From the Administrators Desk

Welcome to the first edition of Elim Park Health Care Center’s newsletter REFRESH AT ELIM. This is a great new opportunity to showcase the various departments that make up the Health Care Center and provide new information and updates regarding the extraordinary services we provide at Elim Park.

Elim Park is a not-for-profit Life Plan Community with a mission to provide quality care through comprehensive wellness programs and medical facilities for our residents in a Christ-centered environment. With over 100 years of healthcare experience, Elim Park’s Health Care Center embraces a wide variety of services for inpatients and outpatients. All are welcome at Elim Park!

Many great changes are taking place in the Health Care Center, including expansion of our Short Term Post-Acute unit into the Pavilion area. This will increase our post-acute to 45 dedicated beds. Elim Park was chosen by the Department of Public Health to be part of a Music & Memory program to help improve the lives of residents with dementia. We are all very excited to have this opportunity for our residents.

The strategic vision continues at Elim Park as we recently presented our second annual Clinical Excellence and Quality Report. This practice of accountability allows us to showcase our successful operations resulting in superior outcomes and financial stability. We are proud to illustrate patient-centered care delivered in a compassionate atmosphere. Our dedication to high quality health care continues to be paramount in helping our patients recover and improve their quality of life.

~ Chris Newton, MHA, LNHA, ACHE—Administrator

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“Forging Solutions Out of Challenges”...

was the March 2016 theme for Social Work month. Social workers confront some of the most challenging issues facing individuals, families and communities, and forge solutions that help people reach their full potential and make our world a much better place to live!

Social work is one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. There currently are more than 600,000 people employed in this field. They contribute to all levels of society working towards fostering positive relationships and create hope and opportunity for people in need.

Tips for families and friends in a healthcare setting:

* When visiting a family member or friend, brighten their day by bringing a favorite food treat, beverage, flowers, balloons or pictures. Everyone also loves visits from their family pet, and of course children brighten everyone’s day!

Fun fact about our Social Service team here at Elim Park:

* Kristie Strollo, Jennifer Galligan and Molly Collins are all dog lovers. Kristie has a 2 year old lab mix, Nala. Jen has two dogs, Tallulah, an 11 year old Lhasa Apso and Mady, a 5 year old yellow lab. Molly has a golden retriever puppy named Jerry.

* Jennifer Galligan (now Jennifer Nolan) was recently married on April 23rd this year. Congratulations Jen!

Please take a moment to recognize the Social Workers in your life!

More than just Admissions

Did you know that the Admissions and Marketing Team do regular hospital visits?

If you find your loved one hospitalized due to an accident or illness, it can be a very stressful time.

Regardless of your level of care at Elim Park, the Admissions and Marketing Coordinators are here to walk you through the process. In addition to our onsite visits, we also have access to many of our area hospitals medical records, which gives us the ability to see, with permission, what is happening with your loved one in real time!

Most health care needs can be met at Elim Park. Please call Nicole (ext. 123) or Sarah (ext. 139) in Admissions to find out how we can help.

Meet Nicole Caccomo and Sarah Mach, Health Services Admission Coordinators

Congratulations to Alice Frascatore ALSA CNA for naming the Health Care Center Newsletter and being the recipient of the $50 gift card. Thank you Alice!

Elim Park Social Service Team: Kristie Strollo, Jennifer Nolan and Molly Collins
Changes to Recreation

In November of 2015, Therapeutic Recreation changed its name to the Life Enrichment department, uniting the mission and department title. Their mission is indeed Life Enrichment, bringing activities that are not only therapeutic but also enriching to each resident. With this change, the Country Kitchen also went through some décor updates making the area more cozy and home-like for our residents.

Over the last few months, there has been changes in programming as well, revising the programs for resident’s enjoyment, including several new entertainers. The staff is always open to suggestions to meet the leisure needs of our residents.

Life Enrichment has extended its hours to include staff staying later during the week and longer hours on the weekend. The hours are M-F until 5:30 and Sat & Sun until 4:30.

Life Enrichment held two Open Houses in 2015. One for the newly renovated Kitchen, and the other a Christmas Open House. Both were received very well and our residents and staff all enjoyed themselves very much!

Life Enrichment continues to expand its services, including spearheading the Music & Memory Program Elim Park is initiating in the near future.

If you have any suggestions for the Life Enrichment staff, please call ext. 4113.

Spring has Sprung!

Life Enrichment has the new baby chicks!! Their first few weeks here at Elim Park will be spent in their enclosure in the Country Kitchen Window. Once they are big enough, they will join the older chickens outside in the coop area.

From top left over: Olive Egger Chicks; White Leghorn; Light Brahma; Easter Egger; Barred Rock; Brown Leghorn; Rhode Island Red; French Black Maran
Our New Baby Chicks… (middle)

Highlights from Life Enrichment

Chef’s Corner: The department continues to offer the Farm to Table cooking program, held every Mon. & Fri. at 10:30 a.m. If you have a recipe you would like to try, please let us know.

Bake Shop: Bake Shop is held every Wednesday afternoon at 2 p.m., baking seasonal treats and holiday favorites.

Patio Gardens: This year we will be adding more veggies than in the past. Look for the addition of carrots, potatoes and possibly pumpkins.

Eggs: Chicken and Duck eggs are for sale all year round. $5/dozen or $2.50/1/2 dozen.

Helium Balloons: Birthday balloons are now for sale in Life Enrichment. Mylar for $2.00 and Latex for $1.00. Surprise a co-worker or family member. All monies are returned to the department for ongoing programs.

Health Care Center Prom

Tuesday June 21st, 2016 @ 2:00 p.m. In the RCH Dining Room …… Entertainment and Refreshments will be provided.
It was March 4th, 1986 when Donna Dzubak started her first day of employment here at Elim Park. She had just graduated from a CNA program and this was her first, and has definitely been, her last job as an aide.

Donna started by working on the 3 to 11 p.m. shift, while caring for her then 5-year old son and fifteen-year old daughter. At that time, Elim Park had just two apartment buildings, an ICF level of care as well as the HA (Home for the Aged) which now is called the RCH (Residential Care Home).

Donna has stayed at Elim Park because she enjoys working here, and the reason is: “It’s because we treat each other like family. Working now on Post-Acute makes me happy to see the residents come in, make progress, and are then ready to go home.”

Donna has always been considered a very valuable employee, and the residents love her!

We thank Donna for her continued dedication to Elim Park and want her to know how much she is appreciated!

~ submitted by Sarah de los Cientos, RN

Infection Prevention Update

Our community is still as risk for the Flu, Flu like Viruses, and Gastro-intestinal Viruses. Here are 10 tips to help protect your-self and others from illness:

1. **Increase your hand hygiene!!** Wash well with soap and water. Use alcohol gel or foam frequently, and always before and after contact with others. Keep a hand sanitizer ready when you are out and about! Remind family members, especially children, to wash their hands frequently, especially before meals and food preparation.

2. **Wipe down environmental surfaces frequently, especially:** phones, doorknobs, refrigerator handles, keyboards, pens, remote controls, and any other shared objects.

3. **Cover your coughs and sneezes with your sleeve!** Wash your hands after sneezing or coughing.

4. **Keep your hands away from your face.** Many illnesses are spread by touching your face with germs that are on your hands you cannot see.

5. **Keep 3-6 feet between yourself and others when possible.**

6. **Decline a questionable hand-shake or hug with a polite explanation.**

7. **Change your toothbrush after each illness, or wash it on the top rack of dishwasher.**

8. **Avoid preparing food for others if you are ill.**

9. **Eat right, exercise, reduce your stress, rest and sleep more, and drink fluids to keep hydrated.**

10. **If you do get ill, PLEASE stay away from others until you are well!!**

~ submitted by Kim Gray, RN - Infection Control Nurse
**Music & Memory ♪**

On February 23, 2016, Elim Park was awarded a grant from the Department of Public Health to receive training to become a Certified Music & Memory Provider. Through this program, Elim Park will receive some of the equipment needed to begin implementation of the program.

The Music & Memory Program helps residents to “find renewed meaning and connection in their lives through the gift of personalized music”. Using iPods and iPads, personalized, individualized music playlists are created. For residents with impaired memory or physical challenges, listening to their favorite music brings back special memories that are not lost and improve their quality of life.

Once we are certified as a Music & Memory Provider, the team will begin the process of working with some residents and their families to build their playlists. We look forward to all this program will bring to our residents in our community.

For more information about this program go to the website at [Music&Memory.org](http://Music&Memory.org)

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**Elim Park Strategic Vision for the Future**

Elim Park Baptist Home is beginning a major strategic initiative in the future delivery of skilled nursing services for the organization. We are looking at a Small Homes model which incorporates a community based environment for our permanent residents. Chris Newton is leading this initiative.

We are currently in the fact finding stage to determine the right number of beds per small home, types of services (Long-term care, Memory Care, Post-Acute care, Assisted Living, RCH, Home Health Care, and Hospice), method of delivery, building/footprint options etc. to make it a profitable venture for the future of Elim Park. Elim Park is also looking at three other additional options in terms of construction alternatives (use of existing space vs. new construction), and levels of care/types of services delivered based on a demographic market analysis in order to determine the best option we feel most viable for our organization in the future delivery of health care services at Elim Park.

As we progress further along with our strategic vision, we will keep our residents, families and staff informed and provide periodic updates.

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The RCH has a new face. Rebecca “Becky” Gravel, LPN has joined the staff on RCH. Becky has been a nurse for 14 years. She is married with two young daughters, Taylor and Alyssa. She enjoys spending time with all of her patients, and loves being a soccer mom as well!

Help us in welcoming Becky to the RCH family!!

~ submitted by Megan Santos
Joshua Greene, Director of Therapy and some of the dedicated team from Elim Park Rehabilitation

The therapy staff at Elim Park provides in-patient and outpatient services, that include Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Aquatic Therapy.

The team also provides homemaking and community re-training, as well as in-home safety assessments to ensure a smooth transition home for the post-acute patient.

Volunteer Voices

“God had a plan for me” is exactly how Leanne Case, RCH resident and Elim Park Volunteer describes her journey to Elim Park.

After 26 adventurous years living in Florida with her late husband Douglas, and care for her late parents, Leanne returned to be with family in Connecticut. Soon after her return North, she began to experience headaches that Leanne thought were the result of stress. After her sister was unable to rouse her from a nap, Leanne sought immediate medical attention.

Diagnosed with a brain tumor in 2014, Leanne found herself making the decision to have rehabilitation at Elim park following her tumor removal surgery. Leanne credits the excellent care and motivation she received from the staff of Elim Park, along with the loving support of her family towards her miraculous recovery.

With the gift of good health, Leanne shows her appreciation of Elim Park through her volunteer work. Whether she is volunteering on Friday mornings at the Wellness reception desk, assisting with Wed/Sat Bingo as a Life Enrichment Activity Assistant, or introducing new RCH neighbors to activities within Elim Park, Leanne generously donates her talents with professionalism and compassion.

Elim Park Volunteer Services is privileged to have Leanne celebrate her second year of volunteer work, and looks forward to many years of her wonderful southern hospitality that she shares with the residents and staff of Elim Park daily!

~ submitted by Allyson Palma, Volunteer Director

Resident Spotlight: Ruth Rodgers

Ruth comes to Elim Park from the Pine Rock section of Hamden, CT. She worked for years at Fowler’s Jewelry Store, where she repaired jewelry as well as more complex tasks. Ruth is an Opera fan, and tells of her experience at the Metropolitan Opera where she “stood behind the rail” for a performance. She was also fortunate to meet one of her Opera idols, Eleanor Steber.

Some of Ruth’s cherished memories are as a youth singing with the New Haven Symphony and the New Haven Opera Company. She also spent many happy hours at her workbench in the basement of her family home constructing models and miniatures. Ruth also has a love of cats.

Ruth enjoys many activities living at Elim Park, and especially likes Chime Choir and attending Nelson Hall performances.

~ submitted by Judy Cesarski

Look for the June 8th Rehab Open House in Nelson Hall - 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
13 Healthy Habits to Improve Your Life
By Dulce Zamora
Web MD

Eat breakfast every morning.
Research shows people who have breakfast tend to take in more vitamins & minerals and less fat & cholesterol. If there is no time at home, bring it with you!

Add fish and Omega 3 fatty acids to your diet.
It is recommended to eat 6 oz of fish at least twice per week. There are studies being done that link more omega-3s in your diet reduces allergies, asthma, eczema and autoimmune disorders.

Get enough sleep.
Seven to ten hours per night is needed. More than 2/3 of adults suffer from sleep problems. Sleep deprivation affects memory, learning and logical reasoning. Get your ZZZ's!

Social Connections.
Community activities are good for physical and mental well-being.

Exercise.
Some advantages of exercise per the National Cancer Institute include: controlling weight, maintains healthy bones, muscles & joints, reduces risk of developing high blood pressure, diabetes, death from heart disease, promotes psychological well-being.

Practice good dental hygiene.
Researches suspect that bacteria that produce dental plaque can enter the bloodstream. So floss and brush!!

Take up a hobby.
Hobbies are supposed to be fun and enjoyable which helps people live healthier!!

Protect your skin!!
Our skin starts to age as soon as we are born! UV rays causes wrinkles, dryness, age spots and skin cancers. Always wear sunscreen with at least SPF 15.

Snack Healthy.
It is recommended that we have 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Eat celery sticks, baby carrots, low fat yogurt, fruit between meals when the hunger pangs set in.

Drink Water and Eat Dairy.
Water and milk are essential fluids. The body needs water to properly hydrate joints and vital organs. Calcium is needed for strong bones and teeth. Drink up!!!

Drink Tea.
Decaffeinated tea is best. Studies have linked tea to possibly helping improve memory, prevent cavities, cancer and heart disease. (Overall research is inconclusive.)

Take a walk!
Not just long walks- keep moving throughout your day. Pace during phone calls, brushing teeth, at your kid’s soccer game! Did you know for every step you take you burn 1 calorie!!

Plan.
All the above don’t come easy. You need to plan or incorporate these habits into your busy day. Remember there is only one you- Take care of you!!
If you would like to submit a story or information for an upcoming edition of the Health Care Center Newsletter, please contact Judie Volosin ext. 4124 or jvolosin@elimpark.org

Thank you!