, rightfully so, want to be sure that the device or medication is as effective as has been hoped or promised and therefore worth the financial burden on patients, taxpayers, employers and insurers. And we, the medical providers, need to not only provide a beneficial treatment to our patients, but also one that is cost-effective. Not all goals are always aligned and that can create problems for patients.

What consumers can do is become informed participants in their care, question their doctors about the risks, benefits and cost of treatments, and, if necessary, seek second opinions. Patients and their loved ones who educate themselves stand a better chance of getting the right care, when they need it and at a cost they can afford.

That's a strategy our heart team takes when reviewing the virtues and shortfalls of adopting new technology. And by doing this, we hopefully protect our patients from treatments that don't deliver on all that's promised or advertised, or that might even cause harm.