

Joan Farrell

From: LVHN Insider <no-reply@insider.lvhn.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 12, 2021 4:32 PM
To: Joan Farrell
Subject: LVHN Weekly: Your Bonus and Merit Increase, New Vaccination Policy, and More

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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LVHN WEEKLY | YOUR WRAP-UP OF THE WEEK'S NEWS FROM LVHN



Here's Your 2021 Bonus and Merit Increase for Creating Better Days Ahead

With teamwork, compassion, integrity and a drive for excellence, we created "Better Days Ahead."

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COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination Will Be Required for All Employees

LVHN, St. Luke's and Good Shepherd jointly announce new vaccine policies.

[Read more →](#)



Reminder: Time is Running Out to Complete COVID-19 TLC

This course is an OSHA requirement for all colleagues.

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It will help us enhance operational efficiencies and better serve our community.

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Learn what prompted these cyberattacks and what the state is doing to stop it.

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Vote for LVHN in Morning Call Readers' Choice Awards

Start casting your vote for LVHN today.

[Read more →](#)



Vote LVHN Services 'Best' in Pocono Record Contest

Learn how to cast your vote and be #LVHNProud.

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Vote for Coordinated Health in Scranton Times Readers' Choice Awards

Vote today for Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics.

[Read more →](#)



Develop and Strengthen Your Skills

Learn about the professional development opportunities available to you as you set your FY22 goals.

[Read more →](#)



40 Years of Outstanding Service for LVHN-MedEvac

After more than 76,000 missions, the dedicated team looks ahead to the next 40 years.

[Read more →](#)



Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders Ticket Deal

Act fast. Tickets are available for games on Aug. 13 and 14.

[Read more →](#)



LVHN Rehabilitation Services Helps 6-Year-Old Boy Find His Voice

At age 3, David Counterman could barely speak. Today, he speaks in almost complete sentences.



[Read more →](#)

‘Poppies of Remembrance, Lanterns of Hope’

LVH–Cedar Crest will be lit in red to honor those touched by COVID-19.



[Read more →](#)



Lehigh Valley Health Network 1200 Cedar Crest Blvd, Allentown, PA 18105

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Here's Your 2021 Bonus and Merit Increase for Creating Better Days Ahead

With teamwork, compassion, integrity and a drive for excellence, we created “Better Days Ahead.”

LVHN Insider

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

This message is from Brian A. Nester, DO, MBA, President and Chief Executive Officer, and Lynn Turner, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer.

Think back to the start of the pandemic. We were faced with the most daunting challenges in the history of our health network. These challenges seemed insurmountable. Yet, we did it, together. We vaccinated our community, furthered our mission to “heal, comfort and care,” opened a new hospital and numerous facilities, and continued the construction of two more new hospitals. With teamwork, compassion, integrity and a drive for excellence, we created “Better Days Ahead.”

LVHN's success in navigating the COVID-19 pandemic is thanks in large part to our extraordinary colleagues throughout the health network. You are dedicated, hardworking and extraordinary, and you deserve to be recognized and rewarded for all you do **every day**. You juggle personal and professional challenges, and you continue to prioritize your patients and support your colleagues.

On behalf of LVHN's Board of Trustees and executive leaders, thank you for all you have done during these trying times. We remain committed to giving you the LVHN experience you deserve by rewarding and investing in your future. Last year the health network contributed to your financial well-being with merit increases, Wellness Time off, a Shared Success Plan (SSP) award,

pension plan contributions and no increase in medical premiums. These contributions totaled approximately \$4,300 for a colleague earning a salary of \$55,000.

This year, we will continue to support our colleagues' financial well-being by directing close to \$80 million in financial awards to our colleagues.

- **Annual merit increase.** Managers have a 3.00% pool of money they will use to award merit-based increases to eligible colleagues based on the colleague's individual performance. Merit increases will be effective Oct. 3 and will appear in the Oct. 22 paycheck.
- **SSP bonus.** Eligible full-time non-union colleagues will receive a \$1,000 SSP bonus. Eligible part-time non-union colleagues will receive \$500. The SSP bonus will appear in the Oct. 22 paycheck.
- **Market adjustments.** Nearly 6,900 colleagues will receive a salary increase in addition to their merit increase, based on competitive market data. Many of these market adjustments will position LVHN as a market leader in the region for pay and benefits. Colleagues who received a market adjustment have already been notified by their supervisor. These market adjustments are in addition to market adjustments recently implemented for technical partners, medical assistants, mental health techs and professional student nurses.
- **Leadership Incentive Program (LIP).** Bonuses for participating colleagues will be based on individual and network goals. LVHN's annual network goals are currently tracking at target. Final approval of the network goals will occur in September by the Board of Trustees.
- **Employer contributions to the health network's pension plans.** LVHN will continue to make contributions to all LVHN pension plans during fiscal year 2022 (FY22).

While union colleagues are not eligible for this merit increase and SSP bonus – because current collective bargaining agreements address changes in compensation for union colleagues – it is important to emphasize that union colleagues equally contribute to the success of LVHN. Our entire senior leadership team recognizes and appreciates all you do to care for our communities.

More rewards focused on your well-being and professional development

The pandemic affected many colleagues' physical, emotional and financial well-being. That is why LVHN is providing additional support for you in FY22 by providing:

- **No increase in employee health plan contributions.** Your health care premiums in 2022 will remain the same if you participate in our medical and dental insurance plans. This is the third consecutive year your health premiums will remain unchanged.
- **A leader focused on your well-being.** We're adding a Director of Compassion and Caring for Colleagues to our team. This colleague will be dedicated to supporting your emotional health needs and connecting colleagues with many of the resources already available throughout LVHN.

- An enhanced [tuition reimbursement program](#). Effective Jan. 1, 2022, the new program will be consistent for all LVHN locations, giving you access to academic advising at no cost and generous reimbursement rates.

Union colleagues are not eligible for these rewards due to current collective bargaining agreements.

Thank you physicians and APCs

The exceptional work of our physicians and advanced practice clinicians (APCs) in caring for our community is always appreciated and deserving of recognition and rewards. FY21 incentive payments are planned to be distributed in late October, similar to prior years. Amounts will be consistent with applicable LVPG compensation programs for physicians and APCs. Additional investments in LVPG provider compensation also are planned for FY22, including value-based incentives, APC compensation adjustments and other focused increases. More information regarding these updates will be shared in the upcoming weeks.

Let's continue to create better days ahead

Thank you for all you do. Your commitment, expertise and partnership are creating better days ahead for our health network, our colleagues and our community. For that, we all can be #LVHNProud. Best wishes for a continuing wonderful summer with family and friends.



COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination Will Be Required for All Employees

LVHN, St. Luke's and Good Shepherd jointly announce new vaccine policies.

**This message is from Brian A. Nester, DO, MBA,
President and Chief Executive Officer, Lehigh Valley Health Network.**

Everyone has been craving a return to normalcy, and the decline in COVID-19 activity during May and June was a step in the right direction. The significant reduction in cases and hospitalizations in our region was a direct result of the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. More recently, however, vaccination rates have declined. As a result, new variants have emerged, and we are again seeing an increase in new cases, hospitalizations and deaths.

And so, our fight against COVID-19 continues. As health care professionals – and as the region’s largest employer and health care leader – it is our obligation to do the right thing. We are committed to the safety of every patient in our care and every colleague on our team. Each of us must role model the behaviors necessary to save lives and end the pandemic. Getting vaccinated is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself, your colleagues, our patients and our communities. Unvaccinated colleagues who interact with others are putting those individuals at risk. It is a risk we simply cannot afford to take. That is why LVHN, St. Luke’s University Health Network and Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network are jointly announcing that we are introducing new COVID-19 and influenza vaccine policies that will help us save lives and meet our responsibility to our communities and one another.

All colleagues, including remote workers, will be required to be vaccinated after the first COVID-19 vaccine receives full FDA approval. By early September, the Pfizer vaccine is expected to receive full approval from the FDA. This means the FDA will have reviewed more than six months of data that supports the fact that the vaccine is safe and effective. This is the same rigorous assessment and approval process required for all other vaccines currently approved for use in the United States, many of which are required for employment at LVHN and other health care organizations.

As we wait for FDA approval, we must remain diligent. Should a significant rise in COVID-19 cases occur locally or if there is an unexpected delay in FDA approval, we will consider the need to implement this policy sooner to help protect our patients, colleagues and communities.

Details about LVHN’s COVID-19 vaccine policy

- Read LVHN’s [COVID-19 vaccine policy](#). You also can access the COVID-19 vaccine policy on the Colleague Resource Center (CRC). Visit the CRC by clicking the “LVHN – CRC Lawson” icon on your SSO toolbar. If you are prompted to log in to the CRC, enter your SUI@lvh.com and your LVHN password.
- When full FDA approval is granted, unvaccinated colleagues will have three weeks to receive their first dose and eight weeks to complete the vaccine series.
- Colleagues and independent medical staff may request a medical or religious exemption. All requests will be submitted to employee health services. Exemption requests will not

be accepted until the policy is implemented and must be submitted within three weeks of the policy implementation date.

1. **Medical exemption requests** will be approved or denied by employee health services. Your primary care provider will not have the ability to determine exemption, although documentation regarding contraindications from your primary care provider or medical records is required and will be considered. Temporary medical exemptions will be granted to pregnant colleagues for the duration of their pregnancy.
 2. **Religious exemption requests** will be approved or denied by legal services.
- Colleagues who do not initiate the vaccine series or request exemption within three weeks of full FDA approval will receive a final warning as part of the discipline process.
 - Colleagues who have not been vaccinated or approved for exemption eight weeks after full FDA approval will be deemed to have resigned and will not be eligible to appeal the decision through the Fair Treatment Process Policy.
 - If the FDA should ever approve the need for a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, all colleagues will be required to receive it under this policy.
 - This policy also applies to non-employed LVHN partners including volunteers, students and residents, Crothall, Morrison and valet services employees, vendors, contracted workers and others. These groups cannot request exemption and must be vaccinated to work in LVHN facilities. LVHN leaders with oversight of our non-employed partners are responsible for their compliance.

Read the [FAQ and talking points](#) for more information.

Proof that COVID-19 vaccines are safe

- More than 346 million doses of vaccines were administered in the U.S. since December 2020.
- Vaccines have undergone and will continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.
- Serious side effects that could cause a long-term health problem are extremely unlikely following any vaccination, including COVID-19 vaccination.
- Current data does not identify any safety concerns for pregnant women who were vaccinated or for their babies.

Proof that COVID-19 vaccines work

- **94%** – Reduction of risk for developing symptomatic COVID-19 illness among more than 500,000 fully vaccinated health care workers in 25 states
- **610** – Peak number of COVID-19 patients in LVHN hospitals in January 2021
- **26** – Number of COVID-19 patients in LVHN hospitals on Aug. 4, 2021

Visit the [COVID-19 FAQs page on LVHN.org](#) for detailed information about vaccine safety and effectiveness.

Why wait? Get vaccinated now

There are four easy ways to get vaccinated:

- Schedule an appointment at [LVHN.org/appointments](https://www.lvhn.org/appointments).
- Schedule an appointment on MyLVHN.
- Call the COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline just for colleagues at 484-750-4951.
- Walk in at any of these LVHN vaccine clinics; no appointment is needed:
 1. [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic–Northampton Crossings](#)
 2. [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic–Pocono](#)
 3. [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic–Hazleton](#)
 4. [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic–Schuylkill](#)
 5. [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic–MacArthur Road](#)

Revised influenza vaccine policy

In 2021, all colleagues and non-employed LVHN partners also will be required to receive the influenza vaccine. Previously, only colleagues in patient-facing roles were required to get the influenza vaccine. Colleagues and independent medical staff may request a medical or religious exemption. Non-employed LVHN partners cannot request exemption. The revised policy is forthcoming. Details about our influenza vaccine clinics for colleagues will be shared as flu season approaches. Requiring all colleagues to get the COVID-19 and influenza vaccines will help ensure we provide the safest possible care to our patients and keep colleagues and community members safe.

Thank you for doing your part

Throughout the pandemic, the work of our LVHN family has been nothing short of extraordinary. Now, it's time for us to help end the pandemic once and for all. With every COVID-19 vaccination administered, we move one step closer to winning this fight. Thank you for doing



Reminder: Time is Running Out to Complete COVID-19 TLC

This course is an OSHA requirement for all colleagues.

LVHN Insider

Thursday, August 12, 2021

This message is from Timothy Friel, MD, Chair, Department of Medicine, and Alex Benjamin, MD, Chief Infection Control and Prevention Officer.

LVHN remains fully committed to protecting colleagues from the potential dangers of COVID-19. A new mandatory TLC course has been developed to keep members of the LVHN community educated and informed about best practices to keep health care workers safe. Formal education about COVID-19 safety is a new requirement of the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

On June 21, OSHA issued an [emergency temporary standard \(ETS\)](#) to protect health care workers from contracting COVID-19. The standard focuses on health care workers most likely to have contact with someone infected with the virus. OSHA announced the new standard alongside new general industry guidance, both of which are aligned with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance.

The standard follows the science and will provide increased protections for those whose health is at heightened risk from coronavirus while they provide critical health care services. Given the pace of vaccinations, the standard – along with the guidance OSHA, the CDC and other agencies have released – will help protect front-line health care workers.

While LVHN already had the core components of the standard in place for some time, OSHA also requires that all health care employers provide and document specific training to all employees so they comprehend COVID-19 transmission, tasks and situations in the workplace that could result in infection, and relevant policies and procedures. To meet this requirement, this new TLC has been created. All colleagues will receive an email when the training is available and must complete the course in one month.

If you have any questions, please contact Infection Control and Prevention at 610-402-9446. Thank you in advance for completing this important TLC.



Free Student Loan Support for All LVHN Colleagues

Navigate will visit LVHN to provide a personalized repayment plan. Schedule an in-person or virtual appointment.

LVHN Insider

Thursday, August 12, 2021

To support your financial wellness, LVHN is partnering with Navigate to help you explore possibilities that could reduce your student loan debt. Sixty-seven percent of adults with a college degree have borrowed an average of \$29,900 in student loans. For physicians, that number jumps to \$250,000 or more in medical education debt. If you experience stress related to your student loan debt, Navigate is here to help.

Navigate specializes in reducing student debt repayment for health care professionals. Most borrowers can reduce student loan debt between \$10,000 and \$100,000.

Here's how:

- Navigate will meet with you to assess your student loan debt.
- If your loan repayment plan is set up correctly and you are on track, no further action is required.
- Navigate's custom calculator analyzes multiple scenarios at once to produce the best repayment plan for you. If there are opportunities to save you money, the Navigate team will work with you to develop a simple, step-by-step plan to help you gain control of your student loan debt.
- Then, you make the changes with your loan servicer or financial institution (with Navigate's help if you need it).

- After you partner with Navigate, they continue to support you if you, your loan servicer or financial institution have questions.

Schedule a visit

Navigate is coming to LVHN. [Schedule an in-person or virtual visit online.](#)

- Tuesday, Sept. 21, LVH–Cedar Crest
- Wednesday, Sept. 22, LVH–Muhlenberg
- Tuesday, Sept. 28, morning, LVH–Hecktown Oaks
- Tuesday, Sept. 28, afternoon, LVH–Pocono
- Wednesday, Sept. 29, morning, LVH–Schuylkill
- Wednesday, Sept. 29, afternoon, LVH–Hazleton
- Monday, Oct. 18, morning, Coordinated Health–Allentown
- Monday, Oct. 18, afternoon, Coordinated Health–Bethlehem
- Tuesday, Oct. 19, morning, LVHN–Mack Boulevard
- Tuesday, Oct. 19, afternoon, LVHN–Winchester Road
- Wednesday, Oct. 20, LVHN–One City Center

You will receive a confirmation email with details for your appointment, including meeting location and what to bring with you. You will also receive a text message reminder the day before your scheduled appointment.



Leaders Assume Responsibilities in New Roles

It will help us enhance operational efficiencies and better serve our community.

LVHN Insider

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

As we continue to make progress in the fight against the pandemic, Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) also is focused on the future and how to best meet the needs of the communities we serve by giving patients the health care access, experience and value they expect and deserve. As previously announced, this includes a regional approach that empowers our leaders to create opportunities to grow, serve and care for our communities. The LVHN Northwest Region will include LVH–Hazleton, LVH–Schuylkill and LVH–Carbon.

- [John Fletcher](#) has been named Senior Vice President of Operations for LVHN and Vice President of Operations at LVH–Cedar Crest.
 - [Terrence J. Purcell](#) has been named President of the LVHN Northwest Region. He also serves as President of LVH–Hazleton.
 - [William “Bill” Reppy](#) has been named Vice President of Operations for the Northwest Region. He also serves as President of LVH–Schuylkill.
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• State Answers Questions About Fraudulent Unemployment Claims

- Learn what prompted these cyberattacks and what the state is doing to stop it.

• LVHN Insider

• Friday, August 6, 2021

- **This message is from Mike Minear, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer,**

**Lynn Turner, Senior Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer,
and Annette White, Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer.**

- Across the United States, [fraudulent unemployment claims](#) continue to be a prime target of cybercriminals during the pandemic. Numerous organizations are being impacted, including LVHN.
- Recently, we told you [what LVHN is doing to keep information safe](#), find the cybercriminals and help protect your personal information. We have also been in contact with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, which works on individual unemployment claims, to get some questions answered. Here's what we learned.
- **Is the filing of fraudulent unemployment claims a widespread problem?**
- Yes. It is affecting employers of all sizes across the nation and Pennsylvania.
- **When did the increase in fraudulent unemployment claims begin?**
- The start of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program prompted a spike. Cybercriminals are very smart. They watched for announcements and social media activity to figure out what states were doing. They attacked when states began introducing new systems and launching a new federal program, a time when the states were most vulnerable.
- **How is personal information being accessed?**
- Cybercriminals share information with each other on the dark web, which is where they receive the personally identifiable information (PII) they use to file claims. In other words, cybercriminals take information they obtained from data breaches external to the Department of Labor & Industry and state government to file unemployment claims. Over the past year and since the inception of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program, this pattern has been seen time and again, with states receiving claims volumes which are impossible based on their working populations.
- **What is being done to stop unemployment fraud?**
- The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry recently implemented upfront identity validation software in its claims system. A claimant must now pass the identity check before he or she can proceed with opening a claim. This step should dramatically reduce the excessive requests employers are receiving and limit a hacker's ability to file a claim under someone else's name. While the department now has the enhanced security capability to prevent this from being an issue in the future, everyone must remain vigilant.

- The department also has been engaged with law enforcement to cooperate in their efforts to ensure these bad actors are held accountable. This is a federal law enforcement matter, and the department will continue to provide full cooperation.
 - **Have any patterns in the filing of these fraudulent unemployment claims been identified?**
 - The department's software does have fraud prevention measures which detect patterns and places a hold on claims that match certain criteria. These patterns may include similar addresses or similar bank account numbers where payment is being sent. These measures have been refined over the past year to ensure the department is being as inclusive as possible to capture the most fraudulent claims possible.
 - **If a fraudulent payment is made in my name, will I be taxed for that payment?**
 - If payment does begin on a fraudulent claim, neither the employer nor the victim is responsible for those charges. Guidance from the IRS states that individuals should not wait for a corrected 1099 form from the state unemployment system. These individuals should file their taxes normally and disregard any false unemployment payments in their name.
 - **How can I learn more about identity theft and protecting my information?**
 - Visit the [Office of Unemployment Compensation's website](#) to report fraud, learn how to protect against fraud and more. Above all, remain vigilant with your personally identifiable information and monitor your credit reports for any suspicious activity.
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Enjoy Being an Insider? Invite Colleagues to Join LVHN Insider Today

In just a few steps, you can invite colleagues to join LVHN Insider.

LVHN Insider

Friday, August 6, 2021

You can invite colleagues to join LVHN Insider by sending them a link to the sign-in page. The invite link will take colleagues to LVHN Insider's sign-in page where they can join, sign in or download the app. They will need to register for LVHN Insider using their SUI@lvh.com and LVHN password (like any new user) before they can fully access the site.

Here's how you can send an invite:

1. Log in to LVHN Insider.
 2. Click on the stack menu icon (web and mobile).
 3. Select **Invite colleagues** (mobile) or **Invite a colleague to join** (web)
 - From the web, copy the invite message and paste it into an email, chat or another program.
 - In mobile, choose an application from your mobile device to share through.
 4. The share message will prepopulate with text. Edit the invitation note or keep it as is – but leave the link as it appears. Then send the invite to your colleague.
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Vote for LVHN in Morning Call Readers' Choice Awards

Start casting your vote for LVHN today.

LVHN Insider

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

Every day you make a difference in our community. You go above and beyond to provide exceptional care to our patients and make LVHN a great place to work. Together, let's celebrate everything we do as a health network by voting for LVHN in **The Morning Call Readers' Choice Awards** contest.

Please take a moment to cast your ballot for LVHN in a number of categories including **Best Hospital/Health Network**, a regional honor that is very meaningful to all of us. You can vote one time in each category now through Sept. 19.

How to vote for Morning Call Readers' Choice Awards (all categories are multiple choice):

- Visit <https://mcall.secondstreetapp.com/Readers-Choice-2021/>
- **Use Google Chrome** as your web browser. If your default browser is Internet Explorer, copy and paste this link into Google Chrome: <https://mcall.secondstreetapp.com/Readers-Choice-2021/>
- Select the Home & Services Ballot and/or the Wellness & Personal Style Ballot.
- Register with your email. Click continue.
- Enter your first name, last name, ZIP code and birthdate.
- Submit your vote.

Note: If you log out and come back another time to vote for other categories, you will need to enter your email again to vote like the first time.

Vote for LVHN on the Wellness & Personal Style Ballot in the following categories:

- Cancer Center
- Emergency Services
- Family Doctor
- Hospital/Health Network
- Nursing Services
- Obstetrician
- Orthopedic Services
- Patient Care
- Pediatrician
- Physical Rehab Center/Services
- Place to Have a Baby

- Sports Medicine
- Surgeon
- Urgent Care

Vote for LVHN on the Home & Services Ballot in the following category:

- Best Place to Work

Thank you for your support and for being #LVHNProud every day!



Vote LVHN Services ‘Best’ in Pocono Record Contest

Learn how to cast your vote and be #LVHNProud.

LVHN Insider

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

Colleagues can once again work together to help LVHN win our nominated categories in the **Pocono Record Readers’ Choice** awards program.

Local awards programs are a great way to bring awareness to our high-quality services as a health network and show our communities that we are #LVHNProud. **These contests are very competitive and every vote counts.** Please take a moment to vote for LVHN in the Pocono Record Readers’ Choice contest.

1. **Visit** <https://poconorecord.gannettcontests.com/2021-Pocono-Readers-Choice/>
2. Click the following categories and VOTE for Lehigh Valley Health Network in the following contests:

- **Beauty & Health**

- Cancer Care – Dale and Frances Hughes Cancer Center, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Cosmetic Surgeon – Charles Herman, MD
- Family Practice – LVPG Family Medicine
- Hospice – Monroe County Hospice House
- Hospital – Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- In-Home Personal Care – Lehigh Valley Home Care and Hospice - Pocono
- Pediatrician – LVPG Pediatrics
- Pharmacy – Lehigh Valley Pharmacy
- Physical Therapist – LVHN Rehabilitation Services
- Urgent Care – LVHN ExpressCARE
- Weight Loss Center – Nicolas Teleo, MD

- **Top Employers**

- Best Benefits Program, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Company Culture, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Employee Recognition Program, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Overall Company to Work For, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Overall Leadership, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Training Program, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Best Workplace Culture, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono
- Most Innovative Workplace, Lehigh Valley Hospital–Pocono

3. You can **VOTE EVERY DAY through Wednesday, August 25.**

Let's work together to make sure LVHN services win so that everyone in our communities know who their best choice is for care.



Vote for Coordinated Health in Scranton Times Readers' Choice Awards

Vote today for Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics.

LVHN Insider

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

Don't miss this opportunity to shine a spotlight on Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics colleagues and services by voting in the latest Scranton Times Readers' Choice Awards. The polls are now open for the contests.

You can celebrate our colleagues and services by voting for Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics in these categories:

- Best Surgeon
- Best Orthopedic Services
- Best Physical Rehab Center

How to vote in Scranton Times Readers' Choice Awards

Together, let's show our community that we are #LVHNProud.

- Visit thetimes-tribune.com/contests/readerschoice
- Click "Wellness and Personal Style"

You may vote in the following categories (all categories are multiple choice):

- Physical Rehab Center – Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics
- Orthopedic Services – Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics
- Surgeon - Coordinated Health Scranton Orthopedics

You can vote once every 24 hours. Voting ends Aug. 19 at 11:59 p.m.



Develop and Strengthen Your Skills

Learn about the professional development opportunities available to you as you set your FY22 goals.

LVHN Insider

Friday, August 6, 2021

The leadership and organizational development team is pleased to announce that colleagues can now sign up for our Essentials Development sessions. As we begin fiscal year 2022 (FY22) and draft new goals, including our mandatory development goal, now is the perfect time to consider skills to develop or strengthen to meet the needs of our changing workspace.

Here are just some of the session being offered in fiscal year 2022 (FY22):

- Excel Beginning
- Leading in a DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) Culture
- Intro to Project Management
- Responsive Leadership

Additionally, through our continued partnership with Northampton Community College, colleagues can receive a Certificate of Achievement in three areas:

- Management

- Customer Service
- Administrative Professional

The list and descriptions of development sessions as well as online registration can be found on the [organizational effectiveness intranet site](#). Classes will be added throughout the year, so visit frequently to learn about the latest development opportunities.

Have questions? Email LOD@lvhn.org for more information about the programs and sessions being offered.

40 Years of Outstanding Service for LVHN–MedEvac

After more than 76,000 missions transporting patients through the air and on the ground, the dedicated team at LVHN–MedEvac looks forward to the next 40 years.

By **Ted Williams**



Tim Hickey has spent the last 34 years flying in helicopters to accident scenes and health care locations helping seriously injured or ill patients get to a Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) hospital quickly.

And he's enjoyed every minute of it.

"I'd recommend the job to anyone," says the 62-year-old flight nurse, who joins more than 100 fellow team members in celebrating the 40th anniversary of the founding of LVHN–MedEvac, which provides air and ground critical care transportation for patients throughout northeast Pennsylvania. LVHN–

MedEvac has flown more than 60,000 missions since its first flight in spring 1981.

The service now includes more than 16,000 transports of patients since an independent ground ambulance service was launched in 2013. The ground service is the first of its kind in the region in offering the same critical care transport capabilities as the air service.

LVHN–MedEvac takes flight

Hickey, who coupled his MedEvac service with 26 years as a flight nurse in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, was initially a paramedic for ground ambulances in the Bucks County area in the early 1980s. When he heard about MedEvac, the first air ambulance service in northeast Pennsylvania and the second in the entire state, he knew that kind of work was for him.

“I completed my nursing degree and joined in 1987,” Hickey says. “Back then, we had two helicopters with four pilots, four critical care nurses and four paramedics on the team. We worked 12-hour shifts exclusively and worked in tandem with another health network. We’ve come a long way since then.”

Today, LVHN–MedEvac is an independent entity with 65 critical care team members, 16 pilots and eight mechanics working 24/7 to respond to every need asked of them. There also are numerous dispatchers and support staff members serving a fleet of four helicopters – an American Eurocopter H130 stationed in Kutztown; two American Eurocopter EC135s stationed in East Stroudsburg and Pottsville; and an EC145 in Hazleton – as well as two critical care ground transport units.

“It’s really incredible how our service has evolved over 40 years,” says Bryan Evans, Director, MedEvac/Critical Care Transport at LVHN. “Our team now has much more training in clinical care capabilities. Both our air and ground transport teams have CAMTS (Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems) accreditation, meaning we comply with industry standards prioritizing patient care and safety in the transport environment. We have the only teams in the Lehigh Valley to hold that accreditation.”

But the real key has been teamwork.

“Since our inception, the success of our mission has been about partnerships,” Evans says. “I’m talking beyond our LVHN hospital partners –

the 911 dispatchers, pre-hospital providers, firefighters, law enforcement. Our community owes every one of them a debt of gratitude.”

Evolution of flight medicine

Keith Micucci, MSN, Administrator, Emergency Medical Services, spent 10 years as MedEvac director and is going on 20 years since he joined the flight crew. He’s seen dramatic changes over the years.

“The demand on critical care is vastly different today as health care has evolved,” Micucci says. “When I first started, we did a lot more trauma and pre-hospital admission transport. Now we see a lot of heart attack patients, stroke patients, ICU patients, really all types of critical care. The demands on providers and transporters, whether paramedic or nurse, is much different. Our people need to have a solid familiarity with a variety of specialties.”

“I couldn’t be more proud of the great people I work with every day, the way they’ve adapted and overcome during this pandemic,”

Memorable moments of care

“One flight I remember vividly from some years ago involved a tractor trailer driver trapped in the cab of his truck for several hours,” says Joe Rycek, who has been chief flight nurse for LVHN–MedEvac for 22 of his 26 years with the team. “On this day, the weather had closed in while we extricated him, and when we lifted off from the scene, we were suddenly in heavy clouds. This man was critically injured, and we were expecting to need to be directed to an airport landing and then transferring to a ground ambulance – not a good situation. As we were flying north of South Mountain, miraculously there was an opening in the clouds. This divine intervention allowed us to land at the trauma center. The patient was saved.”

Such unforeseen challenges are also common. None have been more difficult than navigating the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the great people I work with every day, the way they’ve adapted and overcome during this pandemic,” Evans says. “We’ve lost two cherished colleagues to COVID. Like everyone in health care, we faced numerous unknowns and dealt with ever-changing information. Our team was always there when LVHN and our patients needed us.”

Micucci echoed those sentiments.

“COVID has rocked health care like I’ve never seen before,” Micucci says. “We’ve been on the front lines figuring out how to safely move the most critical patients, often in confined spaces, inches from a patient’s face. Our team took every recommended safety measure and just came to work to do our jobs. It’s been amazing to witness.”

During his long tenure, Hickey has seen a major shift in patient transport.

“When I started, the cases we responded to were about 70 percent vehicle accidents and 30 percent health care facility transports,” Hickey says. “But after years of education about seat belt safety, driving while intoxicated, and general driving safety, it’s gone completely the other way.”

But one thing has remained constant.

“That would be the grateful faces of the patients and family members, or the caregivers at a small facility that doesn’t have the means to provide a patient enough care,” Hickey says. “That’s what keeps someone like me around for 34 years.”

PATIENT STORY

Lehigh Valley Health Network Rehabilitation Services Helps 6-Year-Old Boy Find His Voice

At age 3, David Counterman could barely speak. Today, he speaks in almost complete sentences and is looking forward to starting kindergarten.

By **Hannah Ropp**



Like any first-time mother, Holly Counterman worried about her son David's development. While he hit all the usual milestones, she noticed that around the age of 2 his speech began to decline. "I noticed that he was actually losing words, and he just stopped babbling and talking altogether," she says.

David began working with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Early Intervention Program, and while he made progress, Holly felt that more could be done. She began taking David to see Kimberly Puzio, speech language pathologist with [Lehigh Valley Health Network Pediatric Rehabilitation Services](#).

Finding a reason

When David began seeing Puzio at 3 years old, he was mostly nonverbal and used sign language as his primary mode of communication. Puzio's first course of action was to find the cause of his speech issue.

An evaluation revealed that David had childhood apraxia of speech. "Apraxia of speech is a speech sound disorder where the message from the brain to the mouth gets mixed up. It's a motor coordination disorder," Puzio says.

Fortunately, childhood apraxia of speech is treatable. Puzio began seeing David and his mother up to three times a week for speech therapy and says Holly was an active participant in her son's therapy.

"It's really important that everyone in the family is involved in the process because the work needs to continue at home. Holly was great in making sure

what we were working on at therapy was carried through into David's home life, as well," Puzio says.

In the beginning, Puzio focused primarily on imitating vowel sounds because that's what gives people the most information related to the message being communicated by the speaker. Within just a few months, Holly says, she saw a huge difference in her son.

"He went from barely speaking to putting together almost full sentences," she says.



Making speech therapy child's play

Holly acknowledges that keeping David entertained and engaged during speech therapy wasn't always easy. "There were definitely times that we

struggled, but we tried to make it as fun as possible. We set up rewards, and Ms. Kim had activities to make his speech therapy fun,” she says.

Puzio says because children learn through play, she incorporates a lot of David’s favorite activities into speech therapy. “David is very tactile, so we’ve made slime, done Play-Doh. I know he likes video games, so we even practice words related to that since that’s important to him,” she says.

Now 6, David only sees Puzio once a week and is looking forward to starting kindergarten in the fall. Holly says she continues to work with him at home and is grateful that she got help for David when she did.

“It’s a tough pill to swallow, to realize that your child is different, but it doesn’t make it any better for them if you don’t tackle it head on,” she says.

For more information on pediatric rehabilitation services, visit LVHN.org/pedrehab.



‘Poppies of Remembrance, Lanterns of Hope’

LVH–Cedar Crest will be lit in red to honor those touched by COVID-19.

LVHN Insider

Friday, August 6, 2021

LVHN is joining with Musikfest and New Bethany Ministries in a special program called “Poppies of Remembrance, Lanterns of Hope” that will honor all who have been touched by COVID-19, including those who have died and front-line health care workers who have dedicated themselves to all that the pandemic has required (and more).

LVHN, along with other community partners, will illuminate buildings and facilities in red light Aug. 13-15 as acknowledgement of loss, thanks and hope for the future. Lehigh Valley Hospital (LVH)—Cedar Crest will display the red lighting that weekend, and digital billboards outside LVH—Cedar Crest, LVH—Muhlenberg and LVH—Hecktown Oaks also will share the remembrance message.

Members of the community are invited to illuminate special bag “lanterns” on Friday, Aug. 13, at their own homes. Special sets are available to order from [ArtsQuest](#) and [New Bethany Ministries](#). Proceeds will support the missions of each of these community organizations.

Learn more about [“Poppies of Remembrance, Lanterns of Hope” at Musikfest’s website](#), and watch for the red glow at LVH—Cedar Crest the weekend of Aug. 13-15.
