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Grant Will Create Residency Program at LVH-Schuylkill

BY [BRIAN DOWNS](#) · JULY 18, 2019

Today, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded LVH-Schuylkill a \$749,859 Rural Residency Planning and Development Program (RRPD) grant. This is part of a larger \$20 million distribution across 21 states. Each RRPD recipient receives up to \$750,000 over a three-year period to develop new rural residency programs while achieving accreditation through the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.



“Supporting the training of health care providers in rural areas through grants like these is a key way to help expand rural access to care, and is part of an overall effort to support rural health care in sustainable, innovative and flexible ways,” says HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “

The RRPD program, administered by HRSA’s Federal Office of Rural Health Policy (FORHP) and Bureau of Health Workforce (BHW), is part of a multi-year initiative by HRSA to expand the physician workforce in rural areas by developing new, sustainable residency programs in family medicine, internal medicine and psychiatry. The recipients of the awards include rural hospitals, community health centers, health centers operated by the Indian Health Service, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, and schools of medicine.

“Today is an important day for rural health care in Pennsylvania,” says Lawrence Riddles, MD, Regional Chief Medical Officer at LVH-Schuylkill and LVH-Hazleton. “We have an aging physician population in Pennsylvania and especially in Schuylkill County. Statistics show that many medical residents choose to practice close to where they did their residency. So this is a great opportunity to introduce this area to family medicine residents and help create our next generation of care providers for our community.”

“The health challenges in rural America are clear: rural communities face a greater risk of poor health outcomes than their urban counterparts,” says HRSA

Administrator George Sigounas, MS, PhD. “Programs like the Rural Residency Planning and Development grants take aim at one of the most persistent disparities: access to high quality health care providers. HRSA is committed to increasing the number of providers serving rural communities and improving health in rural America.”

Rural residency programs often face challenges in securing sustainable financing and faculty support. The RRPD grant award funding will help recipients address these challenges.

“Training residents in rural areas is one strategy shown to successfully encourage graduates to practice in rural settings,” says HRSA Associate Administrator for FORHP Tom Morris. “The rural residency grants set up these 27 future residency programs for success.”

“We know that clinicians who train in rural settings are more likely to continue to practice there after they complete their residencies,” says HRSA Associate Administrator for BHW Dr. Luis Padilla. “Rural communities are more likely to have a shortage of health professionals. The rural residency grants are one more way HRSA is helping to expand the health workforce and increase access to quality healthcare for these communities.”



American Heart Association Recognizes LVHN Hospitals for Stroke Care

BY [BRIAN DOWNS](#) · JULY 18, 2019

LVH-Cedar Crest and LVH-Muhlenberg both have received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get With The Guidelines® – Stroke Gold Award and the Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus Quality Achievement Award, its highest designation. The award recognizes the hospitals' commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

LVH-Hazleton received the Get With The Guidelines® – Stroke Gold Plus award and was recognized on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll. LVH-Pocono was recognized with the Get With The Guidelines® – Stroke Gold award and on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll.

LVHN hospitals earned the award by meeting specific quality achievement measures for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients at a set level for a designated period. These measures include evaluation of the proper use of medications and other stroke treatments aligned with the most up-to-date, evidence-based guidelines with the goal of speeding recovery and reducing death and disability for stroke patients. Before discharge, patients should also receive education on managing their health, get a follow-up visit scheduled, as well as other care transition interventions.

“We are pleased to recognize these Lehigh Valley Health Network hospitals for their commitment to stroke care,” said Lee H. Schwamm, MD, national chairperson of the Quality Oversight Committee and Executive Vice Chair of Neurology, Director of Acute Stroke Services, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, Massachusetts. “Research has shown that hospitals adhering to clinical measures through the Get With The Guidelines quality improvement initiative can often see fewer readmissions and lower



mortality rates.”

In October 2012, LVH–Cedar Crest became the first stroke center in Pennsylvania, and one of the first in the United States, to earn advanced certification as a Comprehensive Stroke Center by the Joint Commission. This designation means LVH-Cedar Crest offers the highest standard of care for stroke; it recognizes the significant resources in staff and advanced training needed to treat patients with complex strokes in the hospital’s Neuroscience Intensive Care Unit (NSICU).

In 2006, LVH–Muhlenberg was designated a Primary Stroke Center. A Primary Stroke Center is a hospital that has developed special procedures to rapidly diagnose and treat a stroke.

LVHN treats more than 2000 stroke patients annually using a Stroke Alert program. The care starts with rapid EMS triage and pre-notification en route to the hospital allowing early testing and prompt evaluation of stroke symptoms and treatment by a team of emergency and neurology specialists.

In January of 2019, LVHN and Cetronia Ambulance Corps, headquartered in Allentown, announced the joint operation of a new mobile stroke unit, at the time the first in Pennsylvania. The mobile stroke unit allows for evaluation and treatment sooner, potentially preventing damage to the brain while the patient is transported to a stroke-certified facility like LVH–Cedar Crest’s Comprehensive Stroke Center.

“We as pioneers of advanced stroke care in the region are happy to continue to provide the highest quality of evidenced based care to our community,” says Yevgeny Isayev, MD, Vascular Neurologist and Director of the Comprehensive Stroke Center at LVHN.

According to the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, stroke is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the United States. On average, someone in the U.S. suffers a stroke every 40 seconds and nearly 795,000 people suffer a new or recurrent stroke each year.

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Welcome New Colleagues in Hazleton – June 2019

BY [JANE DANISH](#) · JULY 17, 2019

We are happy to welcome these new colleagues to our LVHN family at our health network facilities in Hazleton.



(Front row, l-r) Trista Nester, nursing; Noelle Pula, Gunderson Rehab Unit physical therapy; Malena Gallucci, nursing; Jayda Byrne, nursing, (back row, l-r) Bryonna Aldubayan, occupational therapy; Deryl Wolfgang, plant operations; Patrick Welch, LVHN EMS



(L-r) Shaun Ambrose, LVHN EMS; Jamie Fetterolf; LVPG administration; Henry Lark, nursing; Justin Socha, LVHN EMS

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Have Ideas to Improve Patient Experience? Take the President's Innovation Challenge

BY [KIRSTIN REED](#) · JULY 17, 2019

What inspires your most creative ideas?

Do they come to you on your drive to work? While you're walking your dog? However you come up with your best ideas, the presidents from Lehigh Valley Health Network hospitals and Lehigh Valley Physician Group challenge you to harness your most creative energy to [come up with innovative ideas to improve our patient experience](#).

You may have thoughts about how to improve the patient experience at your site, but think about how your idea may be applied across the health network.

Be inspired by what's happening across the country:

- Nurses in Iowa used [essential oils](#) to calm patients in the emergency room.
- A children's hospital in Boston designed [child-friendly green space](#).
- A nurse in Miami [created a clothing closet](#) for underserved patients in the emergency department.
- Staff at a New York City hospital implemented a [device to monitor noise levels](#).

What ideas can we try at LVHN to give our patients the best experience possible?

[Submit your innovative idea today](#).



Pain Management Toolkit Available on the Intranet

BY [RICK MARTUSCELLI](#) · JULY 15, 2019

Managing pain is an important part of our partnership with patients. Now there's an informative resource on the [Pain Management intranet site](#) to help clinicians safely, effectively and respectfully develop comprehensive pain management treatment plans for patients.

The [LVHN Controlled Substances Guide and Pain Management Toolkit](#) contains a broad spectrum of pain management topics including:

- [ED pain management](#)
- [Monitoring patient therapy](#)
- [Monitoring guidelines](#)
- [Opioids in pregnancy](#)
- [Patient selection and risk stratification](#)
- [Recommendations for tapering or discontinuing opioids](#)
- [Risk categories and monitoring groups](#)
- [Weaning strategy and discontinuation](#)

The Pain Management Collaborative provides another opportunity for clinicians to learn about patient management strategies and discuss treatment options for challenging cases. A multidisciplinary team – comprising pain specialists, addiction specialists and others – participates in the hour-long event held quarterly via WebEx. It is available to colleagues network-wide. The next session is July 30, 7-8 a.m.

[Click here](#) to learn how you can participate in this and future sessions.



Penn State Schuylkill and LVH–Schuylkill Present Conference on Opioid Crisis

BY [MIKE PECKMAN](#) · JULY 17, 2019

Penn State Schuylkill and LVH–Schuylkill are partnering to present the 2019 Wellness Conference. The conference, titled Opioids: The Crisis Next Door, will occur on Saturday, Sept. 21, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., in Penn State Schuylkill's John E. Morgan Auditorium. The conference will address the facts about the disease of addiction, the signs of opioid abuse, and the resources available to those addicted and their loved ones.

Glenn Sterner, PhD, will present as the event's keynote speaker. Sterner is an assistant professor of Criminal Justice at Penn State Abington and is an expert on the opioid epidemic. He sits on Pennsylvania's Opioid Overdose Task Force and is also the founder of the Share Your Opioid Story initiative, found at shareyouropioidstory.com. Sterner's main research agenda focuses on the application of social network analysis in understanding illicit, illegal, and covert networks.

Other knowledgeable expert presenters include:

- Schuylkill County District Attorney Michael A. O'Pake
- Lehigh Valley Hospital Emergency Medicine Medical Toxicologist Gillian A. Beauchamp, MD
- LVH–Schuylkill Counseling Center Director William Rowan
- Schuylkill County Drug and Alcohol Program Prevention Services Coordinator Diane Rowland

Topical discussions will include current drug trends, counseling and resources, preventative tools, recognizing the hidden signs of drug abuse, team approaches to recovery and wellness, panel discussions, and testimonials.

Other physicians, first responders, law enforcement and community members with relevant experience



also will participate in the event. Grassroots organizations, providers and resources will also be available along Penn State Schuylkill's mall walk during and after the panels and presentations. Participants are encouraged to speak with these professionals who may have relevant personal and professional advice. Relevant grassroots organizations are invited to attend and set up an informational table at the event.

The conference is free and open to the public. For planning purposes, registration is required for all attendees and grassroots organizations. Learn more and register at sl.psu.edu/opioidconference.

For questions, contact 570-385-6102 or raw44@psu.edu or 570-621-4242.

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We Salute You: LVHN Nurse Leaders Recognized for Supporting Colleague's Military Service

BY [KIRSTIN REED](#) · JULY 19, 2019



Have you ever had a boss so wonderful you wanted to nominate him or her for an award? One LVHN colleague found a big way to say “thank you” to her supportive supervisors.

Sarah Schaeffer, RN, is a nurse on 4K at LVH–Cedar Crest, and what she does with her free time is something we can all admire. Schaeffer is an active member of the Army National Guard and serves as a second lieutenant with the 328th Brigade Support Battalion, located in Lebanon, Pa. Her military service requires that she participate in training exercises that can take her away from the unit and her patients.

LVHN is committed to hiring veterans and celebrates their unique professional skills, leadership styles and cultural values that enrich our health network. Kimberly Bartman, RN, and Christine Joyce, RN, take this commitment to heart. As Schaeffer’s supervisors on 4K, Bartman and Joyce support Schaeffer and her service to our country.

As a way of thanking them, Schaeffer nominated her supervisors for an award recognizing their efforts in

supporting the mission of the National Guard. Bartman and Joyce were presented with a certificate from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) recognizing their unwavering support of Schaeffer's military commitment.

"The award serves as a recognition of Kim and Christine, and as a testament to Schaeffer's colleagues on 4K who help support her and the daily operations on the unit while she is away for training," says Alexander Alex, Director, Veteran Health Program.

LVHN vows to support our veterans and help them live the best life possible. [Our Veteran Health Program](#) addresses the potentially unique circumstances of men and women who have performed military service. The staff at our Dick and Peggy Fleming Military and Veterans Resource/Information Center (MAVRIC) are professionals knowledgeable in veteran care and versed in veterans' health care needs.

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Experience Different ‘Flavors’ of Learning on July 24

BY [MARCIANN ALBERT](#) · JULY 16, 2019

The dog days of summer are upon us, but relief is on the horizon. July is National Ice Cream Month and much like ice cream, the Physician Billing (PB) and Patient Services Representative (PSR) User Group will be serving up “cool” practice topics.

If you are a PSR, cross-trained medical assistant, office coordinator or revenue cycle support staff, this meeting is for you. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 24, from 2-4 p.m.

Agenda topics this month include:

- PSR MVP winner
- POS Collection monthly updates
- Guarantor Account Maintenance
- FAP
- And much more

The meeting will be held live in the LVH–Cedar Crest auditorium and simulcast to locations across the health network. Here are details.

- LVH–Cedar Crest (live location)
- LVH–Muhlenberg ECC room A
- LVH–Hazleton annex board room
- LVH–Pocono Serenity conference room, second floor, Hughes Cancer Center
- LVH–Schuylkill E. Norwegian Street, conference room C, second floor
- LVH–Palmer Health Center, conference room B

To register, click below for:

- [Self-registration directions](#)
- [Directions for managers to register one or more colleagues](#)

Please note that all sites will register as “attending” at LVH–Cedar Crest. This meeting will also be recorded.

Laura Kurchock, PSR at LVPG-Hazleton Neurology was June’s MVP – PSR Award recipient. Kurchock was nominated by her Practice Manager, Stu Eskin, for her

cross-functional talents and extraordinary ability to provide multifunctional tasks within the practice.

This past April, the practice lost their site lead and primary clinical person. For several weeks, with the help of just two medical assistants, Kurchock served as acting site lead, centralizing resources and mitigating practice challenges.

Her superb handling of daily tasks, workflows and clinical duties navigated the practice through a tough time and as a result, propelled them to become stronger.

Eskin's cannot thank Kurchock. "Her pride, professionalism and experience has held this department together like glue," he says.

Learn more about [LVPG-Hazleton Neurology](#) on [LVHN.org](#) and congratulate Kurchock for her exemplary effort.

Questions regarding the PB and PSR User Groups can be directed to Lynne_A.Reph@lvhn.org.

