



livewell

SPRING 2017



All About Older Adults Issue



Inside:

BCHD to Build 'Healthy Living Campus'
 Older Adult Health Resource Guide
 Care Through the Eyes of a Social Worker
 BCHD Teams with Manhattan Beach Fire



Beach Cities
 Health District
 A Public Agency



The Evolution of BCHD

SINCE BECOMING CEO SIX MONTHS AGO, I HAVE LEARNED A lot about the history of Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) and its evolution that began in the mid-1950s. I greatly appreciate the time people have spent helping me fully appreciate what a true gem BCHD is.

The District story all began when the cities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach came together to build a community hospital in a location that, at the time, was a rural area. In fact, our campus site was a pig farm before the hospital was completed in 1960. Dubbed South Bay Hospital, the community medical facility was operated by the District until 1984. Then a third-party ran the hospital into the mid-90s, at which point increased private sector competition and the urbanization of the South Bay rendered the community hospital obsolete. The District's Board of Directors decided to cease operating the building as a formal hospital and focus on preventive health in 1998. This marked the end of the South Bay Hospital and the beginning of Beach Cities Health District.

Roughly 70% of chronic illnesses that require hospitalization are preventable through lifestyle changes, so this was a strategic move – and years ahead of its time. The building, still owned today by the Health District, was upgraded 20 years ago and leased for the provision of health services. The lease revenue the District generates is used to fund critical health services in the three beach cities, ranging from childhood obesity prevention programming in schools to geriatric social workers.

In 2010, we successfully competed against dozens of cities across the U.S. for the right to implement the Blue Zones Project, an emerging, innovative community health initiative. And in just six years our beach community has transformed into one of the healthiest places to live in the country, according to data from the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index. Blue Zones Project has clearly shown us that our built environment – where we live, work, learn and play – has a significant impact on our health.

Today we're asking our community to help guide us as we update the original hospital building and 11-acre campus that residents voted to construct over 60 years ago. This process is purposefully designed to enhance the campus to match who we are as an organization now and serve the ever-changing health needs of the Beach Cities.

In this issue of LiveWell, you will learn more about our proposed "Healthy Living Campus" concept, discover the many ways BCHD is addressing the needs of older adults and, hopefully, choose to play a role in the next stage of our evolution.

It is an exciting time.



In health,

Tom Bakaly
Chief Executive Officer
Beach Cities Health District

BEACH CITIES HEALTH DISTRICT IS ONE OF THE LARGEST preventive health agencies in the nation, and has served the communities of Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach since 1955. It offers an extensive range of dynamic health and wellness programs, with innovative services and facilities to promote health and prevent diseases across the entire lifespan.

Mission

To enhance community health through partnerships, programs and services for people who live and work in Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach.

Vision

A healthy beach community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michelle Bholat, M.D.
Noel Chun, M.D.
Jane Diehl
Vanessa Poster

CHIEF OFFICERS

Tom Bakaly
Chief Executive Officer
Jackie Berling
Chief Wellness Officer
William E. Kim, M.D.
Chief Medical Advisor
Monica Suua
Chief Financial Officer

Care Through the Eyes of a Social Worker



Greg Flaxman is a young man working in a field traditionally dominated by women. However, his clients say his emotional capacity and quality of care are what really make him a 'rare breed.'

GREG FLAXMAN TYPICALLY ENTERS INTO THE LIVES OF HIS clients during difficult periods of transition and uncertainty. Such was the case early in his career when he met 65-year-old Frank Selders in September 2013.

Frank, who is legally blind and copes with his fair share of other health struggles, had just lost his long-time caretakers and needed immediate assistance with errands and transportation to remain living in his home.

On the advice of a friend, he put in a call to Beach Cities Health District (BCHD), located just blocks from his home in South Redondo. And not long after, a soft-spoken, 26-year-old social worker, who Frank affectionately calls "one of the most special people you'll ever meet," was standing on his doorstep.

"That was honestly the best piece of advice I've probably ever received, because it brought Greg into my life," said Selders.

Greg, now 31, is a Care Manager in BCHD's Community Services Department, specializing in caring for older and disabled adults in the Beach Cities. On any given day, Greg, who holds master's degrees in social work and public health from UCLA, has 70–80 clients on his caseload, most of whom, like Frank, are struggling to live independently in their homes due to health issues and isolation.

Greg's job is to help his clients stay put, for as long as safely possible, by developing customized care plans and connecting them with BCHD health programs and resources

like errand assistance, in-home exercise, social-emotional support, subsidized home care and meals, and more. This long-term, specialized care is often the difference between older adults being able to continue living in their homes or being uprooted for assisted living facilities.

"He's just really well-suited for his line of work," said Selders, who praises Greg for helping him stay in his home despite recent bouts with cancer and liver and kidney transplants. "Young men aren't generally known for being empathetic, but Greg has genuine compassion and concern for people. He has a mature understanding of what older people are going through. And he really listens.

"Most of my family has passed away, I never married and don't have children to care for me, so it's very reassuring to know he's always just a phone call away."

We sat down with Greg to learn about the work he's doing to help older and disabled adults in the Beach Cities as well as what inspired him to dedicate his professional life to geriatric social work.

Q How did you get involved with social work?

A "My first exposure to social work was seeing my grandparents age, and the support that they needed. I was actually with them when a hospice social worker visited their home for the first time. I saw how intimate of an experience it is to help a family during its most vulnerable moment and really support them. And I was drawn to that type of work."



BCHD Care Manager Greg Flaxman makes a home visit to Redondo Beach resident Frank Selders to assess his health needs and develop a customized care plan.

So that end-of-life experience with your grandparents inspired your career?

"Absolutely. I graduated from UCLA with an MSW and MPH and landed an internship at Beach Cities Health District in 2012. I was hired fulltime the following year and was the youngest social worker on staff at the time."

Do you think you offer clients a unique style of care, considering the majority of social workers in the U.S. are female?

"Yeah, I think so. It's really important to have men interested in this kind of work because some people are more comfortable interacting with a particular gender. And it's not always men wanting to talk to men, or women wanting to talk to women. Maybe a client had a really close relationship with their father or other male figures in their life, and feel more at ease interacting with a male social worker. Or maybe they have a grandson who I happen to remind them of, so they're more willing to open up to me. So, yes, it's beneficial to have a balance of male and female social workers."

What do you find most satisfying about your line of work?

"The opportunity to make a difference and enhance people's lives. Honestly, the simple things are the most satisfying, like the flexibility in my job that allows me to spend time with a client in need of extra attention or a little more support at the moment."

How many clients are you caring for currently?

"Right now, between 70 and 80. But it fluctuates a bit. I'm one of five social workers in the Community Services Department and, collectively, we manage roughly 430 cases in the Beach Cities."

Is there any cost for your services?

"No, there isn't. Any aging or disabled resident in need can have access to a BCHD social worker at no cost. And they can stay on our caseload for as long as necessary. There's no time limit, which makes our service especially unique. It also allows us to provide a continuum of care to our clients as they age and keep them living in their homes for as long as safely possible."

You work with people who are generally nearing the end of their lives. Do you find that part of the job emotionally difficult?

"Yeah, it's especially hard to see someone's health decline. Maybe someone you knew as a vibrant person before is afflicted with some disease or illness, and it's a progressive disease, so you see them fade mentally or physically. That part of the job is really tough because we form connections with our clients. We build relationships and establish trust so they are comfortable coming to us when they need help. So, yeah, it can be very emotionally difficult, but it's my job to provide quality care and do everything I can to preserve their quality of life."

What health trends are you seeing in the older adult population?

"We are seeing a higher prevalence of dementia as our local population continues to age. It's a very challenging disease because of the toll it takes, not just on those afflicted but also on family and friends who may be struggling to cope and care for their loved one. It's difficult to watch someone you love change due to the disease. And there's currently no cure for dementia, which makes it especially hard for caregivers and family members to process the experience, so it's really important that they receive support and take time to care for their own health, too."

So in a situation where there's no cure, like dementia, what can be done to help that client?

"Well, it starts with simply being a supportive presence for the person and their caregiver — really listening to their challenges and then connecting them with available resources. Our Healthier Living Program is designed for those with a chronic illness and our Memory Club provides support to people in the early stages of dementia as well as the people caring for them on a daily basis. These programs provide both peer support and education, and show people that they aren't alone in what they're going through. They also allow people to share experiences with fellow community members and learn evidence-based techniques to better cope with the disease and maintain quality of life for as long as possible."

I keep hearing you mention improving “quality of life.” Is that your ultimate goal when working with clients?

“It really is. That and helping people age in place, in their community, for as long as safely possible.”

How do you accomplish that?

“It all starts with an initial in-home assessment, during which we have an honest conversation about the client’s needs and challenges, and take him or her through a complete biopsychosocial assessment to determine the greatest areas of need. Sometimes we actually identify needs that people don’t even realize they have, or connect them to programs that they never considered but that ultimately boost their quality of life. And, again, the assessment is provided at no cost.”

What are some of the free resources available to older adults through BCHD?

“It varies, but anything from in-home exercise, errand assistance and social-emotional support to emergency preparedness training, evidence-based support groups and workshops, and much more. It really just depends on the needs of the person because, thankfully, we have a variety of resources at our disposal.”

Working with older adults, you receive a lot of sage advice. Any in particular stand out to you?

“That’s actually something that I really love about my job. Older adults have a lot of life experience and wisdom to impart to a younger guy like me, and I have a lot of respect and reverence for their life histories and the things they’ve lived through. But to answer your question, a client once said to me, ‘aging isn’t for sissies.’ That always stuck with me because it’s going to happen to all of us, and it isn’t easy. So it’s important that as a society we’re compassionate and extend a hand to help older adults maintain their dignity, health and quality of life as they age. And that’s what we’re doing at Beach Cities Health District.”

To consult with a Care Manager and to learn more about the programs and services available to residents through BCHD’s Community Services Department, visit www.bchd.org or call (310) 374-3426, ext. 256.

Greg helps Frank live independently in his home for as long as safely possible by connecting him with in-home assistance programs and services at no cost.



RESOURCE

Free Workshops

bchd.org/classes-workshops

Healthier Living: An Introduction to Managing Ongoing Health Conditions

Six-week Series

Created by Stanford University researchers, Healthier Living is an evidence-based workshop designed for anyone with an ongoing health condition. The class is also open to family or friends of someone with a condition.

Mondays at 1 p.m.

Beginning June 5

Heritage Pointe

1801 Aviation Way

Redondo Beach

Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Beginning July 27

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD)

514 N. Prospect Ave., Suite 102

Redondo Beach

Contact: Tara Guden

310-374-3426, ext. 120

tara.guden@bchd.org

Memory Club

Eight-week Series

The Alzheimer's Association's Memory Club at BCHD is designed for families to talk with others about the experience of early-stage dementia. Individuals with dementia and their care partners are invited to attend.

Thursdays from 10 a.m.–Noon

Beginning September 19

BCHD

514 N. Prospect Ave., Suite 102

Redondo Beach

Contact: Tara Guden

310-374-3426, ext. 120

tara.guden@bchd.org

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Six-week Series

A self-care program for family caregivers who are currently involved with providing care to a friend, loved one or older adult.

Wednesdays from 5–6:30 p.m.

Beginning June 14

BCHD

514 N. Prospect Ave., Suite 102

Redondo Beach

Community Services Group Room

Mondays from 1–2:30 p.m.

Beginning July 24

Joslyn Community Center

1609 N. Valley Dr.

Manhattan Beach

Tuesdays from 5:30–7 p.m.

Beginning September 12

BCHD

514 N. Prospect Ave., Suite 102

Redondo Beach

Community Services Group Room

Contact: Tara Guden

310-374-3426, ext. 120

tara.guden@bchd.org

Nutrition Class

Four-week Series

Dianne Staso, MS, RD, leads a variety of nutrition classes in Hermosa, Manhattan and Redondo Beach. Topics include eating right with prediabetes and diabetes, how to eat for better immunity, eating to fight inflammation and more.

Maintaining a Healthy Weight as We Age

Tuesdays from Noon–1 p.m.

Beginning June 6

Hermosa Five-O

710 Pier Ave.

Hermosa Beach

*No registration required

Mindfulness Meditation and Aging

Six-Week Series

A class focused on meditation and its benefits for the body and mind. Individuals age 50 and older are welcome to attend.

Thursdays from 9–10 a.m.

Beginning June 22

Veterans Park

309 Esplanade

Redondo Beach

Contact: Shiori Lange

(310) 374-3426, ext. 262

slange@bchd.org



Visit bchd.org/mindfulness for more mindfulness opportunities.



Dianne Staso, RD, performs a cooking demonstration at one of her nutrition classes in Manhattan Beach.

GUIDE *for Older Adults*

Older Adult Classes

BCHD sponsors a variety of older adult classes in Hermosa, Manhattan and Redondo Beach.

Tai Chi

ABC—Agility, Balance and Coordination Mindfulness

For more information on class schedules:

City of Manhattan Beach
(310) 802-5430 or visit www.cityymb.info

City of Hermosa Beach
(310) 318-0280 or visit
www.hermosabch.org

City of Redondo Beach
(310) 318-0650 or visit
www.redondo.org



Bob Wood leads an agility, balance and coordination class at the Joslyn Community Center in Manhattan Beach.

Care Management

Seniors and disabled adults in the Beach Cities have free access to BCHD's team of master's level social workers, who perform in-home health assessments, biopsychosocial evaluations and create a customized care plans to keep people living safely in their homes for as long as possible. Call (310) 374-3426, ext. 256, to speak with a care manager.

Programs

- Conversation Companion
- Errand Assistance
- In-home Exercise
- Brain Buddies
- Emergency Preparedness

Referrals

- Housing
- Activities
- In-home Assistance
- Transportation
- Veterans
- Support Groups
- Public Benefits
- Employment
- Mental Health
- Medical
- Dental
- Substance Abuse
- Health Services
- Counseling



Participants focus on their form in a Tai Chi class at the Joslyn Community Center in Manhattan Beach.

Ask a Care Manager

Seniors and disabled Beach Cities residents can meet one-on-one with a BCHD care manager to discuss helpful community resources.

*No appointment necessary

Last Monday of the month from 11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Perry Park
2301 Grant Ave.
Redondo Beach

Last Thursday of the month from 11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Veterans Park
309 Esplanade
Redondo Beach

First and Third Tuesday and Second and Fourth Thursday of the month from 11:15 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Joslyn Community Center
1609 N. Valley Dr.
Manhattan Beach

Covered California Certified Enrollment Site & Medical

BCHD's team of certified enrollment counselors is available to help residents of Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach and Manhattan Beach at no cost. Call 310-374-3426, ext. 256 to schedule an appointment.

Other Resources

Center for Health & Fitness

www.beachcitiesgym.com

The Center offers trained medical exercise specialists and programs designed for the needs of older adults.

Visit bchd.org/support-groups to find more support groups.

A 'Silver is Headed Toward

With the local senior population expected to double by 2020, Beach Cities Health District unveils plans for developing a Healthy Living Campus



Tsunami the Beach Cities

by Jeff Green, BCHD Community Outreach Consultant

AS A KID, I REMEMBER WATCHING the great Willie Mays, then in his early 40s, playing centerfield during his final year in baseball. The most talented, graceful ballplayer of his generation was chasing a routine fly ball when, for no apparent reason, he wobbled, stumbled and lurched face-first onto the outfield grass as the ball rolled to the wall. That was the early '70s, and though I figured I'd never get wobbly and stumbly, that image has stuck with me.

When you're a child, aging is such an abstract concept. You're pretty sure it'll happen to you, and more certain to your parents, but it's so far down the road, you can worry about that in another 50 years or so. Well, for my parents and me, those worries arrived almost simultaneously earlier this year.

Until this January, I knew little about senior living communities. There was no need. My four 80-something parents (hey, divorce and remarriage happen) had been in their respective homes for 40-plus years, they were relatively healthy, aging reasonably well and still very self-sufficient.

My dad, an Energizer Bunny who's survived three heart attacks, was taking his nightly walk in early March when he decided to pass a slower person. That next step was a doozy. He didn't navigate the curb correctly, fell into the street and has been in a rehab facility ever since. Nobody's sure if he'll ever walk again. Simultaneously, my stepmom admits she's not as "with it" as she once was. One of the smartest people I know, her memory is waning, which frustrates her and

creates challenges from a caregiver perspective.

During the same period, my mom also fell. She wasn't able to get her hands in front of her in time, so she landed directly on her face. The multi-color bruising is scary, but thankfully she didn't break anything. Second time in three years this has happened, though.

By sheer coincidence, I began as a community outreach consultant for Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) a few months ago, and the insights and knowledge learned by working with the staff and doing quite a bit of research have helped me achieve pseudo expert status on older adult living for both sides of my family. When I talk with my sister and various step-siblings about senior villages, communities or villas, I ask about the level of independent living that's available. Is there a campus-like atmosphere? Nearby pharmacies, libraries and grocery stores? What about the onsite medical facilities and specific types of care? Are the walkways flat and without cracks, and are they lined with benches and shaded by trees?

Oh, and both sets of parents, while not excited about moving, want to stay as close as possible to their current homes.

Another component of the aging puzzle turns out to be Baby Boomers; the 76 million people born from 1946 to 1964 who are getting a little creaky. Trust me, I know.

Today's Boomers are basically healthier and more active than their predecessors, but the generation named "Man of the Year" in 1966 by *Time magazine* now averages more than 60 years of age and is going to face some unique

challenges in the near future. Some quick stats about the forthcoming “Silver Tsunami:”

- Today, a large percentage of Baby Boomers in their 50s and 60s are caring for their parents, but that pool of assistance will soon evaporate.
- In ensuing decades, when Boomers will require care, there will be fewer adult children to assist.
- According to AARP, in 2010 there were more than seven potential caregivers for every person 80 and older. By 2020, there will be only four and by 2050 there will be less than 2.5.

Getting older ain’t for the faint of heart. The process, though, can be tempered if older adults have access to a hub of vital services, which in the Beach Cities region is not always readily available. Some more quick stats:

- There currently is up to a three-year wait at some older adult living facilities in the Beach Cities; essentially, there’s a lack of housing to serve the 65 years and older crowd.
- A recent study by Gallup found that 94 percent of older adults in Hermosa, Manhattan and Redondo Beach want to remain living in the Beach Cities community.
- The Beach Cities’ older adult population has reached nearly 15,000, and it’s expected to double in the coming decade.

Which brings us to BCHD and their proposed Healthy Living Campus Project. The 11 acres of BCHD property in Redondo Beach, with the four-story medical building on 514 N. Prospect at its core, will be a self-contained hub of well-being for residents that promotes health and independent living.

“By modernizing our existing medical campus, which includes renovating existing facilities and developing new structures, BCHD can address a growing community need, invest in the future and prosper; growing the enterprise to support our overall mission,” says BCHD CEO Tom Bakaly. “We want the campus to reflect who we are, which means taking a broad, holistic approach.”

The remodeled Healthy Living Campus is intended to provide everything the local aging population may require, ranging from dementia care, geriatric social workers, cancer treatment and primary/preventive medicine to a medically-based exercise facility (with yoga, weight training, medically-certified staff and more), housing and outdoor facilities featuring walking paths, bikeways, outdoor gathering spaces and shuttle carts to ferry guests and residents across the property.

“Our campus is the ideal location to develop a residential community for older adults because of the health programs and services onsite,” says Kerianne Lawson, a licensed geriatric social worker and BCHD’s director of lifespan services. “Increasing access to this hub of services

will allow our aging residents to remain socially and physically integrated in their community, age gracefully in place and maintain the level of independence and quality of life that they deserve.”

The Healthy Living Campus will even incorporate Blue Zones Project principles and concepts, which means re-engineering the campus to create a more livable environment where it’s easy for campus visitors, residents and tenants to use active transportation, connect socially and make healthy choices “that nudge people to eat well and move more.”

BCHD, which exists to provide health and wellness programs throughout the lifespan of residents in the three coastal communities, is intent on meeting the growing demand for older adult residential living options and providing a continuum of care. It’s all about livability, offering independence as well as the foremost health programs and services, and creating an all-inclusive campus where residents of all ages, including older adults and those with disabilities, can enjoy a high quality of life.

Trust me, I now know about these things.

Community for Older Adults



Learn more at bchd.org/healthylivingcampus



Healthy Living Campus Project

AT A GLANCE

What is the Healthy Living Campus Project?

Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) is in the planning and design stages of creating a Healthy Living Campus for the community on the District's 11-acre site located at 514 North Prospect Avenue in Redondo Beach. When completed, the Healthy Living Campus will be a hub of well-being that better connects Beach Cities residents – ranging from children and families to adults and older adults – with the abundant health services and programs offered onsite.

The Healthy Living Campus Project involves holistically modernizing the 62-year-old campus to better serve the evolving health needs of the Beach Cities. Proposed upgrades include:

- Refurbishing BCHD's aging medical building
- Constructing a residential Community for Older Adults
- Increasing campus connectivity and accessibility by integrating Blue Zones Project principles
- Creating usable green space at the core of the campus by consolidating parking on the perimeter
- Leveraging livability principles to form a pedestrian and bike-friendly environment

As these efforts begin to move forward, the goal is to be methodical, cost efficient and, most importantly, community-focused. To ensure the Healthy Living Campus best serves the needs of the community, BCHD is conducting a robust public outreach campaign, which will include community open houses and public presentations, and has convened a Community Working Group to help design the project.

How Can I Provide Feedback About the Healthy Living Campus Project?

Questions and general feedback about the Project can be emailed to HLCinfo@bchd.org or submitted directly to BCHD staff using our online comment card at bchd.org/healthylivingcampus.

Who is on the Healthy Living Campus Community Working Group?

Sue Allard	Manhattan Beach
Jenny Attanasio.....	Manhattan Beach
Pat Aust.....	Redondo Beach
Jan Buike	Manhattan Beach
Craig Cadwallader	Manhattan Beach
Walt Dougher	Manhattan Beach
Pat Dreizler	Redondo Beach
Patrick Flannery	Redondo Beach
Laurie Glover	Redondo Beach
Darryl Kim	Redondo Beach
Jim Light	Redondo Beach
Jean Lucio,.....	Redondo Beach
Dency Nelson	Hermosa Beach
Mark Nelson	Redondo Beach
Lisa Nichols.....	Hermosa Beach
Cindy Schaben	Redondo Beach
George Smeltzer	Hermosa Beach
Kambria Vint	Hermosa Beach



MB Fire, BCHD

TEAM UP

to Support Older Adults

Above: BCHD Care Manager Shiori Lange (front, second from right) and Jan Buike, Older Adult Program Manager for the City of Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation, alongside members of the Manhattan Beach Fire Department.

JOYCE AND ROLAND GUITARE HAVE LIVED IN THEIR MANHATTAN BEACH HOME since 1973, and they're determined to stay there until the end.

It's called "aging in place," and like others, the Guitares get by with a little help from their friends and their community.

Sometimes that help comes from Manhattan Beach firefighters, who've been called to help 81-year-old Joyce get up after a fall or transport 87-year-old Roland to the hospital for a severe nose bleed. And sometimes that help comes from Shiori Lange, MSW, a care manager from Beach Cities Heath District (BCHD), who has provided a range of services to the couple including arranging for a weekend caregiver, providing a LifeLine emergency response system and delivering donated supplies.

Manhattan Beach is such a small town, and it's nice that seniors know that they can call Shiori to provide an amazing network of services to help keep them safe in their homes.

— Jan Buike, MS, Older Adult Program Manager for the City of Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation

It was the firefighters — all of whom are also paramedics — who connected Lange and the Guitares. They carry her card and hand it out to isolated older adults or their caregivers when they suspect she might be able to help. It's part of a collaboration between the MBFD and BCHD that began some 15 years ago to provide needed social services to the aging population in the small town of 35,000.

The City of Manhattan Beach funds part of Lange's salary to support some of its low-income elderly. She has an office at the station where she can be found a couple of hours each week, when she's not out in the field or at BCHD headquarters in Redondo Beach.

When Lange visits a home, she assesses the person's health, psychological state, social environment and support system, in addition to performing a screening for memory deficits and depression. From there, she assists in bringing a range of services to help seniors stay independent. She might arrange for light housekeeping, meal preparation, bathing assistance or personal care. Lange can also connect residents to BCHD volunteer services to help with errands, or enlist volunteer Conversation Companions or MoveWell exercise trainers to visit.

Lange first met the Guitares in 2014 and she continues to check up on them every couple of months to bring supplies and provide emotional support. And they have nothing but good things to say about her and their local firefighters.

"The fire department has been outstanding for me and my wife," said Roland, a retired lieutenant from the Manhattan Beach Police Department. Referring to Shiori, he added: "She's wonderful, too."

"The collaboration between Manhattan Beach and Beach Cities provides tremendous security for the city's seniors," said Jan Buike, MS, Older Adult Program Manager for the City of Manhattan Beach Parks & Recreation, who helped to initiate the partnership years ago.

"Manhattan Beach is such a small town, and it's nice that seniors know that they can call Shiori to provide an amazing network of services to help keep them safe in their homes.

"It really does 'take a village' to provide a continuum of services," Buike said. "The community as a whole is fortunate that there is a strong working relationship between these agencies."

Manhattan Beach Fire Department Chief Robert D. Espinosa concurs: "Anytime we can share resources to have the best result for one of our residents that would be our goal."

To consult with a Care Manager and to learn more about the programs and services available to residents through BCHD's Community Services Department, visit www.bchd.org or call (310) 374-3426, ext. 256.

Shiori Lange and Jan Buike work together to meet the evolving needs of Manhattan Beach's older adult community.



Delivering Peace of Mind, One Backpack at a Time

EDUCATING ISOLATED OLDER ADULTS ABOUT EMERGENCY preparedness is Mary Drummer's true purpose. It's her passion. And it's what compels the long-time Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) volunteer to drive far and wide throughout the Beach Cities delivering backpacks filled with lifesaving supplies to the community's most vulnerable residents, many of whom require special accommodations to live independently in their homes and rely on daily medications that they can't afford to go without in the event of an emergency.

Residents like 77-year-old Lois Parker, who recently suffered a stroke and lives alone in her Redondo Beach apartment. A few weeks ago, Care Manager Shiori Lange, MSW, a BCHD social worker whose job is to keep Lois living at home for as long as safely possible, identified her aging client's need for emergency supplies and training and referred her to BCHD's recently-created Emergency Preparedness Program.

And that's where Mary comes in, and with her, a backpack complete with non-perishable food, a flashlight, whistle, personal care items and more. During the in-home visit, which lasts about an hour, she carefully walks Lois through each item, explaining its purpose in great detail and providing instruction on proper usage. Next, she guides her through an informational packet that details lifesaving procedures to follow should disaster strike, kindly emphasizing the importance of creating a plan of action, keeping critical documentation handy and stockpiling a week's worth of medication in a safe, accessible place.

By the visit's end, Lois is smiling,



BCHD volunteer Mary Drummer (right) delivers an emergency preparedness kit to Redondo Beach resident Lois Parker.

joking and feeling empowered to face the unexpected. That's what's become known around BCHD as the "Mary Drummer Effect."

"Most people don't think disaster preparedness is the most exciting or glamorous thing, but it's really important," said Mary, a former registered nurse. "Teaching is the biggest part of what I do — showing people how and when to use their supplies, 'here's your whistle; you can use it if you're trapped in the house and can't get out during a disaster.' It's very gratifying to see the lightbulb go off above their heads in these situations."

Since BCHD launched the program in 2015, Mary has completed more than 75 home visits, accounting for 40 percent of all of BCHD's emergency preparedness-related client visits.

But for as much as she gives, Mary believes she is the true beneficiary of the program.

"This project graced me with the opportunity to hold the hand of a Holocaust survivor and dozens of others who are facing chronic pain, disease and disability, yet living with joy," she said. "These are courageous members of our community and at the end of each visit I walk away thinking 'I want to be just like them when I grow up.'"



BCHD emergency preparedness kit contents.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Each year, more than 100 Beach Cities Health District volunteers make helping older adults a priority, contributing 7,000 hours to our aging population. Here are ways you can get involved, too.



NEW! Brain Buddies

One in three older adults 65 years and older are living with some form of memory impairment or dementia. Brain Buddies Volunteers meet one-on-one with these older adults to help keep their minds healthy, active and engaged. Meetings include evidence-based socialization, games and activities proven to help slow the process of memory loss and positively impact a person's health and well-being.



Conversation Companions

Develop a meaningful social connection with an isolated and homebound older adult in need of social support, friendship and conversation.



Errand Volunteers

Be the key to independence for an older adult by assisting with errands required for daily living, such as grocery shopping and pharmacy visits. Must be available for weekday shifts.



MoveWell Volunteers

Help a homebound older adult maintain their strength, coordination and balance through evidence-based exercises in the comfort of their home. Must be available for weekday shifts.



Campus Greeters

"Hello, can we help you?" Yes, you can by becoming a campus greeter! Volunteers greet and provide information and wheelchair assistance to guests at the BCHD campus.

Interested?

Visit bchd.org/volunteer to learn more about these programs and to complete a volunteer application. The next volunteer training for older adult programs will take place on Saturday, August 12.

*****ECRWSEDDM****
POSTAL CUSTOMER

For Patients with Dementia, It May Be Time to Give Up the Car Keys

A diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or some other form of dementia typically signals a turning point in an individual's life and the lives of his or her loved ones. One of the most significant impacts may be the decision to stop driving. The patient, family members and health professionals can all be involved in determining if it's no longer safe for a person with dementia to get behind the wheel.

This issue is assuming greater significance as the graying of the U.S. population translates to more diagnosed cases of Alzheimer's disease and dementia. While the actual number of people with dementia who are still driving is unknown, studies show the rate of automobile crashes in this group is higher than among other drivers, says Zaldy Tan, MD, medical director of the UCLA Alzheimer's and Dementia Care Program. "The risk of motor-vehicle crashes for people with dementia is up to eight times greater compared to people who don't have dementia," Dr. Tan says.

California is among the few states in the nation with a mandatory reporting law aimed at keeping unsafe drivers off the road. The law requires health professionals who make a diagnosis

of dementia to report the diagnosis to the Department of Public Health. That agency reports the case to the Department of Motor Vehicles. DMV officials will review the case and may request that the individual come in for a driving test. Family members, neighbors or others also can anonymously report someone who is suspected of being an unsafe driver due to dementia.

The law protects public safety by removing drivers with dementia from the roads. But it can also put health professionals in a tough spot, Dr. Tan says. "The law is helpful if the health professional does the right thing and loved ones do the right thing," he says. "But, because of this law, it may discourage loved ones and patients themselves from letting health profes-

sionals know there might be dementia. Health professionals might be hesitant to diagnose dementia because they would have to confront this person about driving."

Not everyone with dementia needs to stop driving. However, dementia is linked to an erosion of several skills that often impact the ability to drive safely, Dr. Tan says, including short-term memory and decision-making skills. Drivers with dementia may also have a decline in visual-spatial skills. That may mean difficulties judging the distance to the car ahead or centering one's own car in a lane. "Dementia is a neuro-degenerative disease, so it affects several abilities," Dr. Tan says. "These patients also may have reduced awareness of their own driving safety."

Dr. Tan recommends that a family go on a ride-along with the person with dementia to assess his or her driving ability. Some organizations will offer driving assessments for people with dementia, and there are other resources to help older people make adjustments to their vehicles to enhance safety.

Reprinted with permission from UCLA Health Vital Signs, Spring 2017.

UCLA Health

Driving and Memory Loss: Promoting Independence While Maintaining Safety

Tuesday, July 25, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Redondo Beach Main Public Library

Workshop providing information on memory loss as it relates to operating a motor vehicle, including cognitive changes that impair driving, when driving becomes unsafe/what to do, and resources to support families when driving is no longer an option. Brought to you by the South Bay Dementia Education Consortium.