



What's Happening At Main Line November 2015

Support Main Line Rehabilitation Associates' Food Drive

It's that time of year again!! STEPS will be holding their second annual Holiday food drive to help those less fortunate. Help us give back to the Chester County Food Bank by making a non-perishable food donation. This can include canned foods, cereals, rice, pasta etc. The Chester County Art Association has kindly joined the STEPS program to help us beat last year's donation of 500 pounds of food! Make a difference in a family's life during the holiday season.

Drop off locations include:

STEPS

669 Exton Commons

Exton, PA 19341

AND

The Chester County Art Association: Exton Square Mall

132 Exton Square Mall

Exton, PA 19341

OR

call Stacey at 610-280-0180 ext 115 to request donation pickups.



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Upcoming Holidays:

The holidays are quickly approaching if you are taking a vacation or going out of town please let us know as soon as possible by calling the schedule change hotline at 610-280-0180 ext. 168 or toll-free 877-480-6714 ext. 168. You can also update your staff or Clinical Coordinator about the sessions you will miss. Thank you.

Main Line Events:

Date: November 17th: Coffee and Conversation Women's Support Group

The purpose of this support group is to provide a forum for encouragement, emotional support, access to resources, and knowledge. You will have the opportunity to share personal experiences and the chance to socialize with others

Time: 6:00-7:00 PM

Location: Newtown Square Panera Bread, 3554 West Chester Pike, Newtown Square, PA 19073

For more information, please contact Stacey at 610-280-0180 ext. 115. To **R.S.V.P** contact 610-280-0180 ext. 168

Date: November 18th: Pittsburgh Support Group

A quarterly support group for individuals with brain injuries, families, supports, and professionals. The meetings are designed to be both educational and to provide a forum for individuals to share their own personal experiences. All are welcome!

Time: 1:00 pm– 3:00 pm.

Location: 1 Veterans Way, Carnegie, PA 15106. Support Group is held on the 2nd floor in the Council Chambers Room .

Contact Sarah Fischer at 610-280-0180 ext. 140 or sreis@mainline-rehab.com

Date: December 17th: Coffee and Conversation Women's Support Group

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Cold and Flu Season

During the upcoming cold and flu season, it is important to be proactive in preventing illness and staying healthy. Remember the flu is a virus that is extremely contagious. The most important step in protecting yourself against this virus is receiving your yearly flu shot. Speak with your doctor before getting vaccinated to make sure the flu shot is the right choice for you.

Here are some other tips to protect you from viruses:

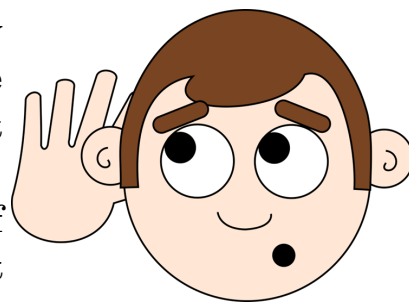
- Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer when soap and water isn't available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or upper sleeve when coughing or sneezing.
- If you are sick, stay home from work, school and volunteering.
- Get plenty of rest and eat a variety of healthy foods.
- Keep your stress levels down by engaging in activities that promote relaxation (going for a walk, meditation, painting, etc.).

The Way To Better Hearing

Hearing loss can often make it hard to listen to a conversation. It may become frustrating, and tiring to the point that you may tune out important information during conversations. In order to communicate effectively, good communication strategies are essential.

Hearing takes concentration, so it is important to pay attention to the person you will be talking to. Making eye contact with the individual or saying their name is a great way to start a conversation.

Avoid having conversations where there is a lot of background noise. A quiet and well-lit location is the best place to have a conversation. During conversation, ask the speaker to use slow and clear speech. Listening to a speaker talk rapidly may cause the conversation to sound muffled, making it difficult to be an active participant in the conversation. Whether you are the speaker or listener having a positive attitude is important in any conversation.



How to Apply for Social Security Disability Benefits (SSD)

Applying for Social Security Disability benefits can be a lengthy and frustrating process. Prepare to be patient and make use of natural supports (family, friends or staff) to help fill out paperwork accurately and on time. Use every tool at your disposal to navigate the process.

Eligibility to receive benefits is largely based on two criteria:

1. You have paid enough into the social security system.
2. You have a medical condition that will prevent you from working for at least 12 months.

If you are denied on the basis that you have not paid enough into the system you may also apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Many people apply for SSD and SSI at the same time, as the process is the same but with different requirements and benefit levels.

Speaking with a lawyer who is familiar with the application process can be helpful. Ask for a referral from others who have gone through the system already or use a lawyer referral service like www.lawyers.findlaw.com.

You can apply in a variety of ways:

- By phone at (800) 772-1213
- In person at your local Social Security Administration office (*find at <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>*)
- Online at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov>
- With the help of a social security attorney

Once you've applied you will be assigned an examiner who will review your medical records and will decide if you meet the criteria to receive benefits. This usually takes 3-4 months.

If your first application is denied you may complete a "Request for Reconsideration." A second examiner will look at your medical records and decide if you qualify. This usually takes another 2-3 months.

If your second request is denied you may request a live hearing where a judge will review your records as well as hear evidence and testimony. This may take as long as another 15-17 months.

If your hearing is unsuccessful you can file an appeal or reapply, starting the process over again. You can file an appeal at the same time as reapplying, and you can reapply as many times as you like.

Remember; be patient and ask for help from family, friends or an attorney to fill out each form correctly and submit each on time. The system works against people with brain injuries, don't give it an opportunity to deny your claim.

Health Advocacy

Self advocacy is about speaking up for what you want, and what you need. Building advocacy skills can help you become your own health advocate, ensuring you get the most appropriate medical treatment by knowing yourself, knowing what you need, and knowing how to get it. Remember it's important to speak up to your doctor if a new symptom arises, medications aren't working or if you're feeling poorly. You know your body best!

Become your own health advocate by following these steps.

Step 1: Know Yourself.

- **Education.** The first step to speaking up for your needs is to know what your needs are. Use the internet, read books about your diagnosis, talk to medical professionals, and talk to other individuals to gather all the information you can.

Step 2: Know What You Need.

- **Identify and research your problem.**
- **Documentation.** Keep a log of specific health related symptoms in a binder or folder.



Step 3: Know How To Get It.

- **Identify whom you need to contact.**
- **Be Persistent.** If someone isn't calling you back, follow up with them.
- **Know when to get others involved.** Just because it's called self advocacy does not mean you have to do everything by yourself! You can always ask your Main Line staff and coordinator for help or to point you in the direction of advocacy groups.

Resources for Lehigh Valley

- **Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living.** Provides advocacy, training, and information to empower people with disabilities and enhance community awareness
713 N. 13th St, Allentown, PA 18102
(610) 770-9781 or www.lvcil.org
- **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.** Lehigh County Offers employment training, educational funding, and placement services
45 N. 4th Street, Allentown, PA 18102
610-821-6441
- **VIA of the Lehigh Valley.** Provides services for adults with disabilities through community or workshop employment.
336 W. Spruce Street, Bethlehem, PA
18018
610-317-8000 or www.vianet.org
- **Second Harvest Food Bank of the Lehigh Valley.** Offers food distribution to individuals in a six-county services area.
2045 Harvest Way, Allentown, PA18104
610-434-0875 or www.shfblv.org
- **Fit City.** Handicap accessible gym and specially designed equipment for wheelchairs.
484 S. Nulton Ave. Easton, PA
610-252-8200 or www.fitcityone.com
- **Easton Coach Paratransit.** Provides door to door transportation for individuals with disabilities.
1200 Conroy Place, Easton, PA 18040
610-253-4055 or
www.eastoncoach.com/transit/paratransit
- **Lehigh Valley Brain Injury Support Groups.** Offers free support groups in Allentown for adults with brain injuries, their families and friends, and medical and rehabilitation professionals
Good Shepherd Health and Technology
Center. Main Level Meeting Room. 850
S. 5th Street, Allentown, PA 18103
610-776-3393 or www.biplv.com/adults

****We will feature resources for *Pittsburgh & Philadelphia* areas in future newsletters.****