Did you know 10,000 Americans turn 65 every day? The number of older adults is rising. Yet, the number of older adults receiving services and the amount of funds to pay for services is decreasing. PACE is an optional Medicaid program. PACE wants to grow to meet the needs of the growing aging population. We have to tell policy makers and those who work for Medicaid about PACE. This summer, we had the pleasure of welcoming two members of the NC General Assembly. Representatives Cecil Brockman of High Point and Ralph Johnson of Greensboro visited PACE. They gained a better understanding of our services to you and your loved ones. They both said they were very impressed with the services and promised to tell others in the House and Senate to visit a PACE program to see the impact.

In August, Dave Richards, the newly appointed Deputy Director of the Division of Medical Assistance (Medicaid) along with Sabrena Lea, Acting Assistant Director, DMA and folks from other NC PACE programs and the NC PACE Association toured our facility and met to discuss PACE and Medicaid. I get very excited when local people and people across the state want to learn more about the services and support we offer. Please continue to share your PACE success stories with others, especially those who could benefit from our services.

On another note, as the season changes, we continue with a couple of traditions that we’ve started. National Fall Prevention Week is September 23 – 29, 2015. Falls are the leading cause of death due to injury among older adults. PACE takes falls very seriously. We work hard every day to teach you and
Help! I've Fallen and I Can't Get Up!

I hope you are thinking of the TV commercial showing someone on the floor calling out “Help! I've fallen and I can't get up!” When we were younger, this may have been a funny commercial. But now, it is far from funny. It is one of our worst fears. What can we do to keep from being that person on the floor? PLENTY!

Being a PACE participant is one of them. With PACE, you have an entire team of health care professionals working with you and your caregiver to keep you safe at home. Here are some other things you can do to help keep you off the floor.

- Participate in exercise programs offered at PACE in the activity program and in the rehab department.
- Exercise at home. Ask PT and OT for a home exercise program if you are interested.
- Use any equipment that PACE has provided for safety such as a walker, cane, brace and/or shower chair.
- Always wear shoes. Make sure they are in good repair and fit well.
- Keep your floors clean, dry and safe. If there are cracks in the flooring or bumpy carpeting, have it repaired. Get rid of all throw rugs.
- Use handrails in the bathrooms and all stairways, even outside. If you don’t have these, talk with your Home Care Coordinator for information.
- Check the lighting in your home, especially in the areas from your bed to the bathroom and in stairways. Do you need to replace a bulb? Are the bulbs as bright as the fixture allows? Do you need more lights in a room or area?
- Get enough sleep to keep your strength up.
- Learn the best way to get yourself up in case you do fall. PT can help you with this.

Doing these things will not guarantee that you will not fall. But, doing them will make falling less likely. These tips should also take away some of the fear of falling. I bet that doing these things will help keep you from being the person on the floor calling for help.
Dementia may increase a person’s “wandering” behaviors at any time. Many people with dementia have the need to be in constant motion. If the person is not otherwise occupied, he or she may wander to satisfy this need. Dementia may cause a person to become confused or overwhelmed. Emotions such as boredom, frustration or even pain may cause him or her to ‘wander off’ to handle these feelings. It is important for caregivers to recognize wandering. Some common signs include:

- Forgetting how to get to familiar places (even inside the home, such as the bathroom or bedroom)
- Trying to “go home” even while at home or trying to “go to work” (although retired)
- Acting restless (pacing, making repetitive movements)
- Returning from a walk or drive later than usual
- Asking the whereabouts of family or friends who are deceased
- Acting as if doing a hobby or chore, but nothing is actually getting done

As you can imagine, wandering can be very dangerous if a loved one is lost, doesn’t eat or take needed medications while missing. He or she could become too hot or too cold outside, which could lead to heat stroke or frostbite. A person could also be approached, picked up or harmed by someone.

Try these tips to help prevent wandering while caring for or spending time with a person who has dementia:

- Keep track of any wandering activities so that you will be aware of when wandering is most likely to occur. For example, does your loved one get anxious right after dinner? Does he or she want to do something they did in the past, such as go to work?
- If the person starts wandering in the evening, limit fluids about 2 hours before bedtime and make sure the person uses the bathroom before going to sleep.
- Regularly check on your loved one to make sure needs are being met (for example, thirst, hunger, toileting).
- Create a daily routine to provide structure. This will give a sense of purpose. Giving a task (such as folding washcloths) helps to keep focus.
- Avoid going to busy places such as shopping malls or grocery stores. If your loved one seems confused, lost or anxious don’t correct. Instead, help by saying things like, “we’re staying home tonight”, or “you’re safe and I am with you.”
- Consider dressing alike when you go out. It will help others to locate your loved one if he or she is separated from you.
- Put these safety precautions in place:
  - Use night lights throughout the home.
  - Put locks out of sight (use slide bolts at the top or bottom of doors) and/or put warning bells above doors to let you know if your loved one opens a door.
  - Make your doors “blend in” by painting them the same color as walls or by covering them with removable curtains or screens or place a strip of cloth across a doorway. You can also use other visual clues such as stop signs.
  - Ask neighbors, friends or family to call if they see your loved one alone and/or dressed inappropriately.

Read Part II of this article in the October newsletter for more prevention tips and what to do in case wandering occurs. If you have immediate questions, speak with your Home Care Coordinator nurse.
A Word from the PACE Pharmacist...

Over the Counter Meds

The PACE care team keeps an up-to-date list of all the medications participants take every day and “as needed.” This includes medications that require a prescription, as well as, those that can be purchased without a prescription “over-the-counter.”

Often times friends, family members, advertisements and the internet recommend over-the-counter medications or natural or herbal supplements. It is important to remember that these medications and supplements do contain active ingredients that could interact with other medications on the list. They may even affect the control of chronic health problems. If a supplement is labeled as “natural” or comes from a plant or mineral, it can still have drug-like effects. Participants and caregivers should be sure to call and check with the care team and get approval BEFORE taking or giving ANY over-the-counter medication or supplement.

Here are just a few examples of some potential issues with over-the-counter medications and supplements:

- Many of the drug interactions with herbal supplements result from the fact that some herbs including garlic, ginkgo and ginseng contain naturally-occurring compounds that interfere with blood clotting and increase risk of bleeding. This can be especially dangerous if combined with prescription anticoagulants or aspirin.

- People sometimes do not think of creams, ointments and powders as medications but these contain active ingredients as well. For example: Goody Powders and BC Powders can contain high doses of aspirin which can increase bleeding risk and cause kidney damage and stomach irritation with regular use.

- Over-the-counter products that contain diphenhydramine often have “PM” in the name (e.g. Tylenol PM). Diphenhydramine may be used to treat allergic reactions, allergy symptoms or insomnia; however, it can cause confusion, dry mouth, blurred vision, low blood pressure, constipation, urinary retention and affect glaucoma control. This drug should be used with caution.

- Some supplements like calcium and magnesium can interfere with absorption of other medications and may need to be spaced apart from other medications to prevent this interaction.

The bottom line when it comes to over-the-counter medications and supplements is that while many are safe and beneficial, it is important to always ask the PACE team and get approval before taking them.

Charlotte Matheny
Pharmacist

Welcome New PACE Faces

Anastacia Chandra
Driver

Renee Poole
Intern

Visitors at the PACE Center

Some of you have asked about having personal visitors while at PACE. We want the PACE Center to be a safe, beneficial and relaxing place for our participants. And, we want to be open for family caregivers to come anytime. We want caregivers to see how the participant is doing and observe the care that we provide.

When it comes to non-caregiver visitors, however, we have to consider several things:

- the participant may not want to have the visit
- the caregiver may not want the participant to see the visitor
- the visitor may be trying to sell things to the participant or others in the building
- the visit may take away from planned activities
- limited space and seating for visitors
- we are liable for everyone in the building, including visitors

We will allow non-caregiver visitors, for special circumstances with advanced notice. For example, if there is out-of-town family visiting or perhaps to celebrate a participant’s birthday, then a visit to PACE can be arranged. Please call PACE to make arrangements with Jacque Williams, RN, Adult Day Health Center Coordinator.

What are you doing to prevent falls?
Healthy Living Expo

Tuesday, September 15, 2015; 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church, 3906 W. Friendly Ave., Greensboro, NC 27410. Sponsored by Senior Resources of Guilford, United Way, Walgreens and other organizations. Free health screenings and information.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (Sponsored by ACE)

The Adult Center for Enrichment is offering a six week educational series designed to provide you with the tools needed to care for yourself while caring for your loved one. The classes offer tools to help you to reduce stress, to communicate effectively with family, doctors and paid help, to take care of yourself, to reduce guilt, anger, and depression, to help you relax, to make tough decisions and to set goals and problem-solve. The classes are held once a week on Thursdays from 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. at Well-Spring Services, Inc., 3859 Battleground Ave., Greensboro, NC 27410. The dates for the upcoming session: September 24, October 1, October 8, October 15, October 22 and October 29. Space is limited. To reserve your space, please contact Jodi Kolada, Director of Caregiver Education at (336) 274-3559 or jkolada@well-spring.org. You may also register on-line at www.ACEcare.org. This series is offered at no charge with contributions graciously accepted.

Understanding Advance Directives and Powers of Attorney (Sponsored by ACE)

Tuesday, September 29, 2015; 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m., Well-Spring Retirement Community, Richardson Auditorium, 4100 Well Spring Dr., Greensboro, NC 27410. Attorney Dori Wiggen with the Trusts and Estates Group of Schell Bray PLLC, presents important information on power of attorney for healthcare, living wills and financial powers of attorney. These legal documents are important for family caregivers to understand.

Medication Safety Tips for Caregivers (Sponsored by ACE)

Tuesday, October 6, 2015; 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., First Baptist Church, 1000 West Friendly Ave., Room 112, Greensboro, NC. Pharmacist Sarah Walker offers information to help promote safe and appropriate prescription and over-the-counter medication use at home. She will offer tips to prevent medication related problems and avoid medication misuse.

7th Annual Caregivers Education Conference

Sponsored by the North Carolina A&T State University Center for Outreach in Alzheimer’s, Aging and Community Health, in partnership with the African American Alzheimer’s Disease Research Study and the Western Carolina Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association. Saturday, October 31, 2015; 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., NC A & T State Alumni Foundation Bldg., 200 Benbow Rd., Greensboro, NC 27403. More details to come.

Caregiver Connections Expo

Get connected with fellow family caregivers and community resources! Friday, November 13, 2015; 9:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Mount Zion Baptist Church Chapel, 1301 Alamance Church Road, Greensboro, NC 27406. More details to come.