First, I’d like to share some very exciting news. NC Department of Health and Human Services approved us to apply to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand PACE services to Forsyth, Stokes and Surry counties! If approved, we will open a PACE program based in Winston-Salem for residents in those counties. Do you remember your life before joining PACE? Well, that is what thousands of older adults in those counties are currently experiencing without PACE services. This growth will not affect the care and support you are currently receiving but it will make a world of difference for those who could use our help. I will keep you posted. If everything goes as planned, we expect to open in late 2020.

Last year we completed a major building expansion adding 9,000 sq. ft. We now have a larger clinic and therapy gym, two additional activity rooms and an expanded kitchen and private outdoor patio. We’ve added 3 new PACE vans and have hired additional staff to provide care. We’ve changed our pharmacy to CareKinesis and now medicines are mailed to most participants in convenient bubble packs. We have celebrated birthdays, including the birth of 100-year-old participant, Ruby Troxler. Ruby passed this week in her home surrounded by family, where she wanted to be.

Of course, we were not without challenges in 2018. There were participants and families affected by the tornado that ripped through our area. There were also participants, families and staff that were affected by the two hurricanes that plagued North Carolina with high winds, downed trees, power outages and flooding. A few weeks ago, over 15 inches of snow covered streets and walkways in some areas making it unsafe for participant transport. PACE is unable to clear ramps, steps, walkways and driveways leading to your home. Even though the street may be clear, if the pathway between the house and the van is slippery or dangerous, PACE will not transport.

Happy New Year!

Ursula Robinson, LCSW, MHA
Executive Director

Continued on reverse
Despite the construction noise last spring and the temporary change in our day program lunch meal vendor, our annual satisfaction survey scores remained high in most areas. One hundred percent of the caregivers and 99% of the participants were satisfied or very satisfied with PACE services. All surveyed caregivers said they would recommend PACE to family and friends. This is huge, and we are so grateful! If you know of someone who could benefit from PACE services, have him or her to call us.

Here are a few quick reminders:

- If you receive medical bills for services that have occurred since you enrolled in the PACE program, mail the bill to the attention of Cerise McIntyre, Billing Specialist or bring it to PACE. It is important to show your PACE insurance card when you go to medical appointments or the hospital. This will help avoid having bills mailed to your home.

- Call the Weather Line number for PACE closure announcements when snow or ice is in the forecast. The recorded message will be available at 6:00 am. Listen to the full message, as it does change. The number is 336-550-4150.

A brief survey about the newsletter is included in this mailing. Everyone who completes the survey will receive PACE points that can be used to purchase items in the PACE store as a thank you. All who return the survey will also be entered in a drawing for a chance to win a Walmart gift card.

It has been an honor providing care and support to our participants for the past 8 years and we look forward to many, many years ahead!

Happy New Year!

Ursula

From Joe’s Desk

Joe Stanley
Center Manager

SNOW!

As I write this article, operations at PACE of the Triad are back to normal following the storm that brought many of us over a foot of snow and the need to close for 2 days! I would like to review what we all have learned from this event.

1. Safety is always our number one priority. We needed to be certain we could safely provide transportation to and from the PACE site. Supervisors were in constant communication all through the storm to determine the safety of the roads and ability to re-open.

2. Participants and caregivers were informed on Friday 12/7/2018 of plans to close PACE on Monday 12/10/2018. PACE participants were informed of and used the Weather Line to get updated information on the site closure. Weather Line: 336-550-4150

3. The PACE On-Call phone was activated throughout the site closure to respond to concerns from participants. PACE was in communication with all hospitals and skilled-nursing facilities where participants were receiving care. Critical appointments, including dialysis, were kept and all others were rescheduled for the next available appointment time.

4. PACE used our Phone Tree system to alert all participants and staff of closing and delayed openings.

Please let me know of any other concerns you experienced during this recent closure, or any areas where you feel we can improve. PACE is a partnership between participants, caregivers and PACE staff. By communicating and working together, we can make our efforts to “weather” the next emergency the best it can possibly be.
Starting January 1, 2019, all participants who take opioids will be required to sign a **Participant-Provider Agreement (PPA)**. Opioids are pain drugs made from opiate plants. Misuse can lead to drug addiction, physical and mental harm, overdose or death. In 2016, there were 1,505 opioid-related overdose deaths in NC (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2/2018).

NC’s STOP Act was created to reduce the number of misused and non-used opioids drugs. The law lowers the number of opioids prescribed after surgery and injuries. It also limits refills and monitors prescriptions using a database.

The agreement is just one way to protect our participants. The agreement lists the side effects of taking opioids. It states that you agree to take the drugs correctly. The primary care provider also signs the agreement. The provider agrees to monitor your pain for the safest dosage. The care team will work together to assess and manage your pain and treatments.

Opioid addiction, abuse and death is a nationwide concern. PACE is serious about participant safety and well-being. Communication is important. An appointment will be scheduled with the participant and/or caregiver to meet with their primary care provider. This will provide an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the medication. If you have any questions before or after the appointment, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Paulisha McIntyre
Social Worker, LCSW-A

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Winter Retreat for Family Caregivers
January 18, 2019, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Lusk Center, 2501 Summit Ave, Greensboro, NC 27405
To register, call 336-274-3559 or send an email to ikolada@well-spring.org.
Sponsored by the Well-Spring Group.

Recognizing and Recovering from Caregiver Burnout
January 31, 2019, 12:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Well-Spring Group, 3rd Floor Conference Room, 3859 Battleground Ave. (Battleground Corporate Park), Greensboro, NC 27410. To register, call 336-274-3559 or send an email to ikolada@well-spring.org.
Sponsored by the Well-Spring Group.

Welcome New PACE Face

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PACE Participant Bill of Rights

1. You have the right to be treated with respect.
2. You have the right to protection against discrimination.
3. You have the right to information and assistance.
4. You have the right to a choice of providers.
5. You have the right to access emergency services.
6. You have the right to participate in treatment decisions.
7. You have the right to have your health information kept private.
8. You have the right to file a complaint.
9. You have the right to leave the program.

If you feel any of your rights have been violated, please tell your PACE social worker or another staff member immediately. If you want to talk with someone outside of PACE about your concerns, you may call: 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or 1-800-662-7030 NC Division of Medical Assistance.