

Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program Newsletter

Spring 2014

The Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program enhances the quality of life for indigent and incompetent adults of Medina County.

A Letter from the Volunteer Guardianship Coordinator:

Welcome to our second Volunteer Guardianship Program newsletter! This newsletter's purpose is to keep you more informed of issues and support during your volunteer time with your wards and our program.

The Volunteer Guardianship Program with Medina County Probate Court will be celebrating 10 years of service in our community this year. The program has been very successful and continues to grow. The thriving of the program and the growth is contributed to all the wonderful volunteers in the past and present that are serving as guardians to wards in our County.

Judge Kevin Dunn has been extremely supportive and involved with our program and believes in the mission to protect and care for our precious elderly



2013 VGP Appreciation Picnic at the Brunswick Eagles Club.

and improve their quality of life. My goal for 2014 is to expose our program and educate area nursing facilities about this mission and how we could serve and advocate for potential wards living in facilities.

This year we celebrate 10 years, and look to the future. We have many new ideas and in-service

topics to better support and educate our volunteers.

On behalf of the Volunteer Guardianship Program, thank you for your commitment and reaching out to others in our community to improve their quality of life through visits, phone calls, and medical management with nursing facilities and group homes.

-Nicki Shook L.S.W.



“How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong, because someday in life you will have been all of these.”

-George Washington Carver

Training Tip:

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Did you know that all volunteer guardians have been assigned a volunteer attorney? If you have any questions legally that the Volunteer Guardianship Coordinator is unable to answer, a volunteer attorney has agreed to answer and help guide you.

When legal questions or a situation with your ward occur, please call Nicki Shook at (330) 725-9707 to find out which Volunteer Attorney has been assigned to the case.

Thank You!

Thank you to all of the host facilities who have provided the locations for our annual events and training sessions.



Willowood Care Center of Brunswick



The Inn at Coal Ridge



Medina County Home



Brunswick Eagles Club

Do You Know Their Wishes?

Suppose your ward was in a coma or unable to speak. If you had to make health care decisions for him or her, would you know what to say? Making the choices that are right for your ward requires knowing his or her preferences in advance. But starting the conversation can feel awkward.

Use a soft approach. Make it about your need to know versus their being frail. Choose a place that is comfortable and quiet and allow plenty of time. Don't be upset if your ward does not want to respond at first. Sometimes people need time to think about these important topics.

Plan on several conversations. There are many topics to explore.

- 1 Preferred Setting.** Many of these decisions have already been made with possible nursing home placement, however, you can get details about favorite wishes and dreaded scenarios.
- 2 Treatment and Pain.** Would he or she want treatment to stay alive as long as possible? Or are comfort and quality of life more important?
- 3 Breathing.** Would your ward want help to breathe through a machine? On a temporary basis only? "Forever"?
- 4 Eating and Drinking.** Would he or she want food and liquid mechanically supplied if eating was not possible? Only temporarily? "Forever"?

Let your ward know that you're aware their wishes may change with time. Plan to check in occasionally to stay up to date.

Source: SeriousIllness.org

Recruiting Efforts Increase to Find Volunteer Guardians and Wards

With a steady amount of volunteer guardians since the program began in Medina County in 2004, Judge Kevin Dunn and VGP Coordinator Nicki Shook look to continue raising the bar. Below, Shook explains how she will make recruiting visits to nursing home facilities the first step.*

Our program currently serves 25 Medina County residents. This could not be possible without the 38 wonderful Volunteer Guardians that have dedicated their time, visits and advocacy. In looking forward to 2014, we would like to educate area nursing facilities and group homes about potential residents in their facilities that would benefit from our program.

Our plan is to make personal visits to these nursing facilities and provide information to them. We are more than willing

to educate the entire staff as well, to help better facilitate and recognize those residents who may be appropriate for the program. At the same time, we are hoping to "recruit" more volunteers to help keep the program thriving with new energy and ideas.

The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.

-Pablo Picasso

The Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program's mission is to continue to improve the quality of life for individuals in our community, and we are able to achieve that with the help of our wonderful Volunteer Guardians.

The Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program believes that all persons deserve the absolute best care and concern should they become incompetent or incapacitated.

Judge Kevin W. Dunn has a passion for our community and personally served as a guardian for years prior to becoming the Medina County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge. He understands what a positive difference a guardian can make in the life of an individual.

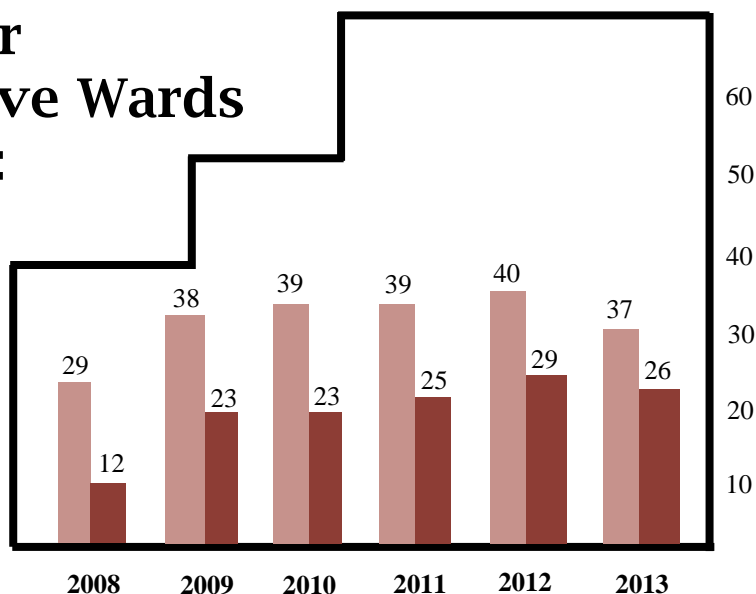
If you know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a volunteer or have any other comments or suggestions, please don't hesitate to call me at (330) 725-9707.

-Nicki Shook L.S.W.

Ratio of Volunteer Guardians to Active Wards in Medina County:

Volunteer Guardians
 Wards

Source: Medina County Juvenile Court Annual Report



*Correction: The Volunteer Guardianship Program began in Medina County in 2004, not 2008 as previously noted. Spring 2014

What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is actually a new medical specialty that has recently emerged and it's not the same as hospice. It doesn't serve only the dying, but focuses more broadly on improving the life and providing comfort to people of all ages with serious, chronic, and life threatening illnesses. These diseases and illnesses can cover the whole spectrum to meet criteria for palliative care.



work to identify and carry out your goals for symptom relief, counseling, spiritual comfort, and whatever may enhance your wards quality of life. Palliative care can also help volunteer guardians understand all the treatment options that could be provided to their wards.

When can your ward start palliative care? Your ward could start at any stage of their illness. The team of palliative care consists of a

One can start with palliative care at any stage of their illness. The palliative team understands the stresses that a volunteer guardian could face to cope with treating their sick wards.

doctor, nurse, and social worker. Additional services are available such as music and art therapy, home health aides, counselors and chaplains.

With palliative care, there is a focus on relieving pain and other troubling symptoms and meeting your wards emotional, spiritual, and practical needs. This new medical specialty aims to improve the quality of life. A palliative care team will

Majority of the Hospice companies that long term care facilities work with offer these services of palliative care. If you feel that your ward would benefit from palliative care services, contact the social worker or Director of Nursing at the facility.

Source: WebMD

The Most Difficult Decisions

The most difficult decisions for guardians are about what to do when death of their ward is inevitable. These decisions include about how the ward would evaluate the benefits and burdens of treatment when life could be prolonged in an impaired state.

These complex decisions can be easier if a guardian understands their wards and have a good sense of what

adds value to their lives.

The DNR decision is one of these difficult decisions to be made. The common misconception is that a DNR (Do Not Resuscitate) order means that no life-sustaining treatments will be used. In reality, the DNR designation means only that CPR will be withheld in the event of a cardiac arrest.

DNR instructions indicated that all measures should be

taken to prevent a person from having a cardiac arrest (such as oxygen, medications, etc.), but that, if your ward actually does go into a cardiac arrest, CPR will not be provided. No other treatments are to be withheld, unless specifically discussed in individual circumstances.

It is essential that guardians learn more about the true nature of CPR and DNR orders.

Source: Professor of Nursing and Medicine at Case Western Reserve University

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

-Maya Angelou

Raising the Bar in Nursing Homes

Ohio is raising the bar for quality long-term care, beginning with nursing homes, through a Medicaid payment policy that rewards a nursing home for achieving quality incentive measures. At the center of this effort is the resident who lives in a nursing home for any length of time— whether they are elders or people with disabling conditions.

Person-centered care is becoming a way of life in Ohio. This means that we are creating environments where people care and live and work with meaning and purpose. It involves residents, their family and friends, and the caregivers who work every day to support the resident's preferences and needs. Everyone engaging together makes the place home.

The quality incentive measures are intended to stimulate practices that support residents in five general areas; nursing home performance, choice, staffing, clinical practice and environment. The goal is for all nursing homes to achieve the quality incentive measures. For more information, visit www.aging.ohio.gov.

THE MEASURES

Staffing

Assignments: No more than 12 nurse aides assisting a resident during a 30-day period

Retention: Retention rate of employees must be at least 75%

Turnover: No staff turnover rate more than 65%

Participation: A nurse aide who is a primary caregiver for a resident must attend and participate in at least 50% of resident care conferences in the facility

Clinical

Pain: No more than 13.35% long-stay residents reporting severe to moderate pain

Ulcers: No more than 5.16% long-stay, high-risk residents with stage two, three or four pressure ulcers

Restraints: No more than 1.52% long-stay residents may be physically restrained

Urinary Tract Infections: Reporting less than 7% of residents with a urinary tract infection

Hospital Admissions: Must track admissions to hospitals and report monthly

Immunizations: At least 95% long-stay residents given pneumococcal vaccine and 93% receive seasonal influenza vaccine

Environment

Rooms: Residents must have a distinct territory with a window, separated by a substantial wall and with complete visual privacy from other distinct territories. They also must have the ability to enter and exit without invading another's distinct territory.

Sound: There must be a written policy prohibiting overhead paging systems or limiting them to the use of emergencies.

Choice

Dining: Residents choose the style of meal and when they eat

Bathing: Residents shower or bath as often as they choose

Sleeping: Residents choose when they go to bed and wake up

Planning: Discuss goals and expectations for the care they receive at the facility

Performance

Satisfaction: Must achieve certain scores on resident satisfaction surveys

Participation: Must participate in the Advancing Excellence and America's Nursing Homes campaign

Review: Must achieve 95% compliance rate with requesting resident reviews in a timely manner for individuals admitted under a hospital exemption

Compliance: Must not have had a health deficiency with a score and severity greater than F or deficiency that constitutes a substandard quality of care

Source: Ohio LTC Quality Initiative website

Spring 2014

Top 10 Type-2 Superfoods

Yes, variety is essential when it comes to diabetes. But these 10 tried-and-true staples are nutrient-rich, protect against chronic diseases, and are ideal foods for people with type 2 diabetes, says Kathleen Zelman, MPH, RD, LD, WebMD's director of nutrition. Plus, they're delicious.



Berries

A smart substitute when you need to limit candy, berries offer sweet flavor, few calories, lots of fiber, and a hefty dose of antioxidants, chemicals that help protect against cancer and heart disease. Raspberries, strawberries, and pomegranates (yes, they're considered a berry) also have plenty of ellagic acid, an antioxidant that may have anti-tumor effects. Toss fresh berries in your morning cereal and noontime salads, and keep dried versions handy for snacking. High-fiber foods like berries help maintain blood sugar levels.



Sweet potatoes

A superior source of the antioxidant beta-carotene, sweet potatoes also contain vitamin C and potassium. Zelman roasts them in a 400-degree Fahrenheit oven for an hour for a delicious caramelized flavor that needs nothing more than a sprinkle of cinnamon, a spice that may help lower blood sugar. Cook with the skin on, since most of the nutrients are next to it.



Salmon

Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, fatty fish such as salmon may protect against age-related dementia. Omega-3s also boost heart health by lowering triglycerides. That's why the American Heart Association recommends eating omega-3-rich fish at least twice a week.



Tea

Black, green, oolong, or white tea has powerful antioxidant flavonoids known as catechins in each calming cup. (The longer you steep tea, the more flavonoids you get, Zelman says.) Research suggests three cups of tea a day may reduce your heart attack risk. Zelman's pantry is full of flavored teas, which are tasty enough to enjoy without sweeteners.



Kale

If you're stuck on spinach, consider kale. Zelman calls it an overall nutrition booster and one of the healthiest vegetables on the planet. One cup offers a riot of antioxidants: 206% of your daily requirement for vitamin A, 134% of your vitamin C requirement, and 684% of your recommended intake of vitamin K (critical for blood clotting and bone health). It's also a top source of lutein and zeaxanthin, compounds that may help prevent age-related eye diseases. Add chopped kale to soups, toss it with pasta and pine nuts, or tear the leaves into 2-inch pieces, spritz with olive oil, and bake until crisp for a bowlful of kale chips.



Eggs

Eggs are not only an inexpensive protein source, they may even help you lose weight. Research suggests that eating eggs at breakfast means you're likely to consume fewer calories the rest of the day. The American Heart Association says healthy adults can eat one egg a day. One reason is that they contain little saturated fat, the real culprit in high blood cholesterol, Zelman says. (To be safe, talk to your doctor about your cholesterol level.) Hard-boil eggs while you prepare dinner so they're ready for a quick breakfast.



Extra virgin olive oil

EVOO offers great taste plus type-2-diabetes-friendly monounsaturated fat. "Extra virgin" means the oil is minimally processed, which protects its more than 30 antioxidant and anti-inflammatory plant compounds, Zelman says. Drizzle it on salads and use it to sauté meat and veggies. But go easy. Like all oils, it packs a calorie wallop.



Nuts

Yes, they're high in calories, but these are calories well spent, Zelman says. Most varieties contain about 170 calories per ounce, along with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats, protein, and fiber. And nuts can help stabilize blood sugar. Reach for a small handful of nuts instead of potato chips.



Low-fat milk

Milk isn't just for kids. Low-fat varieties, such as 1% and skim, are smart choices for adults. Milk has three nutrients that people skip on: calcium, vitamin D, and potassium. For carb counters, 1 cup of milk is equal to a small piece of fruit or slice of bread. Use milk in fruit smoothies or steaming-hot chai tea.



Whole grain cereal

One of the healthiest ways to start your day, whole grain cereal can help reduce blood pressure and LDL ("bad") cholesterol, research shows. Whole grains contain powerful plant chemicals, lignans and flavonoids, which may play a role in preventing heart disease. Zelman recommends cereals with at least 5 grams of fiber to help control blood sugar and stave off hunger. When you're in a hurry, she adds, cereal makes a healthy lunch or dinner.

Source: Erin O'Donnell
WebMD the Magazine—Feature
Reviewed by Kathleen M. Zelman, MPH, RD, LD

Diabetes is a lifelong companion. Sometimes a complication like diabetic nerve pain takes time to resolve, and you may want to try different treatments and medications before finding one that works for you. First, make sure you're doing the best job you can of controlling your blood sugar, exercising regularly, and keeping your weight normal. If you still have pain, numbness, or discomfort in your feet or hands (called peripheral neuropathy), you may need to turn to medications to soothe your nerve.

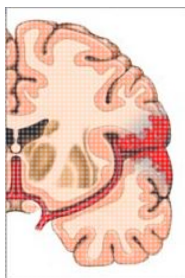
What is a Stroke?

A stroke is a disturbance in the blood vessels leading to or within the brain. These blood vessels feed the brain with oxygen and nutrients.

There are two types of stroke:



Ischemic Stroke occurs when a blood vessel becomes blocked and that part of the brain dies.



Hemorrhagic Stroke occurs when a blood vessel breaks and blood fills and damages that part of the brain.

Major Causes and Risk Factors of Stroke

- High Blood Pressure
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- High Cholesterol
- Atherosclerosis
- Heart Rhythm Problems

THE FACTS

Strokes are the fourth leading cause of death in the U.S. and the #1 leading cause of disability.

1/4

of all strokes in the U.S. occur in people who have already had one.

In 2010, strokes cost the U.S. \$73.7 billion

1/2

of all strokes in the U.S. can be attributed to high blood pressure.

Every **4 minutes** someone dies of a stroke.

On average in the U.S., a stroke occurs every **40 seconds**.

Warnings and Symptoms of a Stroke

Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially one side of the body

Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding

Trouble seeing in one or both eyes

Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination

Severe headache with no known cause

If you experience these signs or see someone else with these problems, call 911 immediately.

2014 VGP Events

April 10

Funeral Home Panel
Western Reserve Masonic Community
4931 Nettleton Road
Medina, Ohio 44256

June 23

Appreciation Picnic
Brunswick Eagles
349 Pearl Road
Brunswick, Ohio 44212

June 23

A Personal Perspective of Being a Guardian
Soprema Senior Center
617 School Drive
Wadsworth, Ohio 44281

How to Refer Someone to the Program:

If you know someone who may need a guardian, call the Medina County Volunteer Guardianship Program to discuss the need. To qualify for services from this program, an individual must be:

1. Indigent (meeting Medicaid eligibility)
2. Without family to provide this service
3. A resident of Medina County

The Program Coordinator will then conduct a detailed phone assessment to determine the appropriateness of the referral. Once the eligibility has been established, program staff will complete an in-depth, onsite assessment of the individual. A physician and the Court Investigator will also examine the individual. The ultimate decision on the appropriateness of the proposed guardianship rests with the Probate Court.

Volunteer Guardianship Program Board Members



Nicki Shook

Medina County Probate Court

Sharon Danko

Medina County Probate/Juvenile Court

Joyce Giles

Medina County Home

Gail Houk

Alternative Paths

Louise Brown

Medina County Job and Family Services

Kathe Shook

Catholic Charities

Lori Betz

GTB Medical

Laura Toth

Medina County Office for Older Adults



A message from Judge Kevin W. Dunn:

"I have no greater responsibility than to protect and care for our precious elderly. Volunteer guardians greatly improve the quality of life for their wards."