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CENTRA CARE
Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)

CONNECTION

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Holiday Time: Celebration or Isolation?

A message from Alexandria Lueth, CentraCare CEO



It's hard to believe most of 2017 is behind us and the holidays are right around the corner. Soon families will be sitting down to a bountiful Thanksgiving meal and many will be watching the Detroit Lions defeat (hopefully) the Minnesota Vikings in Detroit's traditional Thanksgiving Day game. Some will tune into the Macy's parade in the morning where over three million people will line the streets of Manhattan to watch bands, celebrities, and giant balloon figures

that have mesmerized young and old alike since 1924. Not to be outdone, Detroit will also boast its own parade down Woodward Avenue that also has its roots dating back to 1924.

However, holidays can also be particularly lonely for many individuals, especially the elderly. As people age they start to outlive their spouses, friends, and other family members while their

activity levels slow and they find themselves becoming more and more homebound. As these events unfold, it is very common for seniors to experience chronic bouts of loneliness. *According to government statistics, it is estimated that nearly 30% of people over the age of 65 live alone and other studies have shown isolation is associated with higher rates of chronic disease, depression, dementia and death.* As one might suspect, detrimental feelings

associated with isolation can become more pronounced around the holidays.

At CentraCare we not only care for our participants' health care needs, but we also focus on their socialization needs as a way to address any feelings of loneliness they may be experiencing. We do our best to help them find a sense of purpose and meaning in their own lives which gives them incentive to work toward improving their overall health. This holiday season brings an opportunity to engage each of our participants in the sights and sounds of the season and hopefully relive some very special holiday memories with them. We anticipate many smiles!

It is our sincere desire that each of our participants, their caregivers and their families will enjoy the meaningfulness of this holiday season. As you gather for your various celebrations, may you always recognize the importance and preciousness of each family member and cherish the time you have together. Peace and joy to you! ■



What CentraCare Means to Me:

“Nothing is good about being older. Everything is slower and I don’t have as many people left in my life. But my health has dramatically improved in the last two years at CentraCare. This place is the best part of my life!”

*-Beverly Elliott,
CentraCare Participant*



Photo: CentraCare participant Dorothy Penny talks with WMU medical students Conner Ahlgren and Gina Bravata.

Training Tomorrow’s Doctors

New grant supports education for medical students at CentraCare

The Guido A. and Elizabeth H. Binda Foundation has generously granted to CentraCare \$12,500 for the continuation of the Longitudinal Clinical Experience, a strategic educational program established in cooperation with the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine. According to Laura Ferrara, CentraCare’s Chief Strategy Officer, “This support from the Binda Foundation is very instrumental in enabling us to offer WMU medical students exposure to the complex medical needs of a rapidly growing elderly population.”

In 2014 the Longitudinal Clinical Experience (LCE) was launched. Since then, in every subsequent year, each class of students has visited with CentraCare’s participants and staff ten times over their first two years of medical school.

“It has been our hope that in working with our team and participants, the students have gained a unique appreciation for the challenges older adults face in navigating the healthcare system,” said Alexandria Lueth, CEO. Lueth added, “We are very grateful to the Binda Foundation for providing these funds which enables us to continue offering this very unique and important program.”

Throughout their multiple visits to CentraCare, students have attested to gaining a much better understanding of the importance of getting to know the whole person as well as realizing how many non-medical areas of a person’s life can impact their care and health outcomes.

After their first two years of medical school are complete, some students are opting to return to CentraCare for a fourth year clerkship and/or making CentraCare part of their rotation when they become a resident. This continuity is one of the things students, participants and staff enjoys most.

“I love that students value their time at CentraCare enough to return in their fourth year and beyond,” said Sarah Vollink, Educational Liaison and Student Coordinator. Vollink added, “We have students that have created incredibly powerful relationships with our participants and friendships that last to this day.”

As the first class of students graduates this spring and become MDs, CentraCare takes great pride in having been a part of their education. To date, nearly 275 students have participated in approximately 2,500 visits to the Battle Creek and Kalamazoo centers.

Dr. Mehmet Ismailoglu, Medical Director, said, “The opportunities we offer have been unique for the students, for us as a PACE organization, and most importantly, for our participants, who are excited to have helped shape the future course of medicine.” ■



CentraCare Connection is a free publication for all members of the communities we serve. CentraCare, a nonprofit organization, has two convenient locations. To find out more about our nonprofit mission and services to the community, use the contact information below:

Kalamazoo Location:

CentraCare
445 West Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Battle Creek Location:

200 West Michigan Avenue Suite 103
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Toll-free: (800) 488-5860
Local Kalamazoo: (269) 488-5460
Local Battle Creek: (269) 441-9300

Web: www.mycentracare.com
E-mail: info@mycentracare.com

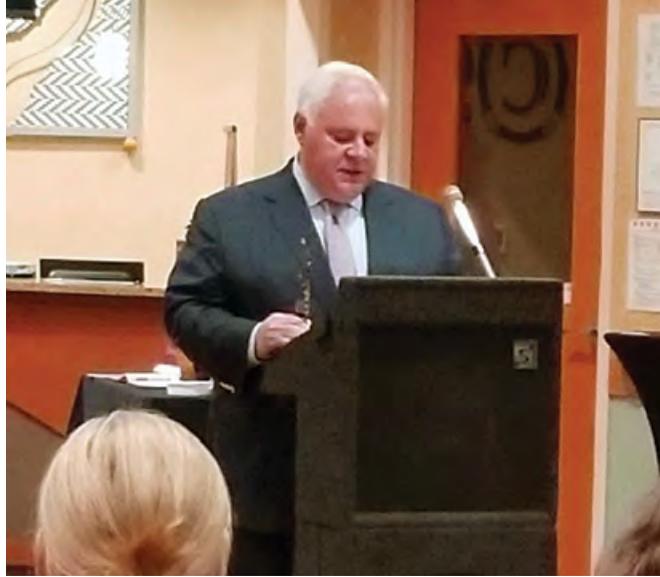


Photo far left: Brenda Hunt, President and CEO of the Battle Creek Community Foundation, hosted a special CentraCare community event on Oct. 24 at our Battle Creek location

Photo near left: Frank Sardone, President and CEO of Bronson Healthcare, hosted the CentraCare community event at our Kalamazoo location on Nov. 2.

Frank Sardone and Brenda Hunt Host CentraCare Community Events

Some say that CentraCare may be the best kept secret in the local healthcare community...but that is rapidly changing!

On Tuesday, Oct. 24, 2017, CentraCare’s Battle Creek location welcomed the community to learn more about the organization’s mission at an event hosted by Brenda Hunt, President and CEO of the Battle Creek Community Foundation. An identical event was also hosted by Frank Sardone, President and CEO of Bronson Healthcare at the Kalamazoo CentraCare site on Thursday, Nov. 2.

Both events experienced a significant public response which included numerous community leaders. The elaborate food presentation for the guests at each event was prepared and catered by Bronson Battle Creek Food Services led by John Fear, Master Chef.

At the Battle Creek event, Brenda Hunt and Dr. Marijo Snyder, Vice President of Medical Staff Development and Clinical Engagement at Bronson Healthcare as well as CentraCare Board Chairperson, effectively recapped the origins of CentraCare dating back to 2008 when the Battle Creek Community Foundation first entertained the idea of helping to fund a unique non-profit health care model that focused on the rapidly growing senior population within our community. Hunt stated, “Now,

nine years later, CentraCare is a very strong health care model within the community serving the frail elderly and we’re glad to be on this journey with them.”

At the November 2 event, held at the Kalamazoo CentraCare location, Sardone recalled the beginning of the organization, especially the opening of the Kalamazoo location: “With the expansion of CentraCare to Kalamazoo in 2013 Bronson recognized the value of the PACE programming and felt it was an important component in the community...Through the evolving relationship between CentraCare, Bronson, and other business partners, like Senior Services, Hospice of Southwest Michigan, the Battle Creek Community Foundation, and others, a unique and essential network of care has been created for the frail elderly living within Calhoun, Kalamazoo, and eastern Van Buren Counties.”

Laura Farrara, CentraCare’s Chief Strategy Officer, shared with the audience, “The PACE model is centered on the belief that it is better for the wellbeing

of seniors with chronic care needs and their families to be served in the community whenever possible.” She went on to say, “While our Battle Creek center began with seven participants in 2009 and the Kalamazoo center opened with only two participants in 2013, today both centers combined serve over 350 participants.

CentraCare’s CEO, Alexandria Lueth, expressed her appreciation to everyone who attended the event and applauded Ms. Hunt, Mr. Sardone, and the organizations they represent for their generous support of CentraCare over the years. She stated, “Developing a community based program such as CentraCare requires the cooperation of many individuals and organizations. Because of the nature of our program, we depend on developing many relationships and we are pleased with the outstanding level of support we have received from the health care community as well as the community at large. These relationships have enabled us to serve well over 700 seniors since our inception.” ■



Participant Story: Davis "Dave" Allen

With positivity and persistence, he faces life's obstacles head on

If you're at CentraCare in Battle

Creek on the days Davis (Dave) Allen is visiting, you'll no doubt hear his laughter echoing through the hallways. Overcoming insurmountable odds, Dave is best known for his positivity. "If you're not coming here, you're robbing yourself of a lot of joy," said Allen.

Dave and his late wife, Jan, enrolled in CentraCare in 2010 and said they had been searching for a program like this for most of their lives. Struggling to manage multiple complications resulting from an automobile accident when he was 16, Dave said, "It has not been an easy life."

While training with the Job Corps in Idaho building homes for the US Forestry Department, Dave and some fellow "corn men" had a car accident that left him in a coma and unexpected to survive. However, Dave surprised everyone when he started to rally.

After much time recovering in rehabilitation hospitals in Idaho, Washington and Michigan, Dave regained the ability to walk with assistance and to use one arm. But he was left blind, which changed his life dramatically. "I could go in the corner and be depressed all the time," says Allen. "But that wouldn't do any good for anyone."

Instead, Dave spends his days socializing with friends at CentraCare, participating in many different activities and playing as many games as possible. He regularly visits CentraCare's Physical Therapy Department and rides the exercise bikes to keep up his strength. And he

also enjoys singing Karaoke whenever he can because of his avid love of music. "We have a ball. Not just the participants – but the staff too," said Allen.

After moving back to the area in 1971, Dave started attending the Michigan Rehabilitation Center for the Blind in Kalamazoo, where he met his future wife, Jan. "They told us it would never last," says Dave, laughing at the irony of having been married for 43 years. "The world gets overwhelmed by the idea of two blind people living alone together. They thought we couldn't handle life."

But Jan and Dave regularly proved everyone wrong. They created a home together and adopted a variety of pets through the years, including birds, rabbits and guinea pigs. Dave still lives independently with his dog, "Buddy," and his cat, "Ding-Ding," who got his name after losing his fifth bell collar. "I called him a Ding-Ding and the name just sort of stuck," said Dave.

With a keen interest in staying connected, Dave mastered the ham radio and earned his General Class license allowing him privileges on all amateur radio bands worldwide. "It was hard learning Morse code and it took me months and



months of practice," said Dave. "But now I talk to people all over the world!"

Jan also helped Dave earn his high school diploma and ring over the course of 21 years of study – a feat he accomplished about a year ago.

"It was really hard losing Jan. People here (at CentraCare) help me through it. Especially when I get down," Dave recalls, adding, with a smile, "believe it or not, I do get down." CentraCare's assistance with transportation, meals and errands is undoubtedly helpful. But it's the emotional support Dave receives that he appreciates the most. Dave is also glad he remains close to his mother and two younger brothers.

"I try to rise above all of the problems," he said. "When I work with the medical students or staff, I try to teach them that just because you're handicapped, life doesn't end."

When asked what he wants people to learn from him, Dave says, "Don't give up on someone just because they have multiple handicaps. Many times, they can overcome and go on." He continued, "I like CentraCare because everyone here is on equal ground. We cheer each other up and keep each other positive. This program is the answer to a lot of prayers." ■

BCBSM Foundation \$50,000 Grant Supports New After-Hours Respite Program at CentraCare!



Blue Cross
Blue Shield
Blue Care Network
of Michigan

“Caregiver burnout is a very significant issue in our society today. This generous grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation enables us to address this vast need within our community.”

– **Laura Ferrara**
CentraCare CSO

In 2016 CentraCare in Battle Creek began a pilot program to provide after-hours respite care, at no charge to those participating in the program, their caregivers or their families. Under this initial initiative the staff of CentraCare provide care for the frail elderly of Calhoun County. In July of 2017 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation provided financial support for this effort through a two-year \$50,000 grant which significantly bolstered the program for Calhoun County, but also opened the door for the same program in Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties.

“Caregiver burnout is a very significant issue in our society today,” said Laura Ferrara, Chief Strategy Officer for CentraCare. “This generous grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation is enabling us to address this vast need within our community.” According to statistics provided by the National Caregiver Alliance and AARP, approximately 34.2 million Americans have provided unpaid care to an adult age 50 or older in the last 12 months. These individuals may be suffering from any number of issues including Alzheimer’s disease or other forms of dementia, Parkinson’s, or any host of chronic illnesses.

Dr. Ismailoglu, CentraCare’s Medical Director, stated, “Statistically, 80% of adults 65 years of age and older have at least one chronic condition, while 68% have two or more conditions. However, it is not uncommon to see 5 or 6 chronic conditions taking place simultaneously among the elderly.” He added, “Caring for individuals with these conditions can be extremely taxing on the caregiver.”

Added Alexandria Lueth, CEO at CentraCare: “We are thrilled to receive these funds from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation. This will enable us to give caregivers a break from the daily care they provide their loved ones. We understand how stressful caregiving can become and we are very glad these funds have been made available so we can provide this respite service at absolutely no charge to them.”

The after-hours respite program provides transportation to and from the center, a nutritious meal and snack, socializing time, assistance with personal care, and cognitively stimulating activity. Anyone interested in using this “no charge” program should contact Donna at (269) 441-9319, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for additional information or to register. The schedule of respite times is available at www.mycentracare.com. ■

Helpful Online Resources:

CentraCare’s **Website** has a fresh new look! Visit us online today at: www.mycentracare.com



Join CentraCare on **Facebook** and click “Like” to stay current on upcoming events and continuing progress. Here’s the Facebook link: www.facebook.com/mycentracare



Meet Our Executive Leadership Team

The Talented People Who Guide the Ship at CentraCare



Alexandria Lueth, CPA, began her career at CentraCare in 2012 as the Chief Financial Officer and was subsequently selected by the Board of Directors to become the Chief Executive Officer of the organization in 2015, a role in which she continues to serve with distinction. During her time with CentraCare, Alexandria has been pivotal in the organization's ability to successfully deliver exceptional, coordinated care for frail elderly adults in an otherwise complicated healthcare system. She earned a BS in Accounting from Hope College in 2005 and anticipates earning a Master of Health Services Administration Degree from Michigan in 2018. She also obtained her CPA designation in 2006. Prior to coming to CentraCare, Alexandria had a successful career as a financial auditor with Plante Moran. She currently serves on boards of the Wesley Foundation of Kalamazoo, The Friends of Portage Senior Center, and the PACE Association of Michigan.



Laura Ferrara began working with CentraCare on a contractual basis in 2009 and joined the CentraCare Executive Team in 2015 on a full time basis where she currently serves as the Chief Strategy Officer and Director of Marketing and Enrollment. In this role Laura works closely with the CEO to articulate and implement the strategic plan of the organization, build new partnerships, and give oversight to all functions related to strategy, business development, marketing and communications. With an extensive background in acute and post-acute health care settings for over 25 years, she is a leading expert in the areas of health care corporate compliance, quality improvement, and operations. Laura's background in compliance and performance improvement standards makes her an extremely valuable asset to the work at CentraCare. She earned an Associate's Degree in Nursing from NYU, and a BS in Health Care from the University of Phoenix. Additionally, she is certified in Healthcare Compliance. Laura is also active in many PACE regional programs and speaks at many PACE events.



Molly Petersen serves as the Director of Finance and Administration and brings to CentraCare a long history of non-profit work as well as extensive corporate finance experience. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree with a concentration in Finance from WMU and a Masters of Management Degree with a concentration in Marketing from Aquinas College. She is also a 2004 graduate of Leadership Kalamazoo. She is also a 2004 graduate of Leadership Kalamazoo. Molly also worked extensively in the financial services industry. While in banking she was a recipient of the distinguished "Award of Excellence." In previous private sector roles Molly experienced tremendous success in the financial services industry. Joining CentraCare in 2017, she currently provides oversight to the areas of Accounting, Quality, Human Resources, Health Data Management, and Technology. Molly also serves on the boards of Lakeview Foundation, Catholic Charities and MRC Industries.



Nicole Roy, RN-BSN, joined the CentraCare team in 2014 and currently serves as the Director of IDT Operations. Nicole brings to the Executive Team over 25 years of nursing and management experience in health care settings and is a Dementia Care Specialist. A graduate of Spring Arbor University with a BS in Nursing, she is responsible for directing the overall operations of the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) which consists of all the medically related professional disciplines within the organization. IDT is instrumental in delivering exceptional care for each participant in the local PACE program. In addition to her technical knowledge and expertise in nursing, throughout her career Nicole has also served as an experienced preceptor, mentor, as well as educator, and she continues to function in these capacities while providing outstanding leadership in her current role. She is a valued member of our Executive Leadership Team.



Mehmet B. Ismailoglu, MD, serves as the Medical Director for CentraCare in Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. A graduate of Albion College, "Dr. I" earned his medical degree from the American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine. In 2014, he became the Dept. of Medicine Section Vice Chief at Bronson Battle Creek. While in private practice Dr. I also served as the Medical Director for the Calhoun County Correctional Facility, Calhoun County Dept. of Public Health, and Southwest Regional Rehabilitation Center. He also was Chief Medical Examiner for Calhoun County, and a hospitalist at the Battle Creek VA Hospital. Dr. I joined the CentraCare team in 2015 as a clinical physician and in 2017 accepted the position of Medical Director for CentraCare.



Our Board of Directors

We are deeply grateful for the commitment and tireless effort of CentraCare's Board of Directors

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What is "PACE"?

PACE stands for "Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly." PACE is a long-term comprehensive health care program that enables frail elderly adults to live at home in their communities for as long as medically and socially possible. CentraCare is the official PACE program for Calhoun, Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren counties in Michigan. Our many services are designed to help older adults stay in their homes, and be part of the community where they live. ■

Do You Qualify for CentraCare Services?

You, or a member of your family, may qualify to participate in CentraCare's PACE program! To qualify, you must:

- Be at least 55 years old
- Live in Calhoun County, Kalamazoo County **or** live in specific ZIP codes of eastern Van Buren County 49009, 49010, 49026, 49055, 49065, 49067, 49071, 49078, 49079, and 49087)
- Meet the nursing home level of care as determined by the standards of a Michigan Medicaid nursing facility
- Be able to live safely in the community with the help of PACE services

To learn more, please call Donna at the CentraCare office at **(269) 441-9319** during normal business hours. CentraCare is a private, non-profit organization serving Calhoun, Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties. We invite you to visit us online at www.mycentracare.com. ■



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Battle Creek, MI 49017



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Get Involved!

Volunteer: CentraCare always needs new volunteers!
For more information, please call Kristina at (269) 441-9548.

Financial Support: Tax-deductible donations of any kind are greatly appreciated and will be used to support our mission.

You can give online at: www.mycentracare.com.
Or you may drop off or mail your donation to:

CentraCare
200 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 103
Battle Creek, MI 49017 ■

Free Respite Care!

*Are you a caregiver of an elderly person?
Are you tired? We Understand!*

CentraCare, a local nonprofit organization, currently offers evening and weekend Respite Care for residents of Calhoun, Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties at **NO CHARGE** to you. Our experienced staff will lovingly care for your family member at our Battle Creek or Kalamazoo Day Center locations. *We provide free:*

- Transportation
- Nutritious Meal and Snack
- Socializing time
- Assistance with Personal Care
- Cognitively Stimulating Activities

To register for *No Cost Respite Care*, contact Donna at (269) 441-9319 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. - Fri.

Funding for this program in Calhoun County is made available through a grant from the Calhoun County Senior Millage and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation. Funding for the program in Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties is provided solely by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation.

Phone: (269) 441-9319
Website: www.mycentracare.com