



Caregiver Resource Program | Ombudsman | o•a•sis | PALS | HICAP

Quarter 1 • 2021

## New Year Challenge: Being Joyous & Grateful

By Michelle DiBuduo, Executive Director of Valley Caregiver Resource Center



Michelle DiBuduo

ppreciative...hopeful... optimistic...and thankful. Is it possible to experience these feelings while being in the throes of a pandemic? I challenged myself and I challenge you to find specific points in your life where you can be grateful.

I recently listened to a podcast with Dawn Barton who wrote, Laughing Through the Ugly Cry. Do you believe that joy is a choice? Dawn Barton does. Dawn shared her

personal story on how she found happiness and purpose even in the darkest of days. She elaborates on how to embrace joy wherever you can find it and how to identify the pros despite how challenging the cons may seem. It is not impossible and I encourage us all to do our part to keep our collective spirits up.

We've experienced our share of challenges here at Valley Caregiver Resource Center since the pandemic began but I am choosing, at this time, to share what we are grateful for:

- Talented and dedicated Board members who guide us through these difficult times, helping us to keep our doors open.
- Helping over 6,000 Medicare beneficiaries.

- Our ability to continue to employ 36 loyal and resilient staff serving our clients each and every day even while navigating COVID-19.
- Touching the lives of over 1,500 family caregivers in the Central Valley.
- Continuing to advocate for over 10,000 residents that live-in long-term care facilities in Fresno and Madera counties.
- Assisting 76 participants struggling with dementia by providing them a day program, prior to temporarily closing due to the pandemic.
- Reaching out to over 75 seniors with weekly calls and virtual activities.
- Supporters who understand our financial situation and continue to give.
- · Conducting two successful fundraisers which enable us to continue to provide services for

I realize 2020 had multiple trials for all of us but I hope you can reflect back and choose at least one positive outcome you had this year. If you have time, please share it with me at mdibuduo@valleycrc.org or call me at 559.224.9154. I would love to hear from you.

I look forward to a more hopeful 2021 in which Valley Caregiver Resource Center, our clients, and supporters will enjoy a healthy and happy New Year.

## **News:** Why We Are Going Digital

his will be our final printed newsletter for VCRC. There are many of you that look forward to our newsletter every quarter and we enjoy being your local resource for information. As we move forward into 2021, we are announcing that our newsletter will come to you via email in a digital format starting March, 2021. We decided to make this change to keep our resources geared toward our programs for seniors and caregivers in our community.

If you would like to continue receiving our newsletter, please visit: valleycrc.org and scroll to the bottom of the page to sign up for our digital newsletters (the form looks like the image below). We will continue to support you all with a wonderful newsletter every quarter so stay tuned! Thank you.

**Subscribe to Our Newsletter** 

### Donate Today!

**Valley Caregiver Resource Center (VCRC)** gratefully accepts donations; donated funds go towards services provided by VCRC, HICAP, OASIS and the Ombudsman Program. Services will not be denied if a client will not or cannot contribute to the cost of the services. The Fresno-Madera Ombudsman Program does not receive donations when Long Term Care Facilities sponsor or donate to VCRC. Your generosity in donating to VCRC will be greatly appreciated and can be done by forwarding your gift to VCRC at 5363 N. Fresno St., Fresno, CA 93710. VCRC is a 501(c3) private non-profit organization; all gifts are tax deductible in accordance with existing IRS regulations. Donations can also be made online through our website at: www.valleycrc.org.

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## Rob Chapa: Editor Katie Throckmorton: Design

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Are You Ready to Go Paperless?

Please visit our website to sign up for the future digital newsletters so you can stay informed and so we can stay in touch with our local caregivers. www.valleycrc.org

## Let's Connect: Stay Home, Save Lives, Check-In

By Rob Chapa

e, at Valley Caregiver Resource Center are proud to continue offering the "Stay Home, Save Lives, Check-In" campaign through these trying times.

Do you have a senior loved one at home, or have senior residents at your long-term care facility who are struggling with feeling disconnected? As your advocates, the PALS/OASIS programs at Valley Caregiver Resource Center would like to ask you to invite your seniors to participate in an interactive weekly call aimed at connecting with those seniors who need it most.

ENGAGE. STAY HOME. SAVE LIVES. CHECK IN.



Our Care Companions are offering our support by enriching the lives of the seniors in our community with regular check-ins and much needed personal connection. We will be there for them with open hearts, open ears and a wide knowledge bank to help them navigate their current situation. We can offer tips on safety, health or wellness. We can offer companionship & listen to stories to help soothe their lonely souls. We can assist them with current technology that is needed to stay in touch with us or even with other loved ones. We can help boost their selfesteem & even give them ideas on how to remain physically active. We will be their outlet for almost any other stressor they may want to discuss.



#### **CONVERSATION TOPICS INCLUDE:**

- Health & Wellness
- Safety
- Reminiscina
- Community Involvement
- Staying Connected with Technology
- How to Stay Active
- Virtual Gathering
- And More

The weekly calls from the "Stay Home, Save Lives, Check-In" campaign will provide your senior(s) an opportunity to stay



connected amidst the isolation that has often been created by the pandemic. We will reach out to them by phone on a weekly basis and will promote:

- Socialization
- Community Connection
- Companionship
- Enhanced Physical & Cognitive Health
- Positivity & Self-Esteem
- Staying Active In Their Unique Setting
- And More

Our goal is to give our seniors meaningful conversation, valuable advise, & a sense of purpose. Let's connect. Let's connect with our seniors. Let's connect with each other. Together we can help ensure our seniors have the support and knowledge they need to nagivate through these uncertain times. We can help ensure they aren't left too out of touch.

For more information on the program benefits, how to enroll, or to obtain an authorization release form, please call or email Kristina Corona at 559-224-9121 or email kcorona@valleycrc.org.

Funding for this campaign is provided by Fresno-Madera Area Agency on Aging.

## Let's Review: Medicare Rights, Hospital Stays, and Skilled Nursing Facilities

re you a Medicare Beneficiary and confused about your Medicare Rights? You have certain rights and protections designed to protect you when you receive health care, to make sure you get the health care services the law says you can get, to protect you against unethical practices, and to protect your privacy. You have the right to receive information in a way you understand from Medicare, health care providers, and contractors. The understanding of your coverage is indicative to making important health care decisions.

Unless waived, most people 65 or older have Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance). This covers your Inpatient care in hospitals, Inpatient care in a skilled nursing facility (not custodial or long-term care), hospice care, home health care, and inpatient care in a religious non-medical health care institution.

Transfers to Skilled Nursing Facilities after a Hospital stay are common and it is important to understand your coverage and to exercise your rights in doing so. To qualify for skilled nursing facility care coverage, your doctor must certify that you need daily skilled care (like intravenous fluids/medications or physical therapy). You may receive skilled nursing or therapy care coverage if it is necessary to improve or maintain your current condition. Medicare covers semi-private rooms, meals, skilled nursing and

therapy services, and other medically necessary services and supplies in a skilled nursing facility. Medicare only covers these services after a 3-day minimum, medically necessary, inpatient hospital stay for a related illness or injury.

While in a skilled nursing facility, you are required to pay nothing for the first 20 days of each benefit period. A benefit period begins the day you are admitted as an inpatient in a hospital or skilled nursing facility. The benefit period ends when you have not gotten any inpatient hospital care (or skilled nursing facility) for 60 days in a row. There are no limits to the number of benefit periods.

If the facility decides to discharge you based solely on a lack of improvement, and not because you no longer require skilled nursing or therapy care, you can appeal. You have rights when you feel like you are being discharged too soon!

If you are a Medicare Beneficiary and you feel like your rights may have been violated contact Livanta's Helpline: (877) 588-1123 or TTY: (855) 887-6668. Livanta is a Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO). BFCC-QIOs are responsible for medical case review, which supports the rights of people on Medicare. Livanta provides Medicare Beneficiaries and their family assistance with

appeals of discharge, quality of care concerns, and Beneficiary complaints. Further details regarding Livanta and their assistance can be found at www.lavintaqio.com.

Advocating for your rights can feel overwhelming during a time when you need help the most. Valley Caregiver Resource Center's Health Insurance and Advocacy Program (HICAP) has registered counselors that are available to assist Medicare Beneficiaries and their families with their concerns over any Medicare Rights being violated. You are not alone and we are here to help. Please contact HICAP at (559) 224-9117 Monday—Friday 8am-5pm.

#### Our Mission

Valley Caregiver Resource Center offers a comprehensive array of services designed to assist elders and their families master the challenges that accompany the aging process.

As long-standing advocates and collaborators in preserving the health and quality of life of others, our aim is to promote personal and community well-being.

## VCRC Helps Local Caregivers with Groceries

unded by the CARES Act and provided by the Fresno Madera Area Agency on Aging, the Valley Caregiver Resource Center was able to provide 60 families that are clients with VCRC, a large supply of groceries during these unprecedented times.

The COVID-19 pandemic has plunged many of society's most vulnerable into a situation where even weekly groceries can be a struggle to maintain.



VCRC's Family Consultants personally called their caregivers and offered this service at no charge. From bread to canned foods, to snacks and many other non-perishable goods, caregivers from both Fresno and Madera were able to take part in this time of giving.

"You have no idea how much you've helped me with this." Caregivers were delighted to receive their grocery bundles and expressed their gratitude with tears of joy and appreciation.









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Keeping you and your loved one safe during COVID-19. We are offering our Caregiver Education Classes either online or by phone. To register, please call us at (559) 224-9154 or (800) 541-8614. Pre-Registration is required. Once registered, you will then receive assistance and information on how to join online or by phone.

#### **JANUARY** Class Schedule

Stop The Bleed: Guest Speaker: Sarah Ellis RN, BSN, Trauma Program Clinical Educator from Community Regional Medical Center will teach Family Caregivers how to respond to a bleeding emergency with basic education and hands-on life saving techniques.	Wednesday January13, 2021	2:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.
Fall Prevention For Older Adults: Guest Speaker: Eliana Troncale , Injury Prevention Outreach Specialist - Trauma Program from Community Regional Medical Center will teach how to identify risk factors that put a person at risk for falling and practical skills to reduce a person's risk of falling.	Friday January 22 , 2021	2:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.
Healthy Living For Family Caregivers	Thursday January 28, 2021	2:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

#### **FEBRUARY** Class Schedule

Ask The Medical Experts: Caregiving During COVID-19	Friday February 5, 2021	2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
Strengthening Family Caregiver Relationships As We Care	Thursday February 11, 2021	2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
Caregiving and Controlling Your Frustration	Friday February 19, 2021	2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

#### **MARCH** Class Schedule

Hands on Skills For Family Caregivers	Tuesday March 9, 2021	2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
Understanding Difficult Dementia Behaviors	Friday March 19, 2021	2:00 p.m.—3:30 p.m.
Long Term Care Seminar	Tuesday March 23, 2021	2:00 p.m. — 3:30 p.m.

Part of a Statewide System of Caregiver Resource Centers serving family caregivers, contracted through the California Department of Health Care Services, and grants from various Area Agencies on Aging in Fresno-Madera, Kern, Kings-Tulare, and Merced. **VCRC educational classes are not open to providers, volunteers or for patients.** 





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April 28, 2021



Ombudsman Volunteer **Recognition Luncheon** 

Recognizing our dedicated volunteers

April 30, 2021



**HICAP Volunteer** Recognition Luncheon

Recognizing our dedicated volunteers

14, 2021



8th Annual Fundraising **Golf Tournament** 

Get your team together!

June 25, 2021

**Elder Abuse** Awareness



Know Abuse, Report Abuse

August 12, 2021

**Donor Appreciation** At Fort Washington

Honoring our community partners

October 29, 2021

25th Annual **Celebration of Care** 



Dinner ~ Live & Silent Auction

For more information on these events and our programs, visit:

www.valleycrc.org • Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ValleyCRC/



#### VOLUNTEER

Volunteer to be an Ombudsman to advocate for individuals in Long-Term Care in Fresno and Madera

**Ombudsman Volunteer Training** 



February 22 to 26 (M-F) 9AM to 4PM

April 12 to 16 (M-F) 9AM to 4PM

To Register: Call 559-224-9177

#### VOLUNTEER



Volunteer for HICAP and help Medicare beneficiaries regarding their plans.

**HICAP Volunteer Training** April 19 to 22

To Register: Call Laura at 559-224-9117

#### HICAP

The Health Insurance **Counseling and Advocacy** Program (HICAP) provides free assistance with understanding Medicare and your health insurance options.

A celebration of appreciation and recognition is being held for HICAP volunteers on April 30th, 2021. Our Volunteers are so valuable and we could not do this job without them.

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If you would like to know more about our sponsorship opportunities, please contact:

Michelle DiBuduo mdibuduo@valleycrc.org





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"Proud to Support the good work of VCRC in our senior community."



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