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Connections

## Senior Care: Continuing to Treat the Whole Person



Joan Luster  
Manager,  
Senior Care

We are entering a new era in healthcare defined by the need to deliver services in a more integrated, collaborative and efficient way. Across the country, the model of care is shifting in order to focus on the patient's overall health. Medical providers, social workers and other caregivers are working as a team to treat the patient as a whole person and deliver better, more cost-effective care across multiple healthcare settings.

From the hospital perspective, it's important for us to place additional focus on patient care in the home once an individual has left the hospital. A patient may be briefly hospitalized and then discharged. Once home, they must continue managing their condition. If the patient has difficulty caring for themselves or makes a mistake taking medication, they may need to be hospitalized again.

Overlake's Senior Care Program has been providing post-hospitalization services to the community for the past 23 years. While other hospitals are just starting to identify ways to better serve patients after discharge,

Overlake is ahead of the curve. Through a variety of offerings, Senior Care has created a comprehensive program that is one-of-a-kind in the Puget Sound region, allowing us to be at the forefront of these trends.

### Community Case Management

Older adults often seek treatment at Overlake because of an injury, illness, chronic condition, mismanagement of medications or other serious health issue. While the hospital addresses and treats the medical condition, we recognize there may be underlying factors that, if left unaddressed, would leave the patient at risk of a recurrence or additional health problems. These patients are typically referred to Senior Care.

Many issues affect a person's overall health. For example, housing, personal finances, nutrition and transportation issues can play a significant role in healthcare choices and most certainly in access to care. Senior Care case managers help close gaps in care by coordinating services among independent healthcare providers. We connect patients with available resources and help break down barriers to care. Community case management is built on the belief that one plan or approach

*(continued on page 2)*

## January Luncheon

### "Getting to the Heart of the Matter"

Sponsored by Aegis Living: Redmond, Bothell, Bellevue, Kirkland

As the heart grows older, this complex muscular organ begins to exhibit tell-tale signs of its age. Ronnier Aviles, MD, Overlake Internal Medicine and Associates, will examine conditions that affect the heart in seniors and review healthy decisions and the latest treatment options to help maintain a healthy heart.

**Wednesday, January 26**

**Noon to 2 p.m.**

**Overlake Park Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall**

**1836 – 156th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA**

*For Connections members only. Free parking.  
Reservations required; see RSVP card on the back cover of this newsletter.*

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**Sonja Potter**  
**Senior Care Auxiliary**

   
 

Overlake Hospital Medical Center  
1035 116th Avenue NE  
Bellevue, WA 98004  
425-688-5000  
[www.overlakehospital.org/seniorcare](http://www.overlakehospital.org/seniorcare)

Overlake Hospital Medical Center is a nonprofit, non-tax-supported hospital providing advanced medicine to the Puget Sound region. The Connections Newsletter is published six times per year by Overlake's Senior Care/Connections Department. It is distributed free of charge to Connections members.

If you would like to be removed from this newsletter mailing, have an address change, would like to receive an electronic copy, or know someone who would like to become a member, please contact Senior Care at 425-688-5800 or e-mail [seniorcare@overlakehospital.org](mailto:seniorcare@overlakehospital.org).

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Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor  
425-688-5806

(continued from page 1)

is not appropriate for everyone. This process is different for each patient, as the plan of care is developed based on each patient's unique history, perspective, knowledge and personal preferences.

**An Exciting Expansion**

In an effort to enhance our services, last spring Senior Care implemented *Care Transitions Intervention*, a national evidence-based program. The term "care transitions" specifically refers to the movement patients make between healthcare providers and settings as their condition and care needs change during the course of a chronic or acute illness. The primary goal of this program is to help patients better understand their conditions and empower them to be their own health advocates, ultimately reducing the number of unnecessary hospital readmissions.

Senior Care case manager Lynn Shapley, RN, is the new transition coach at Overlake. Lynn meets patients while they are still in the hospital and follows up with a home visit after discharge. She follows patients for a four-week period to monitor medication self-management, ensure follow-up appointments with physicians and/or specialists are made, and help patients build and maintain a personal health record. Lynn also discusses possible drug reactions and advises how patients should respond if their condition is worsens.

Since its implementation, the information gathered through the Care Transitions pilot has been very helpful. As we suspected, medication errors persist and patients don't always fully comprehend or remember the education provided to them in the hospital.

As a result of Lynn's work as a transition coach, Senior Care is now part of a new multi-disciplinary hospital pilot project that will examine cardiac patients continuity of care as they move from hospital to home. This pilot aims to reduce hospital readmissions by developing a system of care approach that best meets patients' needs for medical self management once they leave the hospital.

**Community Education**

Through a variety of program offerings, Overlake's Community Education Department strives to promote health and independence while encouraging seniors to actively manage their health.

Classes offered in fall prevention continue to be a major focus in Senior Care. The expansion of *A Matter of Balance*, *Exercise for Balance* and *Yoga for Balance* classes continue to address the needs of seniors. These classes explore their fear of falling and teach exercises and techniques that improve seniors' overall strength and balance. Additional classes that focus on a variety of seniors' health issues are offered around the community every month.

One of the highlights of our community education program for seniors is the annual *Active Senior Fair*. Last March, over 1,500 people took advantage of free health screenings and attended mini-health seminars. In addition, participants enjoyed live entertainment and met with more than 60 vendors. The fair has come a long way in 15 years, and we look forward to seeing you at this year's event on Saturday, March 12.

**A Heartful Thanks**

Again this year, I am honored to make special mention of both the Sonja Potter Senior Care Auxiliary and the Overlake Hospital Foundation. Their exhaustive fundraising efforts on our behalf support the Senior Care program and enable us to continue to serve the Overlake community free of charge. Because of this, patients have access to our services regardless of their financial situation.

Most of all, we are deeply grateful to all of our wonderful Connections members, as we could not perform our important community work if it were not for all of your support. Among other things, our partnership enables us to learn from your richness of knowledge, humor, and perspective. We are truly at your service.

Wishing you all good health and wellbeing in 2011!



*I hear that laughter  
and humor are good  
for your health.*

*How does that work?*

*Can one learn to  
“lighten up” later in  
life?*



*Submitted by: Regina Bennett, MSW  
Social Worker, Bellevue Senior  
Health Center  
425-688-5807  
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**A**bsolutely! Journalist and author Norman Cousins was the first patient to identify the potential therapeutic effects of humor and laughter. In his 1979 book, *Anatomy of an Illness*, Cousins described how laughter therapy helped him cope with his painful and irreversible disease. He knew negative emotions produced negative chemical changes in the body. Cousins reasoned that conversely, positive emotions might have therapeutic value and produce positive chemical changes. With his doctor's support, Cousins opted to “treat” himself with laughter. Films of old comedy routines were brought into his hospital room and so began the laughter prescription.

Cousins describes his elation when he realized that a 10-minute belly laugh led to two hours' worth of pain-free sleep. When blood tests showed that his sedimentation rate dropped several points after each episode of laughter, he was convinced there is truth to the old adage, “laughter is the best medicine.”

The healing power of humor is certainly nothing new. Thomas Sydenham, a 17th Century physician proclaimed “The arrival of a good clown exercises more beneficial influence upon the health of a town than 20 asses laden with drugs.”

Without getting too technical, laughing strengthens our immune system. It produces immune-system-enhancing chemicals which make us more resilient to disease. Laughter reduces stress, lowers blood pressure, elevates mood and improves brain function by releasing natural opiates (pain killers) and endorphines. It protects the heart and exercises the lungs through vigorous air exchange. Socially, it connects us to others and it's been said that laughter is the shortest distance between two people. Humor unites us, especially when we laugh together.

How then do we learn to laugh later in life? It may seem especially daunting if you grew up in a humor-deprived environment where fun was discouraged or thought of as

frivolous. Fortunately, we are programmed to laugh. If you think back to times when others were laughing around you there's a chance you laughed uncontrollably with them, yet you didn't know why. There are many forms of humor and many opportunities to develop humor at any age. It may take a little practice, but here's one good way to start. First, stand in front of a mirror. Next, look yourself straight in the eyes and then start laughing! Most of us take ourselves far too seriously. By learning to laugh at ourselves we “lighten up” a little and add some fun into our lives.

Other recommendations include regular doses of funny films, joke books and comedians. Browse though the humor section of a bookstore or a library. Make a point of looking at the cartoons in the newspapers and magazines. Save the cartoons that appeal to you, and post them where you can see them such as on the refrigerator, bulletin board or in your wallet, and change them regularly. Keep a humor journal. Get in the habit of listening for the unintentionally amusing remark and write it down in a diary. Watch for the wonderfully funny things young children spontaneously say or write. Listen for slips of the tongue, or the amusing error or clever pun. Write down clever bumper stickers, witticisms and funny events that happen to you and your friends. A mountain of options is available to help you become a more humorous person once you decide to get started, but be aware that there is a big difference between hurtful and healthful humor. Sarcasm, put downs, ethnic jokes and anti jokes (anti men, women, religious groups, nationalities, etc.) are considered hurtful as opposed to therapeutic. Remember, “Laughing with others is an ice breaker while laughing at others is an ice maker.”

Now that we know how important humor is to our health and sense of wellbeing, why not resolve to let laughter, humor, and play become an integrated part of your life? This will help you view the world with a more relaxed, positive, joyful and balanced perspective.

## Senior Care Community Classes

Unless otherwise indicated, these classes are held at City University, Building F, 150 – 120th Avenue NE, Bellevue.

**Advance registration is required; call 425-688-5800.**

**Save the Date!**



## 2011 Active Senior Fair

Don't miss this **FUN, FREE,** day-long event geared to the active senior! Call 425-688-5800 for more information.

**Saturday, March 12**  
**10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Westminster Chapel of Bellevue**

13646 NE 24th St., Bellevue

### A Matter of Balance

Have you cut down on a favorite activity because you might fall? Or turned down a chance to go out with friends or family because you were concerned about falling? The fear of falling can be just as dangerous as falling itself. Often, people who develop a fear of falling begin to limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, making the risk of falling greater. This leads to isolation and depression. *A Matter of Balance* can help improve quality of life and help a person remain independent. The class is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to set realistic goals to increase activity, make changes to reduce fall risks, and learn simple exercises to increase strength and balance.

**Date:** **Tuesdays and Thursdays, February 8 to March 3;**

**Time:** **10 a.m. to noon**

**Cost:** **\$15**

Scholarships available on an individual basis

### Exercise to Improve and Maintain Balance

Learn to strengthen key muscle groups and improve use of the core muscles that keep your body in balance. Build a balance, elegant posture, gain confidence in your stability and move with grace and agility. Practice simple movements to improve overall coordination for daily activities to walk steadier and help prevent falls.

**Dates:** **Thursdays, January 20 to February 10;**

**or** **Tuesdays, February 8 to March 1**

**Time:** **2 to 3 p.m.**

**Cost:** **\$36.75 for four-week session**

### Yoga to Maintain Balance

This breath-oriented practice will help to increase your circulation, release tense muscles, strengthen core muscles and help to keep each muscle and joint flexible and strong. *Yoga is done in a seated position on a chair with exercises adapted to each individual's abilities.*

**Date:** **Tuesdays, January 4 to 25; or February 1 to 22;**

**Time:** **11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. or 12:30 to 1:45 p.m.**

**or**

**Date:** **Thursdays, January 6 to 27; or February 3 to 24;**

**Time:** **11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**

**Cost:** **\$44 for four-week session**

### Seniors Making Art – Printmaking

Learn basic block printing techniques to create your own elegant works of art! Block printing is a simple printmaking method where a soft rubber block is carved to create an image that can be reproduced. You will learn sketching, carving and printing fundamentals for block printing. Sponsored by Betty and Kemper Freeman, Jr, Craig Shrontz, and Lynn Ristig. Class limited to 15 participants. New students have first priority. Call and leave a message. You will be called if you are in the class.

**Date:** **Mondays, January 24 to February 28 (5 sessions)**

**Time:** **10 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**Cost:** **FREE**

### Living Wills: Does Your Family Know Your Wishes?

It is important to plan ahead to make sure everyone understands what your wishes are. The class will cover how to develop your own advance directive for healthcare through a workbook for living wills, durable power of attorney and value statements.

**Date:** **Tuesday, February 8**

**Time:** **1 to 3 p.m.**

**Cost:** **\$5**

### Dealing with Dementia

Family caregivers of people with dementia have one of the most difficult and challenging journeys, one that often ends in extreme burnout. This class will provide families and caregivers with some practical hands-on tools. Good communication can improve quality of life for people with dementia and their families, and can help prevent resistance and difficult behaviors. Learn how to enter the world of the person with dementia and gain communication skills. Not appropriate for the memory-impaired person.

**Date:** **Thursday, February 24**

**Time:** **2 to 3:30 p.m.**

**Cost:** **\$5**

### Walk for Life

Join this free, ongoing walking program to exercise safely and effectively. Meet friends and benefit from expert staff who are on site for information, advice and monitoring.

**Date:** **Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday**

**Time:** **8 to 9:30 a.m.**

**Place:** **Bellevue Square, enter at Skybridge 4**

**Cost:** **FREE**

## North Bellevue Community Center

Call 425-452-7681 and mention the class number.

4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue.  
Mondays, 1 to 2:30 p.m.  
Advance registration required.  
Cost: \$7 for Bellevue residents  
\$8 for non-residents

### The Aging Eye

Around the age of 50, most people become aware of changes in their vision. Older eyes are at greater risk from minor irritations, from cataracts to macular degeneration and glaucoma. An Overlake ophthalmologist will review what changes are normal and identify signs of problems.

**Date:** Monday, January 24  
**Class#:** 54592

### Take A Stand Against Strokes

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, however there have been significant advances in treatment approaches. Overlake stroke coordinator, Carole Hardy, RN, will discuss the risk factors, detection and treatment of strokes and offer ideas of how to reduce your risk of a stroke.

**Date:** Monday, February 28  
**Class#:** 54593

## Bellevue YMCA

Call 425-746-9900

14230 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue.  
Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Advance registration required.  
Cost: FREE

### Incontinence: It Doesn't Have to Be A Part of Life

It's estimated that over 13 million Americans suffer from urinary incontinence, a condition experienced twice as often by women. Incontinence does not have to be accepted as a part of growing older. An Overlake urologist will discuss the different types of incontinence and the latest successful treatment options available.

**Date:** January 12

### Hypertension Issues

Hypertension or high blood pressure affects one in four Americans and usually has no symptoms, but it can have serious medical consequences. An Overlake physician will review the risk factors. discuss prevention and treatment options.

**Date:** February 9

## Redmond Senior Center

Call 425-556-2314

8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.  
Wednesdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.  
Advance registration required.  
Cost: FREE

### Understanding Strokes

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, however there have been significant advances in treatment approaches. Overlake stroke coordinator, Carole Hardy, RN, will discuss the risk factors, detection and treatment of strokes and offer ideas of how to reduce your risk of a stroke.

**Date:** January 19

### Vitamins Supplements – Should You Be Taking Them?

Vitamin and mineral supplements shouldn't be used as a substitute for a well-balanced, nutritious diet, but how do you know when you need to take supplements? And which ones should you take? It can all be confusing and overwhelming. An Overlake wellness dietitian will help sift through the information as well as outline the benefits and precautions relating to vitamin and mineral supplements.

**Date:** February 16

## Additional Hospital Community Classes

PACCAR Education Center  
Overlake Hospital Campus  
1035 116th Ave. NE, Bellevue  
Advance registration required.  
Call 425-688-5259 or online at  
[www.overlakehospital.org](http://www.overlakehospital.org).  
Cost: FREE

### Motion Is Life

Is pain keeping you from enjoying life? If so, learn more about joint pain relief as well as knee and hip replacement in this informative seminar presented by the Joint Replacement Center at Overlake. Time allowed for questions.

**Date:** Wednesday, January 19  
**Time:** 6:30 to 8 p.m.

### Be Heart Smart: What Women Should Know About Their Cardiac Health (Men Welcome)

Non-fasting cholesterol screening (reserve your time slot, space limited), blood pressure checks by The Hope Heart Institute; a glass of "heart-healthy" red wine and dark chocolate; and a book signing by authors of *The Sublime Engine: A Biography of the Human Heart*.

**Date:** Wednesday, February 16  
**Time:** 6 to 9 p.m.

## 2010 Volunteer of the Year

Shirley Lumry is an enthusiastic cheerleader for hundreds of seniors in the Walk for Life program and a dedicated coach to the many people who participate in Overlake's fall prevention classes. Overlake Senior Care is pleased to honor Shirley's hard work and commitment to keeping Eastside seniors active by naming her the 2010 Connections Member of the Year.

The Walk for Life program started 23 years ago and attracts more than 75 seniors. Walkers lace up their shoes three days a week and stride inside the halls of Bellevue Square for exercise. Shirley's been involved with the Walk for Life program for several years and is currently employed by Bellevue YMCA, a co-sponsor of the program along with Overlake Senior Care. Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, Walk for Life participants register with Shirley and her volunteers, orient themselves to the course and log their miles.

Shirley's passion for fitness has been instrumental to the success of Senior Care's *A Matter of Balance* program. Developed by the Roybal Center on Research in Applied Gerontology at Boston University, *A Matter of Balance* was launched at Overlake in 2007 to help people reduce their fear of falling while also promoting physical activity. Participants learn practical strategies for avoiding falls, set achievable activity goals and perform exercises that promote strength and balance.

The class is part exercise and part discussion and it's led by two coaches who generate a lively interplay between

each other and all members of the group. Shirley, along with Susan Posten, was one of the six original volunteers who were



Shirley Lumry

trained as class facilitators. As Susan recalls, "I think Shirley taught the very first class, which must have been very scary as there is a tremendous amount of material to learn."

Nevertheless, Shirley was a natural. "She is very in tune with others' points of view

and sensitivities," Susan says. "Shirley is always the first to volunteer for coaching and special assignments. Other coaches want to coach with her because she's so knowledgeable and makes leading the

class easy."

A native Washingtonian, Shirley grew up in the small town of Oakville, southwest of Olympia. She majored in English at the University of Washington and briefly worked in the banking industry. She and her husband Stephen have lived in the Bellevue area since 1978. In addition to her work helping Eastside seniors stay fit, she's active in her church, St. Peter's United Methodist Church of Bellevue.

Shirley's enormous contributions to the Walk for Life program and *A Matter of Balance* have made an impact on hundreds of people striving to stay active as they age. In fact, she regularly encourages participants in one program to try the other. But most of all, it's her ability to connect with people that makes the difference. As her coaching partner Susan says, "She gets nothing but rave reviews!" And that's why we'd like to thank her for all her work and announce that Shirley Lumry is the 2010 Senior Care Connections Member of the Year.

### Ready To Help!

One of the many benefits of being a Connections member is the ability to call the Senior Care office and arrange to have a private, one-to-one meeting with a trained volunteer to get those hard questions answered. These services are provided free of charge in collaboration with the Senior Rights Assistance and SHIBA programs of Senior Services of King County. All of the volunteers are committed to total confidentiality and do not discuss any information divulged in a counseling session. The advisor will also never tell a client what to do, only explain, guide and advise people through the information. They also do not sell or recommend any specific type of insurance. To arrange a meeting with a volunteer, call to make an appointment.

Volunteers available to meet at the Senior Care Office, call 425-688-5800.

- Choosing a Medicare Plan, Medicare Supplemental Policy or Long-Term Care Insurance
- Benefits Check Up and Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) Benefits
- Burial/Funeral, Substitute Decision-Making, Advance Directives, Estate Planning

## Managing Stress

**S**tress is a natural reaction to an urgent situation, our fight-or-flight instinct that helps us protect ourselves from danger. Chronic stress in daily life is not healthy and can be caused by excessive worry about health, finances or family members. People under stress are often unable to relax and can suffer such symptoms as insomnia, anxiety, back pain, headache, muscle tension, irritability, sweating, trembling. Excessive stress can cause a loss of interest in daily activities, fatigue,

difficulty concentrating, social withdrawal, depression and turning to alcohol or drugs to cope with stressors.

Managing stress is all about taking charge of our schedule and environment as well as the way we deal with our problems in order to maintain a well-balanced life. The first step in dealing with stress is to identify the source. Is the stressor avoidable? If so, problem solved! If not, we need to learn (or remind ourselves of) healthy ways to manage stress. Some strategies are listed below:

- Set realistic goals and establish a manageable schedule at home and at work.
- Try to view change as a positive challenge, not a negative threat.
- Plan for 'stressful' big events and projects as best you can. Ask for help or break big projects into small tasks.
- Accept the things you can't change, like the weather. Also, try not to worry about the past or future events and live more fully in the moment.



*Get regular exercise.  
Exercise helps you manage  
stress in multiple ways.*

- Make time for activities or hobbies you find fun and relaxing such as going for a walk, working in the garden, spending time with family, listening to music, watching a comedy or reading a good book.
- Adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes well-balanced meals and limit or avoid sugar, caffeine and alcohol.
- Talk with someone. Seek support from a trusted friend or family, friend or health professional when needed.
- Use meditation or deep-breathing exercises to help you relax.
- Get regular exercise. Exercise helps you manage stress in multiple ways, increases endorphins – the feel-good chemicals in our brain—relieves tension and helps you sleep better and feel more refreshed the next day.

If you need help in managing stress, talk with your primary care physician.

*Contributed to this article:*

*Mandana Shamsa, MD, Overlake Medical Clinic, Bellevue*



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*Fashions from the Heart* 

Fashion show and luncheon hosted by  
The Roger Stark Cardiac & Stroke Auxiliary

**Wednesday, February 23, 2011**  
**Hyatt Regency Bellevue**  
**11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

All proceeds benefit the Cardiac &  
Stroke programs at Overlake Hospital  
Medical Center.

**Tickets: \$150 - Sweetheart Benefactor,**  
**\$100 - Stroke of Luck Patron and**  
**\$65 - Heart Warmer.**

For more information call 425-688-5526 or  
e-mail [events@overlakehospital.org](mailto:events@overlakehospital.org).

## January Luncheon RSVP

To reserve your place at the January luncheon, please fill out this form and send it along with your check to: *Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center.* Payment must be received with reservation. *Mail by Wednesday, January 19* to: Senior Care/Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center, 1035 116th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. To receive a map, please call 425-688-5800.

### *January Luncheon Reservation Form*

*Yes!* I/We would like to make reservations to attend *"Getting to the Heart of the Matter"* on Wednesday, January 26.

Number of people attending at **\$12 each**: \_\_\_\_\_. Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(Please make checks payable to Overlake Hospital Medical Center.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

## Congratulations to Overlake Breast Health

Overlake proudly announces its Breast Health program is the first in the Seattle area to be accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers. This designation underscores Overlake's commitment to the highest level of breast health care and gives patients the added confidence that Overlake has undergone a rigorous evaluation by a highly respected, external organization.