



NEW MEXICO
RETIREE
HEALTH CARE
AUTHORITY

your Benefit Messenger

NMRHCA 2017 Newsletter Vol. 2 - Spring Edition

MANAGE YOUR CHRONIC DISEASE AT HOME WITH 'BETTER CHOICES'

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority members with chronic diseases take notice: The ability to manage your condition has just gone viral.

NMRHCA has joined with the New Mexico Department of Health and Canary Health to bring you the Better Choices Better Health program, an online workshop for people with chronic conditions.

Better Choices Better Health is the online version of the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (known in New Mexico as "MyCD" Manage Your Chronic Disease), a six-week, peer-led education program offered in community settings such as senior centers, church work sites and hospitals that involve one 2½-hour session per week.

The Stanford School of Medicine Patient Education Research Center developed the programs, which are designed for adults of all ages with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, arthritis, asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure or any other ongoing or long-term health condition.

But for those who are unable to travel or prefer to participate in a program in the comforts of your own home rather than travel to an on-site location, you now can access the program and join a peer group on your computer.

See *Manage* on Page 3

UCCI TO HOST DENTAL HEALTH SEMINARS IN ABQ, S.F., IN MAY

Losing your teeth is **NOT** an automatic consequence of growing older. For many seniors, however, it is a reality. As we age, our risk for oral health problems increase at a disproportional rate for a variety of reasons.

gum disease?

Join United Concordia's Dental Wellness Coaches on May 17 as they discuss the answers to these questions and the important connection between your dental health and your overall health.

The Albuquerque session will take place at 10 a.m., in the NMRHCA Board Room, 4308 Carlisle Blvd., NE, Suite 207. The Santa Fe session will start at 2 p.m. in the PERA Building training room at 33 Plaza La Prensa. Healthy snacks will be available at both sessions.

Advance reservations are helpful but not required. Call the Albuquerque office (800-233-2576) or Santa Fe (505-476-7345) to reserve your spot. See you there!

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Protecting More Than Just Your Smile®



For example: Did you know that prescription drugs can increase

the risk of cavities? Have you heard about the connection between diabetes and gum disease? Did you know nearly 75 percent of Americans will have gum disease in their lifetime? Do you know the best ways to prevent and treat

Legislative Session Recognizes NMRHCA Value to Its Retirees

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority's House Joint Memorial 1, titled "Importance of Affordable Health Insurance," passed through the House of Representatives at the 2017 New Mexico Legislative Session.

HJM 1 recognized the importance of the agency's ability to provide affordable health insurance to the 60,000-plus retired State of New Mexico employees as well as provide a benefit for the 100,000 active state employees currently making contributions.

The joint memorial recognized the actions taken to improve the agency's trust fund balance and solvency over the past several years, as well as the negative impact of Senate Bill 7 during the 2016 legislative special session on projected future revenues.

The joint memorial proposed that NMRHCA and its Board of Directors would continue to work with the legislature and executive branch on ensuring the agency's long-term viability.

The Senate Public Affairs Committee's amendment proposed that the Legislative Finance Committee study solutions to improve the solvency of the program and make recommendations to the 2018 Legislature. The joint memorial, however, did not complete the legislative process.

NMRHCA thanks Representative Tomás Salazar for his active support in sponsoring the joint memorial during the 60-day session, as well as the many legislators who voted in favor of it.

HEADACHE? DON'T AUTOMATICALLY REACH FOR OTC DRUGS

Many people suffer from frequent, severe headaches, including migraines. These headaches need careful treatment, with a focus on prevention. Ask your doctor about ways to prevent and treat headaches.

- Limit use of over-the-counter pain drugs. If you use them more than two days a week, cut back.
- Avoid using prescription drugs containing opioids or butalbital, except as a last resort.

Over-the-counter pain medicines can have dangerous side effects.

Aspirin, acetaminophen and ibuprofen work well for headaches on occasion. But if you take these drugs too often, you can get serious side effects. In rare cases, you may damage your liver if you often take acetaminophen several days in a row.

Rarely, these drugs can also cause kidney problems. Aspirin and ibuprofen can, at times, cause stomach bleeding.

Effectiveness of pain meds decrease.

If you overuse pain medicines, they may no longer help as much. You may also get headaches more often, called "medication overuse headaches." The following drugs are most likely to cause overuse headaches. They may also make you more sensitive to pain:

Prescription drugs:

- Drugs with butalbital (Fiorinal, Fioricet, Esgic and others)
- Opioid painkillers (hydrocodone—Vicodin and other brands and generics, or oxycodone—OxyContin, Percodan, Percocet and others)



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done—OxyContin, Percodan, Percocet and others)

Non-prescription drugs that contain caffeine (Excedrin Migraine)

Some pain drugs can cause addiction.

Drugs that contain opioids or butalbital can make you drowsy. Long-term use of these drugs can cause addiction or physical dependence, and overuse headaches.

Some people need headache treatment for years, or even decades. Take addictive drugs only if safer treatments don't work. Ask your doctor how to avoid overuse and addiction.

Lifestyle changes can help some people with severe headaches.

Often, you can prevent headaches or have them less often if you:

- Reduce stress, or learn to cope with it more effectively.
- Drink a minimum of alcohol.
- Get enough sleep.

If you still get headaches more than once a week, consider taking a daily preventive drug.

If you need pain relief during a bad migraine, drugs called triptans work well for most people and usually have fewer side effects than other prescription drugs. FDA-approved triptans are available as generics, such as sumatriptan (Imitrex).



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: NMRHCA SAYS GOODBYE TO MARK TYNDALL

New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority Executive Director Mark Tyndall has left after eight years with the agency and 4½ years as the agency's leader.



Mark Tyndall 62,000 retired State of New Mexico employees and eligible dependents. It includes some 300 participating employer groups (schools, agencies and local governments).

Tyndall came to NMRHCA in November of 2008 and soon was elevated to Deputy Director. In 2009, the agency's projected solvency year (the year in which NMRHCA's benefits funds would be exhausted) was 2019 (10 years).

NMRHCA, created from the New Mexico Retiree Health Care Authority Act in 1990, provides health insurance to more than

In April of 2012, five months before Tyndall took over as executive director, the agency's benefits fund balance was \$230 million.

Thanks to Tyndall's leadership under the direction of NMRHCA's Board of Directors, that benefits fund balance now exceeds \$500 million and until recently, the program had a projected solvency of 20 years (2036).

Tyndall's efforts have allowed NMRHCA to remain a vital benefit for retired state employees and incentive for current state employees.

His strong leadership and guidance will be greatly missed.

During the March Board of Directors meeting in Santa Fe, the board voted to promote Deputy Director David Archuleta to Interim Executive Director.

NMRHCA wishes Mark all the best in his future endeavors.

NMRHCA AT A GLANCE

NMRHCA TO CONTINUE SERIES ON UNDERSTANDING MEDICARE

Sessions on the basics of Medicare and how to manage your health continue at our offices in Albuquerque (9:30 a.m.) and Santa Fe (1:30 p.m.) on May 10, June 7, July 5, Aug. 9, Sept. 6, Nov. 8 and Dec. 6. Sessions also will be in Las Vegas (Council Chambers) on July 7 at 9 a.m. and in Roswell (Bassett Auditorium) on Nov. 8 at 10 a.m.

WELLNESS INCENTIVE UPDATE

A record 58 people in February participated in our Wellness Incentive Program that gives a \$50 gift card to members and spouses/partners for completing two wellness programs! Call us for more information or go to <https://www.nmrhca.state.nm.us/Pages/Wellness.aspx>.

MANAGE YOUR CHRONIC CONDITION FROM COMFORTS OF YOUR HOME

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Chronic disease is a public health issue in the state of New Mexico; it is responsible for more than 60 percent of all deaths in the state, according to the New Mexico Department of Health.

The six-week sessions will give members the confidence and motivation to manage your chronic disease by teaching you how to:

- Make a step-by-step action plan to improve your health
- Problem-solve, make informed decisions and manage your medications (a recent Anthem study showed that those who participated in Better Choices Better Health had improved medication adherence)

- Eat healthy and exercise safely to maintain and improve strength and endurance (the same study showed that those who participated in Better Choices Better Health increased exercise by 43 minutes per week)
- Deal with frustration, stress, pain, fatigue, poor sleep, depression and living with uncertainty
- Communicate better with your doctor, family or caregiver about your health

The first Better Choices Better Health online workshop is scheduled to begin April 24. NMRHCA members may register now by going to <http://enroll-nmrhca.selfmanage.org/>. Slots are limited, so don't miss out. Register today!

For more information, call NMRHCA at 800-233-2576.



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Please visit us online at www.nmrhca.org



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CONTACT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS DIRECTLY

Blue Cross Blue Shield

BCBSNM 800-788-1792
BCBSNM Medicare Advantage 877-299-1008
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Express Scripts

Express Scripts Medicare 800-551-1866
Express Scripts Non-Medicare .. 800-501-0987
www.express-scripts.com

Presbyterian Health Services

Presbyterian Health Plan 888-275-7737
Presbyterian Medicare Advantage .800-797-5343
www.phs.org

Humana 866-396-8810
www.humana.com

New Mexico Health Connections ... 877-210-8239
<http://www.mynmhc.org/nmrhca>

United Healthcare 866-622-8014
www.uhcretiree.com

United Concordia Companies 888-898-0370
www.ucci.com

Delta Dental 877-395-9420
www.deltadentalnm.com

Davis Vision 800-999-5431
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