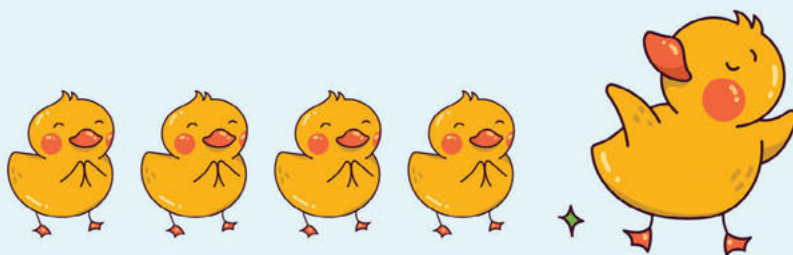


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President's Message

A Word from Joe Steckler,
Our President & Founder



While serving as president of Helping Seniors and becoming more familiar with the problems encountered by seniors, I believe that we are fortunate in having a tremendous resource such as *Senior Scene Magazine* with which to make these problems known so that solutions can be effected. I read a lot of media devoted to senior issues, but the insertion of the Helping Seniors newsletter and publication of the many articles devoted to senior issues makes this magazine of paramount interest to seniors and those who care for seniors.

Included in this issue of *Senior Scene Magazine* is a story about a veteran's assistance program that needs to be widely disseminated, as it will be of great help to many veterans in Brevard County. The article addresses a veteran's program that can give financial assistance ranging from \$1,800 to \$3,000 monthly and is paid to help offset caregiver costs. Since many caregivers are spouses of the one requiring assistance, the money is paid to the family caregiver.

It is important that we understand this is not VA Aid and Attendance, rather it is another example of the many programs about which little is known. Read the article and if you think you might be eligible call the VA office in Viera at 321-633-2012. I recommend this number because it connects you to the team that assists those needing VA help and can get you started in the right direction.

The VA clinic has an excellent hearing aid program that offers the latest in technology, and the service is excellent. There is also an eye and dental clinic. These clinic are a little more restricted, but they are available. Should you need such service, I would give the team a call at 321-633-2012 and state your problem.

You can always call us at 321-473-7770 – we might be able to give you a good steer.



**Need Help?
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Your Aging Plan: Medically Sound

*Kerry Fink, Executive Director
Helping Seniors of Brevard*

As we start racing the rest of summer on our run-up to fall, let's do a Medical Checkup and be sure that our Aging Plan has considered everything needed to be "Medically Sound."

The importance of getting the right convergence of insurance coverage with the right medical professionals (doctors, specialists, and more) at the right time seems to be the success behind a good plan for getting the best health (and wellness) during our senior years.

In this edition of Helping Seniors News™, we continue along our 2022 Theme "Getting Your Ducks in a Row" with the ideas about how we can best organize our Medical Aging Plan.

As you may know, our Operations Director, Nancy Deardorff, has 33 years experience as a Registered Nurse and ran one of the area's largest and most respected home health agencies for many years, so she was the perfect person to turn to for help in our key article, "You are the Captain of Your Own Healthcare Team."

The best idea, as we have talked about all along, is "don't try this on your own" - use the tips, ideas, and suggestions provided to help you build a team of medical and insurance experts that understand (and care!) about your particular circumstances AND who have the experience and expertise to help you make the best decisions in this area.

So, as Nancy Deardorff might say, "Okay, Captain, let's clear you for take-off on your Medical Aging plan!"



Have You Thought About This?

*Nancy Deardorff, Operations Director
Helping Seniors of Brevard*

Eight percent of the US population 65 and older take five or more medications. In healthcare we call this polypharmacy, and it includes both prescription (Rx) and over the counter (OTC) medications. Older Americans purchase 40% of all OTC medications and are three times more likely to be taking one or more OTC medications.

While we rely on medications to treat and manage health conditions, all medications have the potential for side effects, adverse effects, and interactions with other medications, food, or herbal supplements. The more medication someone is taking, the greater the chances of an adverse effect or interaction. But there are things you can do to minimize risk and maximize benefit of your medication regimen.

Make a list of everything you take including prescriptions, OTC meds, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Include the brand name and generic name, dose, frequency, reason for the medication, and who prescribed it. Keep this list up to date, make sure all your doctors know what you are taking, and bring it with you on all doctor's appointments.

Medication Dos and Don'ts.

- Don't start or stop taking medication (Rx and OTC), without consulting your doctor.
- Don't share prescription medications.
- Don't skip doses or take extra doses.
- Do read the label. Many medications look similar, or explore prepackaged medication.
- Do use one pharmacy.
- Do ask your pharmacist to review your medication for potential interactions.

Know your medications, read labels, ask questions, and engage your healthcare team to be sure your medication regimen is working for you.



You Are the Captain of Your Own Healthcare Team

*Nancy Deardorff, Operations Director
Helping Seniors of Brevard*

Just thinking about going to a doctor's appointment can be anxiety provoking for many.

I practiced as a Registered Nurse for 33 years, and I am grateful for my experience and knowledge of the healthcare system. I cannot imagine how overwhelming it must be for someone that has not been in the healthcare industry.

My goal in writing this article to you is to hopefully alleviate at least a little anxiety and impart some knowledge so that you feel a little more empowered to invest in your own healthcare.

Heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease (such as COPD), strokes, Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, Influenza, and pneumonia are some of the top health conditions effecting Americans 65 years and older.

An acute health condition is a condition that comes on abruptly and runs a short severe course. Often, an acute health condition requires immediate medical attention or may require hospitalization.

A chronic disease condition, meaning persistent or long standing, lasts for a prolonged time and may come and go.

An acute health condition can sometimes become chronic, and a chronic health condition can have an acute exacerbation (aggravation, worsening, flare up) that may lead to the need for immediate medical attention and intervention.

According to the CDC, six in ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease, and four in ten Americans have two or more chronic diseases. Chronic diseases are leading drivers of the nation's \$4.1 trillion in annual health care costs. According to the CDC, key lifestyle risks for chronic disease are tobacco use, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, and excessive alcohol use.

There are many things we can do to prevent or

at least minimize our chances of developing some of these chronic health conditions – and prevention is far less costly than treatment. But what if you already have a chronic health condition?

The key in dealing with a chronic health condition is effective management of the condition. Effective management of a chronic health condition is a team effort.

Your team is made up of your primary care physician, specialists, other health professionals (pharmacists, physical therapists, nurse, mental health professionals, dentists) and you.

Every great team needs a team captain, and that team captain is.... YOU! While your primary care physician is a great co-captain, ultimately, you are in charge of your own healthcare.

So, what can you do to be an effective captain of your health care team? Well let's start by how to prepare for your doctor's appointment.

Start by having an accurate, up to date list of all the prescription, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements you take and the name of the physician who prescribed the medication. Note the dose and frequency of the medication.

If you don't have a list or have some confusion, feel free to bring the bottles/containers with you on your visit. Also, use one pharmacy. This reduces the chances of medication errors, and your pharmacist is an important part of your healthcare team.

Next, have a list of questions ready for your physician. Your physician only has a short time with you and will appreciate it if you have your questions ready. Then make a note of the doctor's answers.

And don't be shy or embarrassed. Doctors, nurses, medical assistants, and other healthcare professionals understand that you are not in the medical profession, and in fact they want you to ask questions. Do not be embarrassed to say if you do not understand and need something more clearly explained.

(continued on page 5)



Helping Seniors Of Brevard



You Are the Captain of Your Own Healthcare Team

*Nancy Deardorff, Operations Director
Helping Seniors of Brevard*

(continued from page 4)

Keep a health diary. This does not need to be anything fancy. In fact, it can be a good old fashioned wall calendar. Make notes of relevant health facts on your calendar as it pertains to your health condition. For instance, a diabetic would note blood sugar readings, a person with heart failure would note daily weights, someone with high blood pressure would jot down their daily blood pressures. Information that is pertinent to your condition or unusual for you should be noted and brought with you on your doctor visit.

Bring someone with you on your visit! It is common for people to be nervous on a doctor's visit, and many folks are not fully listening due to anxiety or may forget or not understand what is said on the visit. So, bring someone with you to advocate for you, help take notes, and be a second set of ears.

Tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. You are not there to impress anyone; you are there for your health. So, if you cheated on your diet, ate a lot of salty or fatty foods, or you went heavy on the sweets, tell your doctor. If you experienced a fall, even a fall without injury, tell your doctor. Do not tell your doctor that everything has been fine if it has not been fine. Healthcare professionals can only help you if they have a clear clinical picture.

Remember, early symptom management is key to preventing or mitigating an acute episode, so tell your doctor if you start to develop any symptoms of exacerbation of your condition, and in an emergency, call 911.

Taking on the role of captain of your healthcare team will not only empower you to make good healthcare choices, but along with your healthcare team, is key to ensuring your chronic health condition is effectively managed.



The Benefits of an Assisted Living Facility (ALF)

*Samuel E. Kosmick
Zon Beachside Assisted Luxury Living*

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Avid: The Wave of Change in Home Care

*Traci Graf, RN
Avid Home Care*

Avid Home Care Services in Merritt Island is a unique home care services provider in our area. It is different in many ways starting from the top down. Avid is not a chain or franchise. It is locally owned and operated by an RN and her family, along with an amazing group of caregivers sharing a passion for delivering professional, quality home care services at affordable rates.

A chance encounter that grew into a friendship between two retired business ladies and the current owners, Jeff and Traci Graf, is where the idea was born. Traci was a home care nurse for Health First. She knew first hand that “non skilled” home care was being delivered in a cookie cutter manner, with three and four hour minimums making it unaffordable for so many.

Discussions with her friends is how the client centered concept for Avid was created and started April 28, 2017. Today it is going stronger than ever in our 5th year of providing care in the area.

Like everyone providing home care, we have had staffing difficulties since Covid, but we have over 50 employees and continue to add wonderful committed people to our team every day.

We also provide something called care management to our clients at no extra charge, provided by the owner and Nurse Administrator Traci. This can include collaboration with physicians, other services, and close direction of staff for multidisciplinary methods of keeping seniors safe in their homes.

Most clients can stay safely in their own homes until the end of their lives with the right combination of services and resources and a little creative scheduling.

Of course, staff can do all sorts of tasks in the home to help keep things clean and organized; laundry, changing sheets, meal preparation and transportation are only some of the things we can do that are obvious needs. But what about the things that happen when you have a dedicated caregiver in the home that are not so clear cut?

I am talking about things that are impossible to quantify – like helping slow the progression of Alzheimer’s disease through strict routine, exercise, nutrition, and social engagement. Assisting someone in keeping their beloved pet in the home even if they can no longer walk a dog or bend over to change a litter box. Giving extended family living close or far away peace of mind that someone is seeing their loved one every day for physical and social needs.

Our services have helped extend the lives of clients over and over again. Providing proper nutrition with fresh cooked meals and treasured family recipes they no longer have the stamina to prepare can assist in successful management of chronic disease like congestive heart failure. Assistance in continuing exercise programs set by physical therapy to help maintain mobility can decrease falls.

Close supervision, direction, and consulting on complex medical issues and fact finding for decision making are all things we do really well. Talk to anyone with a loved one who needs assistance at any level and they will tell you these are the things that are invaluable.

Feel free to call us any time with questions at 321-392-3400. We would love to help you or a loved one with assistance in the home. We are fully licensed, bonded and insured, and all staff are employees, not subcontractors. We hire certified nursing assistants and home health aides with a variety of experience. No exemptions for criminal backgrounds are acceptable, and staff must have current CPR, a valid driver’s license, and car insurance.

We wouldn’t be able to call ourselves “the wave of change in home care” if home care didn’t need to change!



The Importance of Nutrition After a Hospital Stay

*Jillian Zebris
Chefs for Seniors*

After a hospital stay, proper nutrition is important for healing and can help prevent future hospitalizations. Malnutrition contributes to higher infection rates, muscle weakness, brain fog, and impaired wound healing.

Why is there an increased need for nutrient-dense foods after a hospital stay?

Our body is as healthy as the food we give it. If we deprive ourselves of fresh fruits, vegetables, and high-quality proteins, and instead eat foods that are manufactured and full of preservatives (think frozen meals and fast food), our bodies are more susceptible to illness, injury, and delayed recovery.

When we are ill or injured, our bodies work overtime to heal. This requires lots of energy and, without enough nutrients, can be a very slow process. Also, many medications are dangerous to take on an empty stomach. It is essential to eat several nutritious meals throughout the day and stay hydrated.

What can I do to make sure my loved ones are eating right after a hospital discharge?

A doctor will discuss post-discharge recovery, including diet recommendations. This can be overwhelming to loved ones and caretakers, which is why communicating with a dietician can be helpful.

A Registered Dietician or Nutritionist can explain foods to avoid and foods to eat for better recovery. If food preparation or grocery shopping is a challenge, a personal-chef service like Chefs for Seniors can help. Unlike many meal delivery services, Chefs for Seniors can work with various diets (low sodium/potassium, vegetarian, etc.) and customize meals to fit clients' tastes and preferences.

Effective discharge planning is not only beneficial for the individual, but because it reduces readmission rates (and costs), it's a positive for the caregiver, too. Call 321-210-6953



How Care Management Services Can Help You

*Catherine Rowlands, MBA, CMC, BCPA
Total Long-Term Care Consultant Services*

A Certified Care Manager (CM) is a professional who specializes in guiding an individual through the health care continuum for a given health situation. A CM is a problem solver with specialized knowledge and skills in assessing, planning, evaluating, coordinating, and monitoring.

The goals of a CM are to identify and meet the individual's medical care needs and preferences in the least restrictive, most appropriate, and most cost effective setting.

In the acute care setting, the CM would identify the individual's health issue and research medical practitioners who specialize in treating the identified health issue as to their training, rating, and insurance acceptance. This information would be presented to the individual to review, make a decision, and schedule an appointment.

The CM would be available to accompany the client to the appointment to be a second pair of ears to listen to the doctor's assessment/diagnosis/treatment plan.

In the long-term care setting, the CM would assist the individual in deciding where in the long-term care continuum to receive identified services: in the home or the community - a group home, an assisted living, or a skilled nursing facility.

The CM would provide information on services provided, insurance coverage, cost, and the Department of Health annual facility survey results to enable the individual to make a good decision.

In both the acute care and long term care setting, the CM would follow the individual and identify/treat medical problems to prevent a crisis from arising.

Call 321-752-0995 or email

nfo@tlcconsultantservices.com



Medical Prevention Tips

*Karen Wernlund, B.S. In Psy.
Emerald Care Management, LLC*

Benjamin Franklin said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Recently I learned about the Brevard County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Vial of Life program. It can be our a voice that we may not have in an emergency. The program allows First Responders to do their job quickly and efficiently, because your vital information is at their fingertips.

The Vial of Life program is tailor made for the 28% of the population in the U.S. who are over the age of 65 and living alone. Here's how it works; you contact the Office of EMS in Brevard County at 321-633-2056 and request a Vial of Life. You will receive the vial, with a medical information form and two green Vial of Life stickers inside. One sticker goes on the front door, and the other goes on the refrigerator where you keep the vial. Full directions and information can be found at the following website: <https://www.brevardfl.gov/FireRescue/EmergencyMedicalServices/VialOfLifeProgram>

The Mayo Clinic recognizes the leading cause of injuries in older adults is falling in our own homes in part due to the medications we take as we age. We can help prevent trips to the hospital or doctors office, unnecessary time spent healing, and higher medication costs by removing home hazards. Here are some easy fixes: keep high-traffic areas de-cluttered, remove loose rugs from the home, store daily necessities within easy reach, and use nonslip mats in the bath. Not only are you saving your own time, but that of your doctor and medical staff. You know what Benjamin Franklin always said: “Time is money.” And I can help.

Contact Emerald Care Management LLC at 321-622-8030 or at emeraldcare21@gmail.com for Home Safety Assessments and so much more. Check us out on Facebook too!



Is Fear Keeping You Away from the Dental Office?

*Lee Sheldon, DMD
Sheldon and Furtado, PLLC*

I know it. I hear it often. I'm afraid of the dentist. It's a real fear. Often it comes from a bad childhood experience. How I wish you didn't have that experience.

But here we are, facing the results of that fear. You finally called us because you couldn't do anything else. You're in pain. You're embarrassed. You put your hand over your mouth when you smile. That's how bad your teeth look.

Except now it's worse. Now it hurts to chew. Or you're looking for a new job, or maybe a new relationship. You now have no choice. You have to do something.

“But what will be different?” you're thinking.

First is the doctor you will be seeing. We wouldn't have chosen this profession, this office, or this team unless we enjoyed being with people like you.

I just saw Marcy last week. She had a big smile on her face. But that's not the Marcy from five years ago, barely able to confront the door handle to come into our office. Now she comes to our office for regular cleanings just like everyone else.

You get the courage to make the phone call. You then come in. You find out that maybe it's a little better than you remembered. Maybe you need sedation or maybe our dental anesthesiologist to get past the fears. And you do. Your work is done. You've spent a comfortable time in our office.

And ultimately, a switch goes off. The dental office can be a good place. You don't need the sedation anymore. Everything is fine.

You can smile and chew and laugh just like everyone else. You can enjoy being in the dental office. Isn't it time to take the first step?

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Join the Businesses and Organizations that
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Your Helping Seniors sponsorship in 2022 is the
good business decision for you that also helps us serve the rapidly
expanding population of Seniors in Brevard County!

Call (321) 473-7770 and Join Today!





Helping
SENIORS
TRAVEL CLUB

2023 FOUNDATION CRUISE HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD

Jan 6th & Jan 8th 2023 - 2- 7- or 9-Night Cruise Round Trip Port Canaveral

3 Cruises to Choose From!



Sail with your friends and your Helping Seniors friends from Brevard County on the luxurious MSC Meraviglia! Choose our 2-night quick getaway to Ocean Cay Marine Preserve, our 7-night sailing to Costa Maya, Cozumel and more, or come with us for the entire fun sailing!

**Take a 2-night getaway,
Explore the 7-night sailing
or join us for 9-nights
of fun and luxury!**



BACK TO SEA SPECIAL:

Limited Time Offer

**Book an Outside Cabin
& receive FREE Upgrade
to BALCONY CABIN!**

Let's Go Sailing!

MSC Meraviglia - January 2023
from Port Canaveral with your friends from Brevard County!

2-night getaway Jan 6th; 7-nights sailing Jan 8th
or join us for all 9-nights!
Call Chris or Betty at 321-978-5211 for Details.



**2022 Foundation Cruise
Helping Seniors of Brevard**

Travel is Better with Friends.
HelpingSeniorsTravelClub.com



Special MSC Meraviglia 7-Night/9-Night Cruise Price Includes...

- Cabin * All Port Charges * All Taxes * Gratuities
- * MSC Drink Package (valued at \$343/person)
- * Wifi Package (valued at \$134/person)
- * All Meals * All Entertainment * Special Events * Private Cocktail Party
- * Admin Fee * Fundraising Donation - Helping Seniors of Brevard
- * Work-Out Facilities * World Class Spa * Great Dancing * Live Bands

Itinerary...

- Fri Jan 6th Leave Port Canaveral at 6:00PM • Sat Jan 7th Ocean Cay Marine Preserve
- Sun Jan 8th Leave Port Canaveral at 6:00PM • Mon Jan 9th Nassau Bahamas
- Tue Jan 10th Ocean Cay Marine Preserve • Wed Jan 11th Fun Day at Sea
- Thu Jan 12th Costa Maya Mexico • Fri Jan 13th Cozumel Mexico
- Sat Jan 14th Fun Day at Sea • Sun Jan 15th Arrive Port Canaveral

EARLY BOOKING INCENTIVE - Book outside & receive free upgrade to Balcony!

- 2-Night Getaway Balcony at \$264/person (double)
- 7-Night Balcony (w/ Wifi & Drink Package) at \$842/person (double)
- 9-Night Balcony (w/ Wifi & Drink Package) at \$1106/person (double)

**Contact: Helping Seniors of Brevard Travel Club Office 321-978-5211
or Chris Morse 818-430-1480 Cell
Cruising the Sea of Excellence**



SeniorTravel
Your Senior Travel Specialist
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