

Senior Services News

Aging in Place - the Village Concept

My parents, when still in their 70's, lived in the small and remote village of Barrington Passage, Nova Scotia. As they got older and more frail, their property became more difficult to manage and so my siblings and I encouraged them to sell their house and move to a condo in the city of Halifax, a couple of hours away. Halifax had all the amenities one would want in a city, including a university hospital and most important, my sister and brother lived there!

My parents resisted this idea for a time, and for cogent reasons. My dad had grown up not far from Barrington Passage, and his family was rooted in that locality. He had a sister in the village and a brother in a village nearby. Everybody in his village knew everybody else. There were many elders in the village, living independently, some over 90 years old!

It did occur to me that the move to the city might involve some losses as well as gains, the most important being the loss of what I would term the *therapeutic community*. There is something health - promoting in being connected to a community of others who share some of your history and your values, who know you well and are there to support you.

Aging involves many losses - of strength, vision, hearing, siblings, friends, and stability of health status. This can lead to the major stressors of aging - *confinement, isolation, alienation, and loss of autonomy*. We start to be confined because of the loss or impairment of our faculties. The more confined we are, the more isolated from our community we become. With isolation comes alienation; a sense that we no longer belong, that

we are not part of the mainstream. Then comes the greatest loss of all - autonomy. When we must rely on others to meet our daily needs, no matter how expert and loving and attentive they are, no one can meet those needs as well as we could when we were able.

From this set of stressors we risk falling into a 'cascade of frailty' - our diet suffers because getting out for groceries and preparing meals is now such an effort. This leads to malnutrition, weakness, and susceptibility to falls and decreased immunity. This cascade culminates in visits to the ER, hospital admissions, re-admissions, and nursing home stays, which can be so destructive in terms of quality of life.

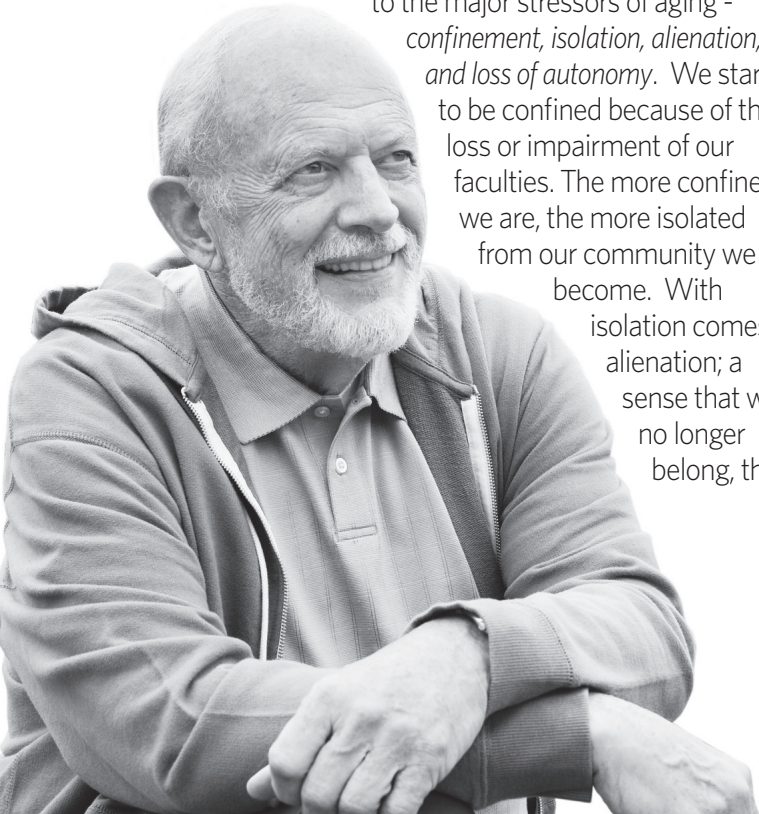
At this point it can be said that our "support system", which consists of our home and family environment, and our connections to the community, has broken down. Our health status suffers when our needs for care exceed the capacity of our support system. We face moving out of our home, having someone move in, or moving in with family or into more institutional care. Or is there another option?

What if our local community of elders were able to organize to better take care of itself, so that seniors could remain independent in their own homes for much longer than is possible now? What if my parents could have called on the community for transportation, help with shopping and meal preparation, for trusted plumbers and other service people that could help them maintain their home environment and nutritional status and improve their health and safety? How much better would they do if they remained in their home and felt more empowered and re-connected to their village?

This is precisely the idea behind the "Village Concept", an initiative that started on the east coast, but which is embodied locally in Lamorinda Village. John Muir Health is excited to become associated with Lamorinda Village, because we realize the profound benefits of the '*therapeutic community*' for everyone.

For more details about Lamorinda Village, see page four of this newsletter.

Lawren Hicks, MD
Medical Director, Senior Service



Educational Opportunities

There is no charge to attend our health education events unless otherwise noted. Registration is required. Register early, class size is limited. Register online at johnmuirhealth.com or call 941-7900 option 1.

JANUARY - MARCH 2016

Get Leaner and Stronger - Kathy Napoli, MA, RD

January 7 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Learn how age affects body composition and metabolism. Discover the important role that nutrition, exercise and sleep plays in helping us build muscle and prevents us from storing fat.

Alternatives to Pain Management - Alan Brast, Ph.D., C.C.H.T., CSA

January 8 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor

Managing chronic pain can be frustrating and sometimes even daunting. Learn techniques to help you control and minimize pain using methods which can compliment and work in concert with your medications.

Understanding and Preventing Stroke - Ray Stephens, MD

January 19 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

Sudden changes in vision, coordination, numbness or weakness could all be signs of stroke. Learn how to identify early symptoms, the importance of seeking medical care and local resources for support.

Heart Healthy Diet - Kathy Napoli, MA, RD

February 4 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Health Wellness Services

When considering heart health "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" according to the latest INTERHEART study. Learn how to take action and discover the latest nutritional and lifestyle recommendations that can improve your chances of preventing heart disease.

Exercise Methods to Prevent Falls - Lori Sweet, PT

March 1 | 10 - 11:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 3 | Outpatient Center, Brentwood

As we age, our balance skills diminish. Health conditions can also impact our balance. In addition to providing exercises that will improve your balance, this class includes a safety discussion about improving safety at home, plus ideas about footwear and assistive devices. Exercises will be done in sitting and standing positions.

Successfully Navigating Life's Changes - Alan Brast, Ph.D., C.C.H.T., CSA

March 3 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Health Wellness Services

Often because of death, illness or other circumstances people find themselves alone in the later years of their lives. This presentation will discuss ways to prepare for possible changes, how to become more self-sufficient, and lead a more fulfilling life as you age, whatever your living arrangement or social situation.

Preparing for End of Life Care - Suzanne Leib MFT, Colleen Wagner MSN, RN-BC, Karen Winer MSW, Sally Sample MD Hospice of the East Bay

March 18 | 9:30 - 11 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

End of life care is something we all face. Hospice and palliative care has emerged as specialized care for those with advanced illnesses. Our panel will discuss the documents you should have in place, the difference between palliative and hospice care and what Medicare pays for.

Ongoing Classes

AARP Driver Safety Program

Jan 23 | 1-day, 8 hour class | 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Feb 2 & 4 | 2- day, 8 hour class | 9 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Feb 20 | refresher class | 8:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

Mar 8 | refresher class | 8:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

Mar 19 | 1-day, 8 hour class | 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

This Smart Driver classroom course, designed for motorists over age 50, helps drivers refine existing skills and develop safe, defensive driving techniques. Offered in an eight hour or four-and-a-half hour refresher course for those who meet the criteria for renewal. There is a charge for this class. Register online at johnmuirhealth.com or call 941-7900 option 1.

Advance Health Care Directives – Suzanne Leib, MFT

January 19 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

February 17 | 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Concord

March 10 | 1 - 3 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Pleasanton

March 22 | 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | Outpatient Center, Brentwood

All adults, regardless of age, need to understand how they can have control over their own life and death decisions. Learn the choices you or your family may face due to an accident or serious illness. This is an opportunity to clarify your choices and make sure they will be carried out should you become unable to make your own health care decisions. Required documents will be provided.

Catch Yourself – Fall Prevention to Maintain Your Independence

February 2, 4, 9, 11 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. | 925-252-4890 | Pittsburg Senior Center

This four-session class series raises awareness about falls by practicing techniques in class. Learn how to improve your strength and balance, simplify your environment, and identify fall risks. Classes will cover home safety strategies, exercise techniques, medication management, and other ways to decrease your risk of falling. Wear comfortable shoes and clothing. Plan to attend all four classes.

Welcome to Medicare - Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program

January 13, February 10, March 9 | 7 – 9:30 p.m. | 941-7900 option 1 | John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek

This course is for those new to Medicare, or soon to enroll, who want to understand the many benefits available. Learn about health benefits, drug coverage and how to supplement your coverage. HICAP does not sell or endorse insurance products. Register online at johnmuirhealth.com or call 941-7900 option 1.

Memory Screening - What's Your Memory Fitness?

January 12, February 9, March 8 | morning appointments | 947-3300

January 13, February 10, March 9 | afternoon appointments | 947-3300

Outpatient Center, Brentwood | Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor | Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek

Many people notice changes in their memory as they grow older. If you are 65 or older and have a John Muir Health primary care physician, Senior Services, in partnership with John Muir Health Neurosciences Institute, offers a free individual memory screening to help determine if your memory is functioning at a level that is typical for a person your age. This is a screening and not a diagnostic exam. Screenings are offered on the specific dates and times at the three locations listed. Call for a 30 minute appointment.



Senior Services
 1450 Treat Blvd
 Walnut Creek, CA 94597

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Change in information? If you have a change in address or wish to be removed from our mailing list, please notify us at 947-3300 or seniorservices@johnmuirhealth.com

John Muir Health Senior Services

Senior Services offers a wide range of services for John Muir Health seniors including resources, information, assessment services, and educational programs. We help older adults, their families, and those who care for them. Our goal is to help older adults keep their independence and enjoy the best possible quality of life. **(925) 947-3300**

Outpatient Center, Brentwood
 2400 Balfour Road, Suite 201
 Brentwood

Outpatient Center, Pleasanton
 5860 Owens Drive
 Pleasanton

Outpatient Center, Tice Valley/Rossmoor
 1220 Rossmoor Parkway, Suite 100
 Walnut Creek

Outpatient Center, Walnut Creek
 1450 Treat Boulevard, 2nd Floor
 Walnut Creek

The Village Concept - Lamorinda Village

“Villages” have emerged as one of the most nationally prominent models of community aging initiatives. They are self-governed, grassroots, community-based volunteer organizations that coordinate access for their members to a variety of services and programs to promote aging in place, social integration, health, and well being.

There is great diversity in how Villages are structured but it is typical for them to address members’ needs by providing services by the Village staff, member-to-member volunteers, community volunteers, or referred to external “preferred providers” whose background and credentials have been checked by the Village and who usually offer discounts to Village members. Villages focus on social engagement and community building through member social events and involvement in Village governance.

Lamorinda Village, (www.lamorindavillage.org), first Village to open in Contra Costa is partnering with John Muir Health to develop a prototype to integrate its services with those of Villages within its service area.

Ruth D. McCahan
 Founder and Board President, Lamorinda Village

PROGRAM LOCATIONS

John Muir Health Wellness Services
 1656 N. California Blvd., Ste 100
 Walnut Creek
 (925) 941-7900 option 1

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
 Brentwood
 2400 Balfour Rd., Brentwood
 (925) 308-8100

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
 Pleasanton
 5860 Owens Dr., Pleasanton
 (925) 224-0800

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
 Tice Valley/Rossmoor
 1220 Rossmoor Pkwy., Walnut Creek
 (925) 939-1220

John Muir Health Outpatient Center,
 Walnut Creek
 1450 Treat Blvd., Walnut Creek

John Muir Medical Center, Walnut Creek
 1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek
 (925) 939-3000

Pittsburg Senior Center
 300 Presidio Ln., Pittsburg
 (925) 252-4890