

# Neighborhood Health Advocate West Hill

News of the Neighborhood Health Advocate Program

Volume 1, Issue 2

A Joint Program of Albany Guardian Society and The Community Foundation for the Capital Region

December 2003

## Supporting Organizations

Koinonia Health Care  
The Elder Network of the  
Capital Region  
University at Albany  
The Sage Graduate School  
NYS Office for the Aging

## In Cooperation with

The West Hill Ministers  
Fellowship



*All of us at the  
Neighborhood  
Health Advocate  
Program wish you  
and your family a  
happy and safe  
holiday season  
filled with health,  
happiness and love.*

## In this Issue...

In this newsletter, you'll find:  
valuable information about  
our program  
information on transporta-  
tion services in the area  
helpful tips and informa-  
tion on issues that can  
affect us in the winter  
months

## Progress of NHAP Program

Dear Neighbor,

The Neighborhood Health Advocate Program has had an exciting and productive two months!

Since our program began in September, we have provided the lay advocates from participating churches in West Hill with information which will help seniors receive needed health and social services in the Capital District. Our program is designed to help **seniors in West Hill** obtain services in order to live healthy and independent lives **in the comfort of their home**. Since September, our team has gathered information through attendance at health fairs, invited speakers, and by meet-

ing people in the community.

In October, the NHAP team attended the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center health fair and the Senior Expo at Colonie Center. These health fairs were great opportunities to meet people in the community and learn about **the services offered by different agencies**. We gathered information on topics such as insurance coverage, prescriptions, home care and medical assistance, recreation, etc. Several presenters visited our office to educate the NHAP team. We have learned about recreation at GuildCare Adult Day Care, resources at Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center and Com-

munity Outreach Services, as well as eligibility criteria for Food Stamps, HEAP, and Medicaid coverage. We are scheduled to learn about visiting nurse pro-



*Debbi Sitterly speaking on Medicaid coverage to NHAP team*

grams, medical insurance assistance, and much more.

Our lay advocates may be **your link** to living a more healthy and independent life. Please don't hesitate to **contact us** at 465-2703 with your questions or concerns.

## Getting the Best of Winter

Don't let short days and long nights, icy conditions, freezing cold, and holiday blues get you down. We want you to get the best of winter! Here's how to take action about winter issues.

One of these issues is the flu season. Besides

stocking up on **chicken soup**, consider getting the influenza vaccine if you are over 50 or have long-term health problems. Flu season usually runs from January through March, but we are already seeing outbreaks in many states which may indicate an

especially severe flu season. There are nearby "Flu Clinics" available to the public (see page 2), so call ahead and bring your insurance card with you. Or, if you prefer, visit your doctor and **get a flu shot** there!

*Continued on page 2*

**NEWS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH  
ADVOCATE PROGRAM**

*A Joint Program of Albany Guardian Society and  
The Community Foundation for the Capital Region*

c/o Koinonia Health Care  
553 Clinton Avenue  
Albany, NY 12206

Phone: 518-465-2703 Fax: 518-689-2341  
Email: [advocateforseniors@yahoo.com](mailto:advocateforseniors@yahoo.com)

**FLU CLINICS**

**Whitney Young Health Center (465-4771)**  
at Lark and Arbor Drive. *Walk-in clinic every  
Wednesday from 9 a.m. to noon, and Friday  
from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. If not insured, cost is \$15.*

**Albany County Department of Health  
(447-4589)** at 175 Green Street, *every Monday  
and Wednesday from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., by ap-  
pointment for Albany County residents.*

## Capital District Transportation Services

If you have any questions, please contact us at (518) 465-2703, or any of the transportation programs directly.

**Albany County Non-Emergency Transportation** -- accepts Medicaid recipients only. Services are available from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. with 24-hour availability (if needed). You must call five business days in advance to schedule an appointment. Return rides are also available upon request and transportation is provided into other counties for appointments. For further information call (866) 208-7357.

**CDTA Star** -- provides services to individuals with physical or mental impairments or with a special disability who find it difficult to get to a bus route. For further information, contact CDTA Star at (518) 482-2022.

**Senior Services of Albany** -- provides services to seniors who reside in Albany and are 60 years of age or older. Appointments are taken from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Calls for appointments end at 3:30 p.m. Seniors who need transportation for medical appointments can call up to two months in advance to schedule. For recreation appointments, seniors can call up to five days in advance to schedule. Senior Services of Albany offers transportation to Price Chopper on West Lawrence, Tuesday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Suggested donation for medical appointments is \$2.00 and for grocery assistance \$1.00. For further information call (518) 434-4219.

## Getting the Best of Winter *continued from page 1*

The flu is not like a common cold. It can leave you down and out for at least three to five days. It is very dangerous to the elderly and those with long term diseases. Be prepared, and if you already have received the "flu shot," **GOOD for YOU! Wash your hands, and try not to touch your face or hair** to help prevent the spread of infection.

Have you heard of Seasonal Affective Disorder, sometimes known as winter depression? Lack of sunlight can lead to seasonal depression. Besides always being tired, sleeping more, and withdrawing from social activities, it includes craving sweets and starches that cause weight gain. In severe cases, special lights are used as phototherapy to help fight this disorder. A more available treatment is **getting outside**

**and soaking up the sun**, for at least a half hour a day, during midday. A well-balanced diet and daily exercise will also help.

Too cold for you? **Layers of clothing are very helpful** in trapping in body warmth, but don't forget to cover your head and ears. A neck warmer is a great way to keep your neck and chin warm; pull it up to your nose on the freezing days. And, don't forget to **wear the right foot-gear**. Are your shoes or boots warm, waterproof and well-fitting? What about the treads on the bottom? There is adaptive equipment for shoes, canes and walkers to make them less likely to slip. Staying active takes effort, but it is well worth it to stay independent.

The holiday season may not always be the wonderful, calm,

and loving time that we anticipate. Spending time with family and friends can be difficult. Traditions may change as families grow and change. **Try to set realistic expectations of yourself and those around you.** It's easy to get caught up in the frenzy of the season and miss the meaning of the season. Being sad, lonely or disappointed is not unusual during these times. It's OK to have these feelings. **Take time to reach out to those who care and support you. Help someone in need. Try something new. Get plenty of rest and proper food. Keep your healthy habits a priority so you don't get run down.**

These suggestions could help **you** make the **BEST** of the winter season and the new year ahead!