Lighting Up the Holiday Season

This past week, the 26th Annual Holiday Tree Lighting was held at the Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center. The ongoing partnership between LVHN–Pocono Foundation and the Rotary Club of the Smithfields was able to achieve an all-time record in raising and awarding $12,000 to 10 not-for-profit organizations serving children in Monroe County. This highly anticipated event hosts more than 200 people from the community to an evening of holiday cheer provided by the JM Hill Elementary chorus, Stroudsburg Middle School chorus, East Stroudsburg High School–North chorus and the Pleasant Valley brass band. Funds for the grant awards are raised in the year prior by selling bulbs in memory or in honor of a loved one, as well as sponsorships in the program booklet. Purchased bulbs are displayed on the holiday tree in the hallway by Radiology. If you would still like to purchase a bulb for the holidays, please use one of the forms located in the main lobby or in the rack near the tree. You may also contact the Pocono Foundation office at 570-476-3530.

ATTEND A TOWN HALL MEETING

Get updates from LVH–Pocono President Elizabeth Wise. You’ll also have an opportunity to ask questions. All colleagues are encouraged to attend these one-hour meetings.

Thursday, Dec. 7
7:30 a.m., Mountain Healthcare Center

Friday, Dec. 8
7:30 a.m., Stroud/Brodhead Rooms
2 p.m., Stroud/Brodhead Rooms

Monday, Dec. 11
7:30 a.m., West End Healthcare Center
2 p.m., Chestnut Street

Tuesday, Dec. 12
7:30 a.m., 447 Office Plaza/500 Building

Wednesday, Dec. 13
2 p.m., Professional Center

Monday, Dec. 18
7:30 a.m., Bartonsville Healthcare Center
The pharmacy is staffed to cover every hour of the day and night with a dedicated team. The after-hours staff are (l-r) Pharmacists Kevin Hanson, Betsy Ostrosky and Ken Czar, and Pharmacy Technician Eric Jones.

A Dedication to Accuracy

At every moment, our pharmacists and pharmacy technicians are calculating complex dosages, working in tandem with one another with extraordinary rhythm and precision to deliver exceptional service to patients throughout the hospital and the Hughes Cancer Center. “My staff is remarkably intelligent, using complex mathematics on a daily basis, mixing doses by the milligram per meter squared, or on a milligram per kilogram basis,” says Pharmacy Director Bill Bedwick. The team consists of approximately 15 pharmacists and 15 pharmacy techs with decades of experience, reliability and accuracy that has earned them the confidence of physicians and nurses.

The cancer center offers two sterile rooms dedicated for mixing chemotherapy drugs and another for intravenous hydration solutions. Two service lines of clinical specialty are anticoagulation service and antimicrobial stewardship. “We prepare every dose in the hospital,” says Bedwick. “When surveyors come to review our work and site they are in awe, often awarding best practice designation.”

Often using the pneumatic tube system, which propels containers through shoots across the hospital and the Hughes Cancer Center, the pharmacists send medicine to their destinations in record time. Throughout the day and overnight, the pharmacy team prepares, verifies and delivers nearly 1,200 carefully measured dosages in less than 10 minutes for the most critical patients of strokes, extensive open-heart surgeries, or the smallest of our patients in the NICU. “We have to be ready at a moment’s notice when every minute between life and death counts,” Bedwick says.
POSITIVE PATIENT TESTIMONIAL

“I fell down and suffered a fracture during a family vacation. Later that day I was brought to your hospital and had surgery. Now, 10 weeks after the incident, I feel much better and my rehabilitation is progressing as expected. It is my pleasure to thank the medical team for the remarkable treatment I received at your facility. The team was very professional, patient and understanding to me as a patient and to my worried family. I may have had bad luck falling and breaking my arm that day, but for sure I had good luck being brought to your medical center and being treated by your professional team. Thank you very much.”

LVHN Acquires Weller Health Education Center

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) and Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital have acquired Weller Health Education Center, a Lehigh Valley organization with a rich history of providing health care information to students and their families. Weller Center has been providing preventive, science-based programs to children in grades K-12 for more than 32 years.

LVHN’s acquisition follows a process initiated by the center in 2015 to locate a potential partner with the depth and breadth of resources to sustain, expand and improve upon Weller’s intellectual property. Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital was the unanimous choice of the Weller Center’s Board of Directors, Foundation and staff. The new program will be known as Weller Health Education at Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital.

The new acquisition will enhance Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital’s existing school-based health services and outreach programs by providing more resources and accessibility to additional schools, parents and educators. Health education will be available for all grade levels (elementary, middle and high school) including parent/teacher programs.

“Partnering with the Weller Center will allow the Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital to expand its ability to help communities make the children of this region as healthy as they can be,” says Nathan Hagstrom, MD, Chair, Department of Pediatrics at LVHN. “It’s a perfect fit with our current pediatric population health and primary care programs and services.”

Weller takes pride in staying ahead of emerging health trends to create new programs that target the most pertinent health risks facing kids today including depression, prescription drug and heroin use, healthy relationships and building resilience and stress management skills. All programs are presented by professional health educators who are experts at connecting with young people and translating even the most complex information into easy to understand concepts. Faculty and parent programs are also available.

The Weller Center’s programs are rigorously evaluated and outcomes-based. Students take part in pre- and post-program tests measuring knowledge gain and positive shifts in attitude using an Audience Response System. Following program delivery, participating schools and funders receive impact reports detailing program outcomes.

The Weller Center partners with hundreds of schools each year to change the behaviors of young people and help them develop life-long healthy habits which will prevent chronic disease, reduce violence and improve the overall health, safety and well-being of children and families in our communities.

Subject matter is centered on prevention in the areas of drug and alcohol abuse, mental health (including stress, depression and suicide), healthy relationships character education, growth and development, nutrition and fitness, and personal hygiene. Each school will receive a risk assessment to complete prior to receiving recommendations from Weller/Lehigh Valley Children’s Hospital for programming options.
Special Nursing Edition of Ask the Doctor: Caring for the Elderly

An LVH–Pocono clinician is featured regularly in the Pocono Record’s Ask the Doctor column. In this week’s special edition, the featured caregiver is Carol Hunt, MSN, Nurse Educator for LVH–Pocono. Hunt serves on the hospital’s NICHE leadership team, educating the team of geriatric resource nurses and other nursing colleagues to care for elderly patients.

Q. My elderly father recently fell at home and was taken to your hospital. How can I be sure he receives the best care? I heard about the NICHE certification when he was a patient at your hospital. What is that, and how can I help him not fall again?

A. I understand it can be difficult for the family when an elderly loved one is hospitalized, especially when you’re concerned whether or not they are receiving the best care possible for their needs. First, let me assure you LVH–Pocono has a dedicated staff of nurses and physicians specializing in geriatric care, educated to notice the slightest of changes in older adult patients.

What this means for our patients over the age of 65 is reflected in the type of specialty care our nurses give. Our providers have been improving their expertise and applying resources and tools offered through the Nurses Improving Care for Health System Elders (NICHE) program to provide specialized older adult care. Our team of Geriatric Resource Nurses now observes and notes subtle changes such as cardiac, pulmonary and neurological changes and post-operative changes that may occur. Even with medications, it is important to understand that these patients metabolize their medications much differently than a 30-year-old patient, for example.

One area our nurses are focusing on in particular is fall prevention. The education and tools nurses provide, especially for patients like your father, benefit greatly in their recovery care.

To reduce falls in the hospital, we encourage patients to call their nurse for assistance in getting out of bed for several reasons. For instance, some medications that have been administered may cause some effects to stability and balance. Getting up slowly and taking time to move around is important not just during recovery, but at all times to prevent falls and further injuries.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, every second of the day an older adult falls, making falls the number one cause of injuries for this population. It’s critical to be seen by a health care provider after a fall because there is a possibility of a head injury or broken bones, which may cause additional stress on the body and increase future incidents.

Below are simple ways to prevent further falls from occurring:

- Secure or remove throw rugs to prevent trips and slips.
- Move items that are used daily, like plates and cups, within reach to eliminate the need to climb on stools or chairs.
- Be sure to wear sturdy and corrective footwear to help prevent falls inside and outside on wet and icy surfaces.
- Wear slippers or socks that have non-skid, rubber bottoms, similar to what we provide all our patients in the hospital.
- Talk with your health care provider about light exercises that can be done at home to increase strength and balance.
- Supportive bars around bathrooms and railings on both sides of staircases offer more stability.
- Add more lights in hallways and dimly lit areas.
- Electrical cords and clutter can contribute to falls. Ensure hallways and all areas are clear of these potential dangers.
- Review all medications with your health care provider to be sure of any side effects that may cause dizziness, drowsiness or confusion.
- If you wear glasses, now is a great time to follow up and ensure that the prescription is accurate.

Often times, older adults won’t tell you about a fall or seek follow-up care. As a friend or family member, you can do your part to help those around you, no matter their age, by simply sharing the tips above. Education about fall prevention is beneficial for everyone in our community.
LVHN Names New Chief Financial Officer

This message is from Brian A. Nester, DO, MBA, FACOEP, LVHN President and Chief Executive Officer

Several months ago I shared with you the news that Ed O’Dea, MBA, our Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer (CFO), has decided to retire at the end of the year. While it is hard to tell by his very busy work schedule, Ed is very much on track to complete his LVHN career on December 31. We will sincerely miss him and all he has done for our network.

Today, however, I am very pleased to announce that we have found someone with an extensive and diverse background and experience in health care finance and financial strategy. Thomas Marchozzi, MBA, CPA, will become Lehigh Valley Health Network’s new Executive Vice President and CFO, effective January 1.

Tom brings to us the best of not-for-profit and for-profit leadership experience. He is joining us from Universal Health Services, Inc., a for-profit integrated health care delivery system which operates 28 acute care hospitals. He served the last three years as Senior Vice President and CFO for the Acute Care division out of Universal’s King of Prussia, Pa., headquarters, where he was responsible for hospitals across the U.S. in high-growth, competitive markets.

Prior to joining UHS, Tom served as the Executive Vice President and CFO at Hartford HealthCare in Hartford, Conn., where he led an impressive turnaround in that organization’s financial performance. He also assisted in cultivating Hartford Health’s relationship with Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Alliance.

During his more than 30 years of professional experience, Tom has held senior-level finance positions at MedStar Health in Columbia, Md., Jefferson Health System in Radnor, Pa., and Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. Tom earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Drexel University, and a master’s degree in business administration with a concentration in finance from Villanova University. He has taken courses in a doctoral program with a concentration on higher education administration at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a certified healthcare financial professional and a certified public accountant. He is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

Tom and his wife, Shelly, have two sons, Tom (34) and Jeff (31). He grew up in, and still has the majority of his extended family in, Conshohocken, Pa. Tom and Shelly enjoy spending time in the Poconos as well as summers at the beach in Ocean City, NJ. Please join me in welcoming Tom to LVHN.

Where is it at LVH–Pocono?

The answer will be given in the next issue of LVHN Weekly–Pocono. Happy guessing!

Last week's answer
Out & About in the Community

- YMCA 5K Run
- Street 2 Feet Free Flu Vaccine Event
- Salvation Army Free Flu Vaccine Event
- Head Start/The Mountain Center Free Flu Vaccine Event