



STOUGHTON PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION & VISITING NURSES



"Come Home To Us"
Stoughton Public Health

Volume 2 / Issue 4

NEWSLETTER

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE YOUR PROVIDER

All patients have the right to choose the provider who renders health care services to him/her. Physicians and hospitals often refer patients to specialists, home health care, long-term facilities or other health care professionals for further care outside of their expertise or ability to provide continuity of care.

Many times physician or hospital relationships violate a patient's right to choose the provider of their choice. Physicians often issue referrals to a specific physician based on a partnership or other relationship. Hospitals often issue referrals to providers that they own or are affiliated with. All providers must take caution not to imply or infer that a patient does not have a choice.

- **The Balanced Budget Act of 1997** (hospitals are required to provide a list of home health agencies to patients that are in their geographic area.
- **The Courts:** Precedence has been set that patients have control of their treatment, including who provides their care regardless to whom is paying for treatment.
- **Federal Statutes:** The Centers of Medicare and Medicaid programs have determined thru federal statutes that patients have the right to choose the provider of their care regardless of the treatment setting.

Above information taken from the article: The Right to Choose Providers by Joy Hicks Updated June 26, 2017. Published in www.verywellhelathy.com/right-to-choose-providers

We are here if you need us. If you or someone you know is in need of nursing or therapy services in your home, please ask for us by name:

Stoughton Public Health Association doing business as Stoughton VNA

WELCOME FALL

It is our hope that you are enjoying our newsletter and keeping up to date with what's happening at Stoughton Public Health Association & VNA. We are hopeful that our ambassadors can be our voice in the community by spreading the word of the award winning services we provide as well as activities that are happening with the agency. If you are interested in becoming a Stoughton Public Health Association ambassador, please contact our office at: 781-344-7011. We would love to have you as a part of our team.

WINTER WEATHER WILL BE HERE SOON!

- Winter weather will be here before you know it. It's important to stay on top of weather as well as knowing what to do in the event of a weather emergency. Stoughton has an emergency notification system. **ALERT STOUGHTON** is a free emergency notification service that allows Stoughton citizens to create an account for their household that includes contact information they want utilized to receive critical communications, from evacuation notices to missing child alerts. To register go to: www.stoughton.org/emergency-management and click on the link in lower left hand corner of the page.

- Flu season will also be soon approaching. Have you gotten your flu shot yet? If not come visit Stoughton Public Health Association & VNA
When: Thursdays, 3:00-5:00 PM
Where: Stoughton Town Hall (second floor),
 Stoughton Public Health Assoc. Office
 10 Pearl Street, Stoughton, MA
 Please bring your insurance card. We will bill your insurance, and there will be **NO CO-PAY**. No individual will be denied a flu shot regardless of insurance coverage.

*See flu tips on page 3

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781-344-7011

Speech Language Pathology

Webster's defines speech therapy (noun) as "therapeutic treatment of impairments and disorders of speech, voice, language, communication and swallowing."

Stoughton Public Health Association and VNA would like to introduce you to our outstanding Speech Language Pathologist, Ellen Comerford.



VNA: What made you want to be a Speech-Language Pathologist?

Ellen: I always knew I wanted to pursue a career in healthcare. During my undergraduate studies, I took an introductory course in communication disorders. I was fascinated by language and cognitive development, as well as the impact of speech, language and cognitive communication therapy on neurological disorders.

VNA: Where did you study to become a Speech-Language Pathologist?

Ellen: I received my Bachelor's and Master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Hawaii at Manoa. My husband was in the United States Marine Corps at that time and we were stationed in Hawaii for two tours of duty. We were so fortunate to live in such a beautiful, multicultural environment. After graduating with my Master's degree, I had the opportunity to work in Hawaii for the Department of Education and an acute care hospital, Queen's Medical Center.

VNA: What services does a Speech-Language Pathologist provide?

Ellen: Speech-Language Pathologists evaluate, diagnose and treat speech, language, cognitive communication, social communication and swallowing disorders in children and adults. During my career, I have specialized in evaluating, diagnosing and treating adults with speech, language, cognitive communication, and swallowing disorders as a result of stroke, head injury, progressive neurological disorders, respiratory diseases and head and neck cancer.

VNA: How long have you been a Speech-Language Pathologist?

Ellen: I have been a Speech-Language Pathologist for 30 years. I have had the opportunity to work in multiple settings including; acute care, rehabilitation and long term acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, public schools, private practice and home care.

VNA: How long have you been a Speech-Language Pathologist for the Stoughton VNA?

Ellen: I have worked for Stoughton VNA for the past 12 years. Working for the Stoughton VNA has been such a positive experience. We are one of the smaller home care agencies, therefore it allows us to work closely as a team which ultimately benefits our patients.

VNA: What specifically do you like about providing Speech, Language, Cognitive Communication and Swallowing services in the home vs in an inpatient facility?

Ellen: When a patient is discharged to home from the hospital, having home care services involved is such an important part of the rehabilitation continuum. The home environment allows me to evaluate and develop individualized goals specific to the patient's functional needs within that environment. It also allows ongoing education and teaching with the patient, patient's family and caregivers who are directly involved in the patient's day to day care. In an inpatient, rehabilitation and skilled nursing facility one often attempts to simulate experiences or tasks within the home environment however, actually being in the patient's home provides a more natural, functional and realistic measure of the patient's strengths and weaknesses.

VNA: How do you feel you have benefited your patients?

Ellen: Over the many years working as a Speech-Language Pathologist, my primary goal has been to improve my patient's quality of life for their specific communication, cognitive communication and swallowing needs. Communication skills are so important in our day to day interactions. My goal is to help my patient become as functional and independent as possible within the home and community. In addition, education and teaching with my patient and patients' family are so important regarding their specific diagnosis, purpose of therapy and specific strategies to help them compensate for their deficits. I always treat my patient's with the same skill, kindness and compassion that I would expect for any of my family members.

VNA: What do you enjoy doing when you are not working at Stoughton VNA?

Ellen: I enjoy traveling with my husband, reading, cooking and baking.

VNA: What was one of your most rewarding experiences while treating a patient at Stoughton VNA?

Ellen: I have had the privilege to work with so many patients over the past 30 years. I think one of the most rewarding aspects of my job is when my patient or patient's family say that they truly believe I have made a difference in their life.



PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FLU

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the following are recommendations to prevent the spread of the flu:

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, it is recommended that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone, except to get medical care or other necessities.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surface and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.

GET YOUR FLU SHOT!

(CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against influenza and its potentially serious complications.) See the first page of this newsletter

JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT!

It's the age of technology, and many are reading their news online. If you don't get the newspaper delivered, you need to get a copy of the newspaper to participate in the fun activity below. Grab the newspaper and see if you can find all of the items in this "NEWSPAPER SCAVENGER HUNT".

NEWSPAPER SCAVENGER HUNT	
	Something being given away for free
	An article about animals
	An advertisement for an upcoming event
	A movie listing for an animated film
	An article about the weather
	An article related to politics
	Something for sale for more than \$550,000
	A comic strip involving an animal that could be a pet
	An article about a fundraising event
	A red vehicle for sale
	A job posting for a job in construction
	A house for sale listed in your area
	A birth announcement
	A postinf for Lost & Found
	A story about bravery
	An advertisement for sporting goods
	An engagement announcement
	An entertainment review
	An advertisement for travel
	An article about an act of kindness

November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Here are some tips to communicate with people with Alzheimer's:

- **Never argue, instead agree**
- **Never shame, instead distract**
- **Never say "remember", instead reminisce**
- **Never say "you can't, instead do what they can**
- **Never condescend, instead encourage and praise**
- **Never reason, instead divert**
- **Never lecture, instead reassure**
- **Never say "I told you", instead repeat/regroup**
- **Never command or demand, instead ask or model**
- **Never force, instead reinforce.**

Alzheimer's caregiver institute © Huey, 1996



"Come Home To Us"
Stoughton Public Health

Are you or someone you know in Need of Home Healthcare? WE can help! Many of today's medical treatments can be offered right in the home. Stoughton Public Health Association & VNA offers everything from skilled nursing care & rehabilitation to wound care, all in the privacy & comfort of your home.

Discuss your needs with your doctor & family to determine if home-based care is right for you. Or, you can call Stoughton Public Health Assoc. & VNA to discuss your needs. We offer a variety of services including:

- Nursing
- Physical, Speech & Occupational Therapy
- Home Health Aides
- Medical Social Worker

We service the following towns: **Stoughton, Avon, Brockton, Canton, Easton, Randolph & Sharon.**

We accept the following insurers: Medicare/Medicaid, VA services, Tufts Health Care, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care & Workman's Comp.

Contact Us:
Stoughton Public Health Association & VNA

10 Pearl Street

Stoughton, MA 02072

(781)344-7011

Check us out on the Web:

<https://www.stoughton.org/stoughton-public-health-association>

Stoughton Public Health Association complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws & does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Stoughton Public Health Association provides free language assistance services to people whose primary language is not English.

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What Our Patients Are Saying About Us!

"The care I got was excellent! I have come along great, the therapists got me to exercise and urged me to continue doing what they taught me, which I do! Thank you to everyone a S.V.N. Assoc. You're the best!"

"They are the finest group of caring people on all the levels I have dealt with. I do not know what I would have done without them."

"They are the very best. This is the second time in 7 months that I have had the SVNA."



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