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LVHN Weekly-Pocono

Lehigh Valley Health Network

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Colleagues, Volunteers and Community Veterans Honored

LVH–Pocono President Elizabeth Wise along with U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps veteran and Vice President LVPG Operations Lamont Louis welcomed colleagues and the community on Nov. 10 to the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center to recognize local veterans in honor of Veterans Day. Veterans were greeted with patriotic pins, made by Mary Gonzalez, human resources administrative assistant. Reverend Ferdinand Feola, IS Administrator LVH–P and licensed Assembly of God Minister, led the group with a meaningful prayer. Glen Lippincott, director of small group operations for the Veterans Assisted Living Out Reach (VALOR) Clinic Foundation in Brodheadsville and U.S. Army veteran and Purple Heart Recipient, spoke of the harsh conditions in Vietnam and the brothers he lost. Elizabeth and Lamont presented a generous donation to VALOR, which provides assistance to our local community veterans through a variety of services from housing to healthcare.

Mementos or photos were on display as Lamont explained the significance and meaning behind the shadow box, dog tags and other military items. LVH–Pocono special events volunteer and U.S. Army veteran Bill Howells read the poem In Flanders Field, as the names of colleagues who served in the military were displayed behind him. The event concluded with the singing of God Bless America.

All enjoyed lunch and refreshments as veterans shared details about how they enlisted and where they were stationed during their service.
On the eve of Veterans Day, LVHN celebrated the opening of the newly completed Dick and Peggy Fleming Military and Veteran Resource/Information Center on the first floor of the School of Nursing building on the campus of LVH–17th Street.

MAVRIC, as it is known, will provide U.S. veterans, guard and reservists, active military, and their families with personal and professional support, especially to those who are challenged in readjusting to civilian life due to illness, injuries or other difficult circumstances. LVHN employs more than 350 veterans, some of whom attended the ceremony.

“At LVHN, we are committed to meeting the unique needs of our veterans, and the MAVRIC takes that commitment to another level,” says Brian Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, President and Chief Executive Officer of LVHN.

The facility measures 11,000 square feet and comprises a dozen rooms, including:

- A resource room equipped with computer terminals and printed materials
- Offices where trained and certified personnel interview, screen, counsel and assist veterans in applying for health insurance, and connect them to medical and legal resources
- Men’s and women’s supply closets stocked with clothing and personal items
- A pantry with a variety of food items and emergency, 72-hour meal kits for veterans dealing with immediate hunger needs
- Community meeting rooms and a coffee lounge for learning, relaxing and socializing

“This new resource will link the continuum of services and care for our veterans and military, including the VA, private providers and LVHN, to offer a seamless experience,” says Debbie Salas-Lopez, MD, LVHN’s Chief Transformation Officer.

MAVRIC was built with funding from the Fleming Foundation, an organization founded by the late Richard (Dick) and Peggy Fleming, longtime LVHN supporters. An oil painting of the Flemings was unveiled during the dedication and will hang in the center. Dick Fleming, a retired executive of Air Products and longtime trustee of LVHN, passed away in 2015. He was a World War II veteran. His wife, Peggy, an ardent supporter of LVHN nurses and founder of the Friends of Nursing awards program at LVHN, was a constant companion and source of support until she was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease in 2002 and died in 2008. The Fleming Foundation has pledged a $2 million gift to fund staffing and capital items for MAVRIC.

“Dick and Peggy Fleming were great friends of LVHN and pillars of our community,” Nester says. “Their legacy will be their dedication, generosity and vision for making ours a healthier place to live.”
Hazleton Renovation and Expansion Project Timelines

In March, colleagues learned about plans to reimagine the future of health care in the Hazleton region. Those plans included renovations throughout LVH–Hazleton to upgrade and modernize patient rooms, corridors, common areas and nursing stations, as well as a robust expansion plan for the ED. They also included a new “health care campus of the future” in Hazle Township that will create a walkable medical mall and serve as a hub for outpatient care.

LVH–HAZLETON MODERNIZATION (renovations begin spring 2018)

Renovations to the hospital campus are designed to enhance patient privacy and comfort, improve wayfinding and create a safe, welcoming environment for patients and their families. Here are some of the changes you can expect to find there:

▶ Lobby – Expansion and renovations to the lobby will create a welcoming environment that increases comfort and decreases stress for families and patients. We’re also adding large windows to bring in natural light and garden views, and creating positive distractions to capture the attention and imagination of patients and their families while they wait.

▶ Room upgrades – Renovations will include new flooring, lighting, wall finishes, and infrastructure for a future Epic implementation. Double rooms will be transformed into singles to give patients the privacy they desire, while maintaining the ability to flex back to double occupancy during times of high demand.

▶ Common areas – Nursing stations, corridors and other common areas will be upgraded to include new casework, task chairs and other amenities.

▶ Cohesive design features – An overall design will unify the look and feel of the hospital using nature-inspired colors and materials to create a calming, tranquil and comforting environment. The addition of accent colors will improve wayfinding.

LVH–HAZLETON ED EXPANSION (construction begins summer 2018)

ED expansion will enable us to care for more patients and their families and improve the flow of patient care. Best design practices will be used throughout the campus to influence how patients and families feel from the moment they arrive on campus through discharge.

▶ External improvements – Changes will include a separate entrance to the ED, modifications to the existing drive-up entrance, a new patient drop-off area for the ED and hospital, and alterations to the main parking area.

▶ ED expansion – Plans include a larger check-in area, more ambulance bays (3 total), large private treatment rooms with sliding glass doors for privacy, a secure behavioral health zone, and the creation of a double trauma bay. Plans also include two centralized nursing hubs that will improve patient access, visibility and flow, as well as other features.

▶ Centralized nursing stations – These areas will be designed to increase professional privacy and security, maximize visibility and accessibility to patients, and reduce walking distances and noise levels.

CENTER CITY EXPANSION

▶ Expansion of LVPG’s services in center city will include an increase in physical space and the addition of primary care and OB-GYN services to our already existing ExpressCARE and pediatric services.

HEALTH CARE CAMPUS OF THE FUTURE (construction begins summer 2018)

LVHN is on a journey to reimagine the health care of the future by creating a new hub for outpatient care in Hazle Township. The strategy is a direct response to health care trends that show decreasing rates of inpatient care and an increased need for outpatient services. Programming is still being finalized.

Plans include expansion and renovation of the current Health & Wellness Center and the LVPG–Alliance Drive location (formerly known as the Dessen Center), as well as new construction. When complete, the campus will provide comprehensive services from primary to specialty care, wellness facilities, a pharmacy and other features. These plans are in addition to our ongoing commitment to recruit physicians who can provide the “health care of the future.”

“Our campus of the future will preserve the natural landscape and park-like features that make it such a special place to work and receive care,” says John Fletcher, President of LVH–Hazleton. “Construction and renovation is set to begin this summer. When complete, this campus will usher in new growth opportunities for us and improve access and experience for patients in our community.”
The Avenue of Access

As I plug in the microphone this month, I am filled with a bit of nostalgia. Recent seasonal shifts in weather have elicited some youthful autumn memories. Taking the time to remember ultimately brings you back to the foundation of who you are.

Growing up in Brooklyn, autumn was a pretty magical time. Remember folks, this is before gentrification, property price skyrockets, Starbucks and trendy hipsters. Whether you were walking against whipping winds on the Brooklyn Bridge, visiting Prospect Park or grabbing a slice of pie at the corner pizza shop, everywhere you turned there was an avenue of access to just about anything you want or need.

Brooklyn had (and still does have) an extensive public transit system. Some of my earliest memories are hearing the subway tram rumbling through the borough. You knew by experience and daily observation that a person could jump on one of the “avenue” trains and get to where they needed to be, when they needed to be there. There was always a way to get there, regardless of where the “there” was, day or night. To put it simply, there was “easy access.”

Fast forward a few years later (ok, more than a few), and another glorious fall season is upon us. The theme of access comes back into sight. This time, we’re focusing on what access means to our patients, who are the center of what we do. I believe it was Alphonse Karr who was quoted as saying, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” We are back to basics. Enhancing our ability to provide easy access for our patients reduces potential outmigration and connects us better with the community we serve.

Remember, the avenue of access starts with us. LVPG is dedicated to providing easy patient access, making it convenient and simple – today, tomorrow or the next day. Now if you don’t mind, I need to go find a few friends for a couple rounds of “Stoop Ball.” You can leave Brooklyn, but it never really leaves you.

About me: My name is Michael Rossi, MD, MBA, and I am the Chief Physician Executive for LVHN and President of LVPG. I came to LVPG 15 years ago as Chief of Cardiology for LVHN and Medical Director of our Regional Heart Center. I truly enjoyed caring for cardiac patients and getting to know them and their families. I am proud to be a part of such a great organization. My passion is patient care. I view my current role as taking that passion for caring for an individual patient, to caring for our entire community. It is an honor to work with such an outstanding network of dedicated colleagues.
Imagine… You Can Schedule Your Mammogram in Minutes

Life is busy. But we have made it so simple to schedule a screening mammogram, there’s no excuse not to make that date. That message is at the heart of a new campaign focused on women, ages 40 to 75, who have not had a screening mammogram in the last 365 days.

This campaign not only is the right thing to do, it is also one of LVHN’s Better Health goals for fiscal year 2018: Increase the number of women who receive a screening mammogram.

HOW WE WILL SHARE THE MAMMOGRAM MESSAGE?

We will use targeted strategies to reach women in the right age group who need a screening mammogram. Some of the ways we will connect with women in that age 40+ group include:

- Direct mail – A postcard invites women to schedule their screening mammogram.
- Social media – We’ll have a little fun with social media messages to draw people to the campaign’s web page.
- Campaign web page – This specially designed page will encourage women to schedule a mammogram, plus offer a guide with information about mammography and our care team, and “Call” and “Click” instructions designed to make scheduling a mammogram easy.
- Guide – The guide will offer insights about why you should have a mammogram, where you can have it done and explain differences between 2-D and 3-D mammography.
- Search – As people search for mammograms, ads will appear and direct people to the mammography campaign web page.
- MyLVHN letter – Practices will be provided with a letter they can personalize for patients who fit the demographic and then send the letter securely through MyLVHN to the patient.

COLLEAGUE AWARENESS

If you are a female colleague who happens to be in the target age bracket for this campaign, please remember to set up an appointment for your own screening mammogram. And consider this: You can be an advocate for your friends and family members to do the same. Mammograms save lives.

Note to LVHN men: While it is unlikely you will see any of these strategies in action – we are focusing on certain women for this campaign and those online elements will only appear to them – we still encourage you to ask the women in your life about scheduling an annual screening mammogram starting at age 40.

If we can increase the number of women who are screened for mammograms, we hope to reduce the incidence of advanced breast cancer in the communities we serve, including right here in our LVHN family.

Get Your Free Turkey Nov. 14

It’s time for Turkey Toss 2017. What’s that? For the past seven years, LVHN colleagues have received a free turkey as a reward for the exceptional work we do to heal, comfort and care for our community. Happening today, LVH–Pocono colleagues have received a certificate for their free turkey in the mail. Accompanying the certificate is a card from LVHN President and Chief Executive Officer Brian Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, who says he his “thankful for the dedication, talent and teamwork of LVHN’s more than 17,000 colleagues for the excellent work they do every day for the people of our community.”

The Turkey Toss event is set for Tuesday, Nov. 14, from 2–5 p.m. at 300 Lincoln Ave., East Stroudsburg. You also may use your LVHN ID badge to obtain your turkey. Leaders will be there to distribute the turkeys, thank you for all you do, and wish you and your loved ones a happy holiday season.

POSITIVE PATIENT TESTIMONIAL

Daughter of a recent Patient wrote this letter:

My family is so very grateful and appreciative of you and your team and the work you do to help people during probably one of the worst times of their lives. My Dad came to you after a stroke and couldn’t speak. It was absolutely horrible and traumatic for us and yet you were all so calm, caring and professional and didn’t let our crazy emotions get in the way of his care. Not only did you take such wonderful care of my Dad, but also of me and my mom and treated us with the utmost courtesy and care. You truly looked us in the eye, listened to us and made us feel visible and relevant in the midst of the chaos.
Out and About in the Community

THANK YOU, LVH–POCONO COLLEAGUES!

LVH–Pocono colleagues participated in the WBRE Eyewitness News Highmark Health and Wellness Fair on Nov. 1 at the Stroud Mall. Our dedicated colleagues offered health and nutrition information such as smoking cessation, scheduled mammograms, provided free flu vaccines, demonstrated CPR techniques, educated attendees on child safety, provided balance testing by Riverside Rehab and more health services. LVHN Populytics colleagues were also on hand to offer bone density, glucose and cholesterol screenings as well as blood pressure readings.

WBRE health reporter Mark Hiller interviewed two of our colleagues, Seanna Thompson, MD, LVPG-Pocono Medical Director on the importance of the flu vaccine and mammograms and Musa Tangoren, MD, Anesthesiologist, about the upcoming Healthy Lifestyle Challenge. Attendees were treated to raffle prizes, hand sanitizers and other healthy and fun giveaways.

- Big Brothers Big Sisters Telethon
- Understanding & Preventing Suicide educational seminar for all EMS, First Responders and Emergency Department. Held in partnership with LVH–Pocono, funded by The WAWA Foundation and presented by Dr. Anthony Drago, Professor of Psychology at East Stroudsburg University.
- 2 Blood drives with the American Red Cross of the Poconos
- Stroudsburg Fire Department Spaghetti Dinner
Ask the Doctor: Substances and pregnancy

An LVH–Pocono provider is featured regularly in the Pocono Record’s Ask the Doctor column. This week’s featured provider is Lucinda Mirra, DO.

Q. As an expecting mother, I feel like the information regarding substances and pregnancy are so controversial. Is it actually okay to have alcohol like some research is now suggesting? What about other substances?

A. In short, no, it’s not worth the risk. While there may be research suggesting that alcohol in small amounts could be okay, there is no research that defines what is considered a safe amount of alcohol. By consuming any amount of alcohol during your pregnancy you are putting yourself and your child at an unnecessary risk.

Everyone metabolizes alcohol at different rates, so what may have no effect on one pregnant woman and her child could negatively affect another. This makes it difficult to recommend that alcohol consumption, even in small amounts, will not create complications.

It’s important to note that what you consume will pass to your baby through the placenta. The baby will receive the alcohol in the same concentration as in the mother. In addition, the fetus cannot clear alcohol from its system as effectively as mom, resulting in the alcohol remaining longer in their system. This opens the window for a multitude of adverse effects.

Research shows again and again that the consumption of alcohol causes adverse effects on pregnancy, which include physical changes such as smaller eye openings, low-set ears and a flattened area under the nose. In addition, behavioral and developmental problems can occur, such as lower IQ, poor coordination and poor hand-eye coordination. Since alcohol consumption is not necessary in pregnancy, and a safe amount to consume varies between people, it is best to not consume any alcohol during pregnancy to avoid complications in the baby.

To answer the second part of your question, other substances, depending on what they are, can be just as harmful – if not more so. Even some over-the-counter medications are proven to affect pregnancy.

A common over-the-counter medication for pain is Motrin. Studies suggest that taking Motrin in the first three months of pregnancy can increase the risk of miscarriage. Also, later in pregnancy, it can decrease the amniotic fluid around the baby. This can cause multiple complications, some of which are compression of the umbilical cord, stunted growth and physical malformations. It can also cause high blood pressure in the baby’s lungs at birth. This occurs by causing early closure in a pathway that the baby uses to bypass its lungs to breathe while in the amniotic fluid.

Another hot topic is marijuana use during pregnancy. As we are seeing more widespread legalization of marijuana for recreational use, this may imply to some that marijuana cannot affect their baby. During the pregnancy, the use of marijuana causes an increase in substances that decrease oxygen to the baby. This can lead to impairment in the growth of the fetus. Early use in the pregnancy has also been found to increase the risk of miscarriage. Later in life, it has been found that babies who were exposed to marijuana during pregnancy have increased learning and behavioral issues. Thus, it is not as benign as some would think and can affect their child for a lifetime.

It’s important to avoid any potentially harmful substances during pregnancy that are not necessary, as you never know how issues may present themselves. Again, I remind expectant mothers that none of it is worth the potential risks and they should be in contact with their physician with any concerns or questions.

Mirra is Board certified in obstetrics and gynecology by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. She practices at Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono.

Where is it at LVH–Pocono?

The answer will be given in the next LVHN Weekly–Pocono.

Happy guessing!

Last week’s answer
26th Annual Holiday Tree Lighting

At
Lehigh Valley Hospital - Pocono

Dale & Frances Hughes Cancer Center

Wednesday
November 29th, 2017
Starts at 5:30pm

Hosted by

Lehigh Valley Health Network

Rotary Club of the Smithfields

Shoppes of Pocono
Friday, Dec. 1, 2017
9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Tranquility Room at the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center
Just in time for the holiday season!
Payroll deduction available.