At My PACE

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Welcome Spring!
Ursula Robinson, LCSW, MHA
Executive Director

Advocacy works! Thank you so much for your advocacy efforts over the years. The Division of Medical Assistance recently released their Legislative Study of PACE in NC. The study recommends allowing PACE to grow in NC! More specifically, the Division will solicit and approve up to three new PACE facilities developed by existing PACE programs in unserved and underserved areas of NC. Again, I can’t thank you enough for your support of PACE in NC.

Spring is finally here. Despite the periodic snow surprises, rain and cold weather, the renovation project marches on! The Activity rooms and kitchen are nearing completion. Furniture, wall art and a few other details will wrap up the renovation of our new and improved spaces. It will be awesome! Several events are being planned in the coming months for family, friends and the community to see the changes. I appreciate your patience during this process.

There are quite a few announcements and reminders:

• PACE of the Triad will be closed Wednesday, April 18, 2018 for annual staff training day. PACE is closed one day each year so all PACE employees can attend. We will not be on site; therefore, we will not have adult day health services, therapy and clinic appointments at the PACE center. PACE will coordinate critical transport for dialysis needs only. Emergency medical phone calls to PACE will be handled. All other calls will receive a returned call on the following day. If you have any questions, contact your RN Home Care Coordinator.

• The next Participant Advisory Committee meeting is Thursday, April 5, 2018 at 1:00 pm at PACE. Family caregivers are invited to attend.

• Healthcare Decisions Month – PACE Notary Available
How to Plan for End of Life Decisions - Lunch & Learn at Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro - April 12, 2018, noon – 1:30 p.m. at the Lusk Center, 2501 Summit Ave., Greensboro, 27405. This event is sponsored by Hospice and open to the public. RSVP to 336-621-5565.

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We will have a free notary available to notarize advance directive forms for PACE participants by appointment this month. Contact your PACE social worker to schedule an appointment.

- **Let’s Move Community Health Fair @ PACE – Fun for All Ages**
  The community health fair is Saturday, **May 5, 2018** from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 pm at PACE. The annual event is sponsored in collaboration with Magnolia Chapter #23 Order of Eastern Star. In addition to health screenings and presenters, there will be exercise classes, line dance demonstrations, food and more.

- Ellen Smith, RN, former Center Manager and current Staff Development Coordinator is serving as interim Adult Day Health Center Coordinator.

May is National Older American’s month. We are looking forward to celebrating with our participants and caregivers.

Enjoy the warmer temperatures until then!

**Ursula**

**Participant Advisory Committee**

The Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meets quarterly to share feedback with Steve Fleming, Board Chairperson and Ursula Robinson, Executive Director. Family caregivers are encouraged to attend.

All meetings are held at the PACE Center from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm.

April 5, 2018
September 5, 2018
November 8, 2018

**From Joe’s Desk**

**Music, Music, Music !**

For over a year, PACE of the Triad has been the grateful recipient of a very generous gift of music from the Piedmont Blues Preservation Society (PBPS). The Society was founded in 1985. As its’ name suggests, it is dedicated to preserving the musical traditions of blues music and to help promote current blues musicians in the Guilford County area.

Chris Roulhac is the current past president of the Society. Last year, she connected with a friend on the staff at PACE and expressed her interest in supporting the Activities program. Since that time, she has brought many wonderful musicians from the Society to PACE to perform 1 to 2 times per month. Some of the local and national talent we have enjoyed include Seth & Terry, Logie Meachum, Roy & AJ and Cup of Blues.

It is a joy to see the smiling faces, clapping hands, snapping fingers, singing along and even dancing among our participants when the music starts playing. The musicians engage in friendly banter during their performances, and pose for photos with participants afterward.

Many of our participants would have a difficult time getting out to the venues where these musicians normally perform, so it is quite a treat to have performances here at PACE.

We are very appreciative of Chris and the Piedmont Blues Preservation Society for their support of PACE participants and willingness to share the gift of music.

Look for pictures of our performances in the May issue of the newsletter.
The 3 D’s: Delirium, Dementia, and Depression

Part 3 – Depression

Spring has finally arrived! For many of us, the longer and sunnier days ahead are a welcome relief from the dark and chill of winter. Do you seem lighter and happier? Do you find yourself smiling when you look at the spring blooms and listen to the birds singing? If so, you might be noticing an uplifting in your mood. Our mood is our state of mind, or our general feeling about our situation. We all have good moods and bad moods, and everything in between. When our mood is particularly down or sad, and this down mood lasts for a long time and seems to interfere with our ability to enjoy life, it might be a mood disorder called depression.

Depression is one of the “3 D’s”, which are common brain conditions in older adults. These D’s (delirium, dementia, and depression) are more common as we get older. They are not, however, a normal part of aging! Because individuals with these disorders can feel better with appropriate care, it is important that we recognize the symptoms and seek attention.

For many of us, the word “depression” is a relatively recent term for what was called “being down in the dumps”, “feeling blue”, “feeling down and out”, or “feeling low and slow”. Everyone feels sad from time to time. It is a part of the human experience. But depression is much more than a case of the blues. Depression is a persistent negative, or low mood, which can range from mild to severe. It can cause sleep problems and affect our appetite. It can make our aches and pains feel worse. It can take away our energy and our desire to get out and do what we usually enjoy. We might become irritable, anxious, or tearful. We might have problems concentrating or making decisions. We might withdraw from our family and friends. We might feel so hopeless and discouraged that we feel like life isn’t worth living.

These are uncomfortable symptoms which should prompt a visit with your PACE team. Our nurses, social workers, therapists and physicians are trained to help you with depression so that you can return to feeling like yourself again. Treating depression at PACE includes talk therapy, a medical review, and perhaps the use of medications called antidepressants. Medications for depression do not “cover up” your symptoms or change your personality. They are not addictive. These medicines actually help rebalance our natural brain chemicals back to the way they are supposed to be. Many of our participants are being treated for depression and have benefited from the team-based approach here at PACE.

Have you heard the phrase, “Too blessed to be depressed?” We may feel that we don’t “have a reason” to feel depressed. We hope that if we focus on the positive parts of our lives, that we should not feel down. Focusing on the positive is very important. This is encouraged! But if you continue to feel low, you should be evaluated for depression. A depressed mood does not have to have a cause, or an event to trigger it. Sometimes it does, but many times it doesn't. If you or a loved one have concerns about any of the symptoms described above, please reach out to a PACE team member to learn more!
Health Care Decision Making
Holly Gerber, LCSW and Porscha Harvey, LCSW
Social Workers

Making decisions regarding your health care wishes can be difficult but, ultimately, it can lead to being better prepared in the future. We often find that people have not communicated their wishes because they are uncomfortable talking about dying. It is important to remember that voicing your healthcare wishes are relevant throughout your life and is not a topic that should only be discussed at end of life.

If you become injured or you are unable to speak for yourself, who would make decisions for you? A healthcare power of attorney is anyone you appoint, over the age of 18, that you trust to make decisions on your behalf. It is important to appoint a friend or family member who understands and will carry out your wishes. Please have open conversations with your health care power of attorney so they can communicate your health care wishes if you are unable to do so.

You can use a living will to jump start some conversations with your healthcare power of attorney. A living will is a document that allows you to state your wishes for end-of-life care. You do not need medical experience to complete a living will but it will help you to become familiar with medical procedures commonly administered to people who are seriously ill.

Caring Connections is a program in Virginia that is using the following campaign to remind you to LIVE:
L-Learn about options for end-of-life services and care
I- Implement plans to ensure wishes are honored
V-Voice decisions to family, friends and health care providers
E-Engage in personal or community efforts to improve end-of-life care

PACE wants you to LIVE as well which is why we are encouraging caregivers to attend the workshop Advance Care Planning: How to Plan for End-of-Life Decisions (see Caregiver Corner for details). Information sessions are scheduled at the Adult Day Center for PACE participants. For more information, ask a PACE social worker.