Telling the PACE Story

I am humbled by the support received in recent months from Congresswoman Alma Adams, Congressman Mark Walker, Senators Paul Lowe and Gladys Robinson, Representative Jon Hardister, Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Rick Brajer and Division of Medical Assistance (Medicaid) leader, Dave Richards. Each spent time learning how PACE programs help older adults by providing medical services and support. I am so glad they were able to visit our program and see many of you enjoying playing chair volleyball, doing activities, socializing with each other or receiving care from our staff. We look forward to other opportunities to share the PACE story.

October is Fire Prevention Awareness month. We will share tips about fire safety throughout the month at the PACE Center. The Fire Department will present information as well.

In November, we will celebrate National Caregiver’s month with special events for PACE family caregivers. Check your mail for details.

IMPORTANT: October 15 – December 7 is Open Enrollment for Medicare. **DO NOT** change your Medicare Part D plan or any other Medicare services during this time. This will lead to an automatic disenrollment from PACE and you will lose PACE services. Other insurance plans may contact you by phone or mail suggesting changes to your Part D plan. In the past, they have sent brochures advertising medical equipment or services that you may already have with PACE. If you have any questions, speak with a PACE Social Worker.

Ursula

Ursula Robinson, LCSW, MHA
Executive Director
The fuel shortage a few weeks ago prompted us to mail a letter to explain how this would be handled, especially if the shortage became worse. We consolidated our van trips and asked participants who were able, to stay home a few days to allow us to conserve fuel. Families were asked to assist with transport, if possible. Thanks to all who made adjustments during that time. Through those efforts we were able to maintain adequate fuel to provide transportation to the PACE center and appointments.

The fuel emergency response was unforeseen, but we prepare for other emergencies throughout the year. For example, we have regular safety drills at the PACE Center during different times of the day. Fire and other evacuation drills allow us to practice moving participants and staff out of the building in a safe, fast and orderly way. We have also had tornado and other severe weather drills in which participants and staff move to a safer space inside the facility.

With the colder weather approaching, we will begin reminding you of procedures for inclement weather. Your safety and the safety of our staff and contracted providers is important. Ice and snow can cause very dangerous conditions in which transporation and personal care assistance may not be available. Please prepare early for these situations by connecting with other family members and friends as needed. Most importantly, tell us of any changes in phone numbers or caregivers.

We are partners in the care of participants and rely on family caregivers to provide care and supervision when getting to the PACE Center is impossible. I am confident that by working together, we can continue to keep our participants safe in their homes and safe when they are at the PACE Center.
Caregivers are encouraged to attend.

Medical Minute with Dr. K

October is “Flu Shot Month” here at PACE. Starting October 3, we will begin immunizing all of our participants and staff against influenza. This is something that I feel very strongly about, but why?

“Flu” is short for “Influenza.” Many people believe that the flu is just a cold. In truth, the flu kills! For example, in the winter of 1918-1919, the flu killed 20 million people world-wide. That’s more people that died in World War I!

On average, between 20,000 and 50,000 Americans die every year from the flu. Who are these people? Well, they are typically someone older with serious medical problems, just like people at PACE. When a healthy young person gets the flu, they may feel like they might die but they usually don’t. When an older or chronically ill person gets the flu, they often will die. The flu shot is your best protection against this killer.

This year, we will immunize 100% of our staff against the flu. This prevents our staff from giving the flu to our fragile participants. We want 100% of our participants to get the flu shot as well. So, when the nurse tells you it is time for your flu shot, say, “Yes and thank you!”

Dr. Robert Koehler
Physician and Medical Director

Participant Flu Shot Clinic

October 3 – 6, 2016
9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

We look forward to all participants getting their annual flu shots and staying healthy and well.