Physical Therapy
gets patients
back on feet

The Physical Therapy Department, which for years has been helping local patients get back on their feet, is pleased to announce that it is now fully staffed.

The department serves St. Joe's inpatient facility, its outpatient center and the local Easter Seals chapter.

At the inpatient facility, the department provides the foundation for rehabilitation for patients with joint replacements, those who have had cerebral-vascular accidents and those who need to increase their ambulatory safety and endurance so they can return home.

The department also assists with discharge planning and helps determine the best way for patients to continue their therapy.

The outpatient facility is located at the Rehabilitation and Fitness Center at 15th and Church streets. Inpatients who need to continue to have physical therapy but do not need to be in an inpatient rehab facility can attend therapy sessions at the center.

Patients who were not hospitalized but who have various neuromuscular and orthopedic problems also may attend. A large part of Physical Therapy's outpatient population is working with work-injured patients from local industries.

Physical Therapy also serves children at the Easter Seal Society of Hazleton and Carbon County. The department currently is looking into starting a program for adults who suffered from cerebral-vascular accidents.

In addition, Physical Therapy provides a yearly six-week exercise program for the Multiple Sclerosis Society and has assisted with the organization of the Post-Polio Support Group.

Physical therapy is an important part of the rehabilitation staff at St. Joe's. The staff works closely with the other rehab departments and is continuing to grow, both in size and in popularity in the community.
You can beat hypertension

By Donna M. Thomas, R.N.
Employee Health Nurse

Did you know you can beat the odds if hypertension runs in your family? Even if both your parents have hypertension, it doesn’t necessarily mean you’re going to develop it. There may be simple solutions you can use to protect yourself.

Experts aren’t sure how high blood pressure is linked to heart disease. They think the force of blood flow damages the blood vessels and arteries, increasing the likelihood of developing hardening of the arteries. Even slight elevation in blood pressure of 130/90 to 140/90 can increase your risk when combined with other risk factors such as being overweight, eating too much salt or too little potassium or having high levels of stress.

Here are just a few suggestions:

- Lose 10 pounds if you’re overweight. Losing weight is probably the most effective “no-drug” method of lowering blood pressure.
- Toss the salt over your shoulder instead of onto your food. Reducing salt by half will most likely lower blood pressure an average of 3 to 5 points systolic and 3 to 4 points diastolic in some people.
- Go easy on the drinks — alcohol that is. If you drink three or more alcoholic beverages a day, you’re more likely to develop high blood pressure than people who drink less. Limit yourself to a maximum of two a day.
- Get a morning or midday workout. It helps to ward off the effects of daytime stress. Also, brisk walking riding a stationary bike, running or any other aerobic exercise lasting 30 minutes a day can help. Exercise can produce a drop of 10 points in blood pressure levels.
- Increase your potassium. This helps dilate your blood vessels to help blood flow.
- Learn to relax. Job stress, or even the stress of arguments, causes temporary elevation in blood pressure. Exercise-relaxation techniques can help.

We all know that lung cancer is associated with smoking. Another type of lung cancer not usually found in smokers — adenocarcinoma — has been found to be five times higher in non-smoking women who eat a diet high in saturated fats.

Cancer prevention may be as close as the spice rack. Common herbs and spices add flavor but help to stave off cancer and other illnesses, as well as being a source of minerals. We’re talking about our basic spices of basil, turmeric, parsley, garlic and onions, to name a few.

Interesting: Although a calcium-rich diet helps build stronger bones, eating too much of certain foods can rob your body of calcium. The culprit: protein and foods with phosphorus, including soft drinks and packaged baked goods. A high intake probably increases calcium excretion, which can result in lower bone mass.

Attitudes:

- Researchers asked 1,100 women what one thing they wanted more of. Twenty percent wanted a good night’s sleep and 15 percent selected time alone over extra cash or steamy sex.
- Twenty-five percent of women, compared to 12 percent of men, report feeling they have been “talked down to” or treated like a child by a doctor.
- There is prejudice against pretty women. They have a tougher time landing a job, according to a recent survey at the University of Connecticut.

Keep healthy, and try a little bit of happy at least.

See you next month.

Four-legged ‘Barney’ brightens a wintry day

There’s nothing like a furry friend to brighten the dead of winter.

One day last month, the X-Ray Department found an injured dog and took him to the Business Office, where he took refuge until the staff could contact his owner.

Luckily, the animal had a collar with his name (Barney) and a phone number on it. A call brought a grateful owner to the hospital and made for a happy reunion.

If you ever need a “pick-me-up,” bring a dog in to the office. Barney certainly brightened a dreary winter day in the Business Office.
In honor of National Heart Month, the Cardiac Departments – Stress Lab, Intensive Care Unit and Telemetry joined together for a week of fun and games.

Joe Hornick, Social Services, was the winner of the Cardiac Wordfind, provided by Mary T. Alimecco, R.N., Cardiac Evaluation Supervisor.

Second place went to Linda Marion, Telemetry; and third place to Joan Menghini, Business Office.

Marie Reinhart was almost right on the mark in the “Guess the Candy Hearts” contest provided by Laura Holderman, R.N., Telemetry Nurse Manager. The jar held 1,247 hearts. Marie’s guess: 1,250.

Sylvia Gillot, Telemetry, took second place with her guess of 1,242. Prizes were provided by Cheryl Bubrowski, R.N., ICU Nurse Manager.

The Heart Month observance continued on Valentine’s Day when the Stress Lab sponsored a tea in the cafeteria. Informative pamphlets on heart disease were distributed and door prizes were awarded.

Winners of the door prizes were (1) Mary Ann Condash, Housekeeping; (2) Sister Generose, Medis Group; (3) Krystyne Grotnick, Dietary, and (4) Kim Montz, Lab.

Hearts were displayed in the cafeteria throughout the month of February and were sold for a $1 donation to the American Heart Association in honor of a loved one.

Hazleton-St. Joseph Medical Center employees showed their creativity for the first annual Holiday Sweatshirt Contest. Employees were all decked out in sweatshirts they decorated in seasonal themes.
325 trained for IBAX

Preparations for the medical center’s new IBAX computer is progressing swiftly, with 325 employees already trained for the system.

Katie Fogarty, R.N., and Debbie Yenchick, M.T. (ASCP) are coordinators for the IBAX O/EAR System, the hospital-wide computer system that will improve communications throughout the entire medical center.

Currently a hospital-wide education program of four training sessions — each four-hours long — is being conducted by a group of six nursing/ancillary employees. The certified trainers are Anne Bertuola, R.T. (R) (4MS/Telemetry), Dolores Evanko (Medis Groups), Mary Beth Gallagher (3MS/Pediatrics), Lenny Kovalick, R.N. (ICU), Denise Ward, R.N. (OB), and Bob Zoshak R.T. (R) (Radiology).

The next training session, scheduled to begin in mid-March, will be for licensed practical nurses from 3MS and 4MS, those on leaves of absences during the last session and new employees. Makeups for new employees also will be offered during this month’s training.

It’s time to change benefits

By Craig R. Gimbi
C/O Human Resources Department

That’s right. It’s that time again.

Now’s the chance to change to a new benefit or drop an old one. Enrollment meetings will occur in April allowing changes and additions to commence June 1, 1994 through May 31, 1995.

You will be able to acquire long-term disability insurance, along with IRS tax savers like the medical and dependent care spending accounts. You will continue to have various health and dental benefits to choose from, including regular indemnity plans and an HMO as well.


Meanwhile, the User’s Group, which has 24 members, is currently creating rough drafts of policies and procedures to be used once IBAX goes on line.

Serving on the User Group are Joe Hornick, chairman, Social Services; Lea Ann Dura, secretary; Denise Ward, OB; Dolores Evanko, Medis Groups; Patti Carrell, 3MS/Peds; Cathy Lapchak, SPU; Selina Bond, 4MS/Telemetry; Ann Marie Tancin, ICU; Mary Ann Gugliemini, OR; Terri Lukach, ER, and Sandy Munich, Hi-Tech.

Also, Mary Ann Montz, Admitting; Tina Holly, OPD; Pat Yacina, Stress Lab; Dr. Philip Selvarayan; Ellen Postupack, Lab; Janet Kuzma, Data Processing; Judy Ervin, Medical Records; Barbara Pease, Centry Supply; Charmaine Lyons, Pharmacy; Marie Colaruso, Accounts Receivable; Terri Sorletti, PT/OT; Lori Monsomo, Ultrasound, and Vicki Kells, Food and Nutrition Services.

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support. Good luck for all.

Benefits Corner

Don’t forget BC/BS rates will be adjusted and will impact the employee deduction for health insurance beginning June 1, 1994 for all employees. Other choice benefits like Law Phone, short-term disability, permanent life insurance and tax-sheltered annuity will be available again. New benefits are on the drawing table and will be explained at the enrollment meetings.

Don’t forget: Most of your deductions, including LTD and Law Phone, are done on a pre-tax basis, which saves you money!

Benefits Trivia

Which of the following is not in the 1993 Act 44 amendments to the Pennsylvania Workers’ Compensation Law?
A: Panel of physicians must have 6 instead of 5 physicians posted.
B: An injured employee must be seen by a physician on the above panel for 30 days.
C: Report any work injury to your family doctor within 15 days.
D: The notice stating, “Remember, it is important to tell your injury,” must be posted in the workplace.

Answer in the next issue of Lifelines.

Last issue’s question: Your savings and checking accounts at your bank are insured by FSLIC. What agency insures pension plans?
Answer: (A) PBGL.
Teamwork working wonders

Teamwork is the only way to win. As part of the second phase of Mission Effectiveness, employees are now serving on teams designed to look at ways to improve service to our patients and each other.

Team members are selected from the people who do the work and, therefore, from the people who know the process best.

Currently, we have three teams in operation working on TV charges, invoice reconciliation and the process of getting reports to Medical Records and from Medical Records to the floors.

We’ll be updating you periodically in Lifelines and also posting each item’s progress in the cafeteria.

If you have any suggestions for future projects, please drop them in the Open Line box or forward them to Sue Farley in Personnel.

Tamie Frable Chief Dietitian

Tamie Marie Frable has been named Chief Dietitian at the Medical Center.

In her new position, Ms. Frable will plan, direct and provide nutritional care to patients and also will assure compliance with standards of practice and regulatory requirements.

A registered dietitian, Ms. Frable is a graduate of Marywood College, where she was a member of the Student Dietetic Program.

She previously was employed as a clinical dietitian and food service director at the Gwynedd Square Convalescent Center in Lansdale.

She has completed internships at St. Joseph Hospital in Carbondale, Mercy Hospital in Scranton, Geisinger Wyoming Valley and the Veterans’ Administration Hospital in Wilkes-Barre.

Ms. Frable is a graduate of Mid Valley High School and resides in Olyphant.

St. Joe’s welcomes Outreach director

Lifelines welcomes Sister Paulette Berrang to the Medical Center family.

Sister is developing the Pastoral Outreach Program that St. Joe’s is sponsoring. You’ll be hearing more about the program as time goes on.

In the meantime, please make Sister feel welcome.

Welcome aboard

Hazleton-Saint Joseph Medical Center is pleased to welcome these four new employees to the hospital family:

- Tammy Frable, Clinical Dietician;
- Sharon Demko, R.N., 3 MIS;
- Mary Ann Segilia, R.N., Telemetry

Sue Farley named interim manager

Sue Farley has been promoted to interim manager in the Human Resources Department, Bernard C. Rudegeair, president and CEO, has announced.

Ms. Farley had been gradually assuming the duties of interim manager.

“"This change is meant to recognize and reward the growth in her professional development and her willingness to accept additional responsibility,"’” Mr. Rudegeair said.

Ms. Farley will continue to have responsibility for the Employment Division as well.

“Please join me in giving your full support to Ms. Farley in this important new responsibility, Mr. Rudegeair said."

Ho, ho, ho!

Santa brought presents and good cheer to the medical center’s annual Christmas party in December. The annual event is a Christmas favorite for St. Joe’s employees and their families.
Sr. Francesca ends 50 years at St. Joe's

Sister M. Francesca, who has served the Medical Center since it opened nearly a half-century ago, has submitted her resignation. A mere “thank you” does not begin to express our feelings for Sister and what she has meant to the Medical Center.

Sister Francesca is a West Hazleton native who entered the Bernardine Franciscan order in 1934. She graduated from Mount Alvernia High School and College, studied pharmacy at St. John’s University in Brooklyn and graduated from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science.

After further studies at St. John’s Hospital in Springfield, Ill., and Holy Infant Hospital in Hoven, S.D., she came to St. Joseph Hospital when it opened in 1949.

Sister is a former member of the hospital’s board of trustees and she celebrated her Golden Jubilee in the religious life in May 1984.

We hope you enjoy your retirement (although we know you’re still working hard as Mother Superior).

We’ll keep you in our thoughts and prayers and hope you will do the same for us.

Thanks again, Sister.

Building & Grounds news

Happy 34th wedding anniversary to Joan Kotch and her husband, Neal. They have two sons.

Happy first anniversary to Cathy Kowalski and her husband, Michael.

Both couples celebrated their anniversaries Feb. 20.

Personal

Who’s where now!?

There’ve been some changes.

Marlene Heidecker has moved from Social Services to Secretary in the Nursing Office.

Pat Paterick, formerly on 3 Med/Surg, can now be found in Social Service.

Sandi Kulick has moved from Occupational Health to Personnel Secretary.

Karen Flannery has moved down the hall from the Nursing Office to Secretary to the Vice President of Finance.

We hope all are happy in their new "homes."

Promotions

We are happy to announce that Janet Richie has been named Vice President of Nursing and Dan Confalone is Vice President of Finance.

Happy Birthday

Happy birthday to Sister Damasia.

Sister recently celebrated her 90th birthday and was honored with a surprise celebration given by Food and Nutrition Services.

We hope you enjoyed the day, Sister, and many more.

Sister Damasia and friends