

Lifetime *Health* -e-News

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Welcome to Lifetime Health-e-News

by Anne Ruffin, President

Welcome to the new electronic edition of "Lifetime Health-e-News"! Just as Lifetime Health moved to electronic medical records a few years ago, we are now bringing our patient communications into the digital era. We've adopted the e-newsletter format to be more environmentally conscious and deliver news to you quickly and more efficiently than ever before.

Over the last couple of years, Lifetime Health has been transitioning to a paperless environment, and the move to e-communications is one part of that. With e-communications, we will be able to share more timely information with you, including weather closings, flu session schedules, and events at Lifetime Health Medical Group. You can also expect a much more interactive newsletter, with links to other types of content including videos, downloads, and surveys.

We are excited to have a new way to share general health information with you, and hope you like the new format. We welcome any feedback you may have. Please send your ideas, questions or comments to patientnews@lifetimehealth.org.

New Addition to the Lifetime Health Physician Team

Lifetime Health Medical Group recently welcomed Dr. Rachel Bermudez-Lunz to the Hamburg Health Center. Dr. Bermudez is board certified in internal medicine, and is accepting new patients. She comes to us with more than 20 years of experience caring for patients in the New York City area.

Dr. Bermudez earned her medical degree from New York Medical College and completed her residency at Montefiore Medical College in the Bronx. She chose to go into primary care because she "liked following patients from start to finish."



Care Connection Program Honored for Innovation

Lifetime Health Medical Group's Care Connection Program was recently honored in the Rochester Business Journal's annual Health Care Achievement Awards in the "Health Care Innovation" category.

The goal of the award-winning program, which operates in both the Buffalo and Rochester regions, is to improve the overall quality of patient care and utilize medical services in a cost-efficient manner. The program's care coordinators "connect" patients to their primary care doctors and specialists and link them to community health resources to assist them in managing and understanding their medical needs. Implemented in 2009, this was the first coordinated care program of its kind in the Rochester and Buffalo regions. In 2010, the program "connected" with 2,040 patients whose medical needs called for enhanced coordination.

"The program reflects the mission and vision of our organization and our guiding principle of 'Patients First,'" says Julie Grossman, Care Connection Program manager.

According to the RBJ, the Health Care Innovation Award honors a company or individual primarily responsible for a discovery in medical science or for development of a procedure, device or treatment that can save lives or improve the quality of life for a large number of people.

Since the program's inception there has been a measurable and consistent improvement in quality and reduction in the overall cost of care.



The Care Connection team at the award ceremony. Pictured L to R are: Julie Grossman, RN, Debbie Gangarossa, RN, Tim McQueen and Corrine Silver, RN. Not pictured: Janet Young, RN

Need X-Ray Images? Request Them Online!

Have you recently had X-rays at one of the Lifetime Health Medical Group practices? You can now request your images online by visiting www.lifetimehealth.org. Just fill out a simple form under the "Health Tools" section.



Please allow up to two business days for us to process your request. If any additional information is needed when we receive your request, we will contact you at the phone number you provide. Just sign a release form when you come in to pick up your images, and you'll be all set.

**To Sign Up For the
Electronic Version Of
Lifetime Health-e-News,
visit:**

www.lifetimehealth.org

The Screening That Can Save Lives

We can probably all agree that getting screened for colorectal cancer is not as fun as other ways you could spend your time, like celebrating a birthday or going to the zoo, but it is extremely important to your health. Especially if you've recently celebrated a 50th birthday, or a 40th birthday if colorectal cancer runs in your family, according to guidelines from the American Cancer Society.

With March's Colorectal Cancer Awareness month just behind us, the providers at Lifetime Health Medical Group encourage patients who meet these guidelines to schedule a colonoscopy screening. Colonoscopy services are available at Lifetime Health's West Seneca location at 120 Gardenville Parkway West, Monday through Friday. Lifetime Health's experienced staff will walk you through the entire procedure, from prep to escorting you out to your vehicle after it is done. The suite is specifically designed for the comfort of our colonoscopy patients, with modern procedure rooms and spacious, sunlit recovery areas.

Although colorectal cancer is the third most common form of cancer in the United States, it is largely preventable if detected early, which is why screening is essential to maintaining good health.



For more information about colonoscopy services at Lifetime Health, call **656-4228** Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or talk to your primary care physician.

Don't Wait Until You're Sick to See the Doctor

When you feel good, you might not think about going to the doctor, but an annual health review or well child check up is an important part of keeping you healthy. Regular preventive exams give you a chance to talk to your doctor about any ongoing concerns and update important health screenings like blood pressure and cholesterol.

Here are some tips from our health professionals about annual health reviews:

- Schedule a check up around the time of your birthday to help you remember to come in.
- For kids, bring any school and/or camp forms that need to be completed by your doctor to avoid a second trip.
- Bring a list of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications that you currently take, how often you take them and why. Prepare any questions or concerns you want to talk about in your visit, and information about specialists you have may have seen in the past year.
- Show up 15 minutes early to your appointment to check in and make the most of the appointment time.

If you haven't been in for a health review in the past year, call your doctor's office for an appointment! Phone numbers and more info about the Lifetime Health practices are listed at www.lifetimehealth.org.

Lifetime Health Medical Group Earns Highest Rating for Patient-Centered Care

Lifetime Health Medical Group recently received recognition as a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Level 3 is the agency's highest designation, and it was awarded to Lifetime's Amherst, Mosher and West Seneca Health Centers in Buffalo, and the Perinton Health Center in Rochester. Only 264 primary care practices in New York State are currently recognized as Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Homes, and less than 1,000 practices in the U.S. have the distinction.



"We're honored to join an elite group of primary care providers to achieve this level of recognition," says Anne Ruffin, president of Lifetime Health Medical Group.

Patient-centered means that you come first. **Medical home** means that we are here to help you meet your health care needs, from coordinating your preventive and acute care, to helping you manage your chronic conditions.

"This recognition acknowledges both our commitment to quality and our guiding principle of putting patients first," says Mark F. Perry, M.D., chief medical officer, Lifetime Health Medical Group.

In a patient-centered medical home, your doctor leads a team of health care professionals to coordinate and provide your total health care - and you are at the center of the team. Team members may include nurses, pharmacists, specialists, plus those who help with scheduling appointments, billing or insurance needs. The team changes as your needs change. We work in partnership with you to help you meet your health care goals and make informed decisions about your care.

You have access to your team in a variety of ways: by telephone and secure online messaging, with flexible, same-day appointments, a 24-hour nurse advice line, expanded hours (including Urgent Care by Lifetime Health) and use of electronic medical records and electronic prescribing.

All of Lifetime Health's practices work in health care teams, and all locations received Level 1 patient-centered medical home recognition in 2010. We expect our additional eight locations to achieve Level 3 later this year.

At Lifetime Health, we are accountable to you. We listen to you, keep you involved and help you through the health care system. You provide the feedback to improve how we assist you in your health care. You leave our office with a plan to stay healthy.

Your medical home brings you, your family and your team together to help you make the best health care decisions for your needs.

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