

# HEALTH ALLIANCE & YOU

EXCEPTIONAL HEALTHCARE CLOSE TO HOME

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# Patient Satisfaction Soars in the Emergency Department

Visiting the hospital, especially the Emergency Department, can be stressful and demanding, so it's important to our team of physicians, nurses and support staff to make your visit as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

Over the past year, HealthAlliance Hospital's Broadway Campus Emergency Department (ED) has seen a significant increase in our patient-satisfaction scores. Based on National Research Corp., or NRC, patient-satisfaction data, these scores now rank our ED statistically in the top quartile of EDs nationwide, a benchmark performance measure meaning our patients rate us among the highest in the country. These latest results reflect a renewed dedication to customer-centric healthcare and the ED patient experience.

To minimize waiting time at the beginning of the ED visit, we implemented full bedside triage. Triage in the ED involves a brief initial assessment of the patient, including his or her vital signs, and the assignment of a "chief complaint" — for instance, chest pain, abdominal pain or difficulty breathing. Patients used to go through registration, triage, room assignment and physician evaluation in sequence, but patients are now brought to an available room immediately, where they can then have all the initial work done privately at the bedside. As a result, the average time from arrival to being seen by a physician dropped to 17 minutes. In addition, our patient-care technicians now, as a matter of policy, circulate the floors at least once an hour to check on how you're doing, to monitor your progress, to see if you need help or to resolve other issues.

We have also optimized our separate Fast Track process so that patients with minor illness or injury are treated and discharged in under 120 minutes. For sicker patients who need to be admitted, we coordinated with our colleagues inside the hospital to improve the transition from the ED to a bed within the hospital.

As ED managers, patient satisfaction is always a top priority. Our 12 board-certified emergency physicians receive formal customer-service training. We use powerful analytics to continually track our progress and provide feedback to staff members from our comment cards and patient-satisfaction surveys. It's especially rewarding to share the increase in compliment letters with our team.

We take our mission — to deliver outstanding emergency care to our community — very seriously, and we continually strive to create a positive patient experience, despite what might otherwise be a difficult personal emergency. No matter what the scenario or reason for your visit, you can depend on the Broadway Campus Emergency Department to provide you with the best quality healthcare.



Fareed N. Fareed, MD, FACEP  
Emergency Department Medical Director, Broadway Campus



Mariana Shaut, RN, BSN  
Administrative Director, Emergency Services, Broadway Campus



According to NRC data of August 2015, our Emergency Department ranked **HIGHER** than the NRC average benchmark in **9 out of 12 categories.\***

Since 2013, the Emergency Department has seen **improved ratings** in several areas, including communication with providers, pain management and discharge information. The overall rating of the facility has **increased from 48% positive to 70% positive** — higher than the NRC national average.\*

## What Our Patients Say: 'Efficient, Professional and Pleasant Care'

Every day at HealthAlliance we strive to provide an exceptional patient experience. Linda Osolin wrote a letter commending HealthAlliance for the excellent care she received when her daughter suddenly needed to visit an Emergency Department. She was traveling down the New York State Thruway, an hour and a half from her home in New Jersey, and had to put her faith in "Siri," Apple's voice-activated assistant, to direct her to the nearest hospital: HealthAlliance's Broadway Campus.

"Everyone we encountered, from the medical staff to the transporter, was kind, professional and efficient, had a sense of humor and genuinely seemed to care about my daughter," said Linda, a registered nurse at a leading New York City medical center.

Linda explained that the Emergency Department staff worked "quickly" with her daughter's registration, triage, physician meeting, examinations, CT scan and test results. She said the staff was smart and sensitive to her daughter's preferences by having a female perform the examination.

"Everything went so smoothly and everyone was so kind and professional. I was pleasantly surprised," Linda wrote.

After receiving "efficient, professional and pleasant" care in a "clean and comfortable" environment, Linda wanted to get her daughter to a hospital closer to home. "Although the staff informed me of all the risks and tried to convince me to have her transferred by ambulance, when I refused, they still treated me with kindness and respect and did what they could to make her trip comfortable and safe," she said in her letter.

Linda's only complaint? She needed more room on the HealthAlliance comment card to write about the things we did well.

**Data from Medicare's Hospital Compare website show that in our ED, the average wait time before seeing an ED physician is 17 minutes — 21 minutes faster than the state average and 10 minutes faster than the national average.\***

\* All data pertain to the HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus Emergency Department



FEEDBACK

**We'd Love to Hear from You.** To submit a comment about the care you have received at one of our facilities, email HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley at [YOU@hahv.org](mailto:YOU@hahv.org).

# Diabetes Party Plan

From now through January 1, food isn't just food. It's a delicious experience loaded with tradition and temptation. It's tough managing the onslaught of festive favorites, such as mashed potatoes, stuffing, casseroles and dessert. But for the 30 million Americans with diabetes, the holiday season can be especially challenging.

"Diabetes doesn't go away just because it's the holidays," says Miranda Aitken, Program Coordinator of the Diabetes Education Center at HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley.

But you can keep your blood sugar reasonably well-controlled while enjoying



Eugene Heslin, M.D.



Miranda Aitken, M.S., RNC, CDE

yourself. "The key is to plan ahead about how you'll manage it all," says Aitken, a master's-prepared certified registered nurse and certified diabetes educator. These party strategies can help you keep your health on track without feeling deprived.

## PARTY SMARTS

### Keep close tabs on your blood sugar.

"Don't throw out your diabetes management plan, but acknowledge that you will eat foods that you don't normally and at irregular times too," says Dr. Eugene Heslin, Medical Director for outpatient diabetes at HealthAlliance.

To keep your blood sugar under control during party

season, monitor your blood sugar daily and talk with your healthcare team to develop a plan to compensate for indulging. "Their guidelines can act as guardrails to keep your blood sugar in the middle of the road," Dr. Heslin says. That could mean adjusting your diet the next day or your insulin dosages, if possible.

**Use delay tactics.** At parties, don't go straight to food and drinks. Instead, grab a glass of seltzer and mingle. "Focus on your family and friends," Aitken says. The longer you put off eating and drinking, the less time you'll have to overindulge. If you choose to drink, be careful and drink only in moderation. "Alcohol combined with some diabetes medication can lower your blood sugar," Aitken says.

**Plan your splurges.** Focus on foods you should eat. "At meals, fill at least half your plate with salads and nonstarchy vegetables, such as salad, carrots or broccoli," Aitken says. These don't raise blood sugar quickly. Then reserve one-fourth of your plate for starchy foods, such as sweet potatoes or green bean casserole.



## November is National Diabetes Month

It's a great time of year to make an appointment with an ophthalmologist for a dilated eye exam and with your primary care doctor for a glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c) and other tests that can indicate if your diabetes is well controlled. "The goal is to live a long, healthy life without complications," Dr. Heslin says. Knowing where you stand can help you make decisions about how to better manage your diabetes and stay motivated to keep up the good work.

## 5

## Immunity-Boosting Foods

Fill the remaining fourth with lean meat, such as roast turkey.

If it's your usual meal time, try to eat the same amount of carbohydrate you'd usually have. But when dinner is later than usual, nibble on veggies to tide yourself over. If you're looking forward to dessert, have less of the green bean casserole (or another carbohydrate) during the main course. Eat slowly and say no to seconds.

**Provide healthy options.** If you're hosting, still offer high-carb holiday favorites, such as scalloped potatoes and stuffing, and send leftovers home with friends and family. But provide plenty of nonstarchy vegetables dishes too. "Cauliflower is a great substitute for potatoes in casseroles," Aitken says. As a guest, offer to bring a dish that fits into your meal plan. "You'll know there will be at least one healthy option," Aitken says.

**Exercise daily.** Physical activity helps lower blood sugar. If you're shopping, walk an extra lap or two around the mall before entering a store. Or complete your workout first thing in the morning.

**Get back on track.** If you over-indulge, don't convince yourself that you can keep doing it. Instead, "go into a no-guilt zone and go right back to your regular diabetes-friendly lifestyle," Dr. Heslin says.

For more on managing diabetes, attend HealthAlliance's monthly diabetes education seminar from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month. For details, contact Cynthia Bell at the Diabetes Education Center, 845-334-4249, ext. 1.

Cold and flu season is upon us, but that doesn't mean you're destined to get sick. Build up your defenses now so that you can fend off germs when they attack. Fill your plate with immunity-boosting foods to increase your chances of staying healthy all season long. Here are some examples:



1

**BELL PEPPERS**

A green or red bell pepper has about as much vitamin C as a glass of orange juice, if not more. Vitamin C helps make antibodies, natural infection-fighters in your blood.



2

**SWEET POTATOES**

Sweet potatoes are the best food source of vitamin A. Vitamin A helps keep your immune system working properly. You can also find vitamin A in carrots, dark leafy greens and squash.



3

**OATMEAL**

This breakfast staple is a good source of the carbohydrate beta-glucan. Your body does not naturally contain beta-glucan. This activates your immune system so it is ready to battle germs.



4

**BEEF**

Beef is high in two nutrients essential for a strong immune system: zinc and protein. It provides half the daily recommended amount of zinc. Since red meat can be high in unhealthy saturated fat, it's best to limit how much you eat, and choose lean cuts.



5

**YOGURT**

Probiotics are beneficial bacteria that live in your gut. Studies show that taking probiotics decreases the odds of having an upper respiratory tract infection or common cold. Probiotics may also shorten the number of days you have a cold, if you do catch one. Yogurt can be a good source of probiotics. Look for the words "live and active cultures" on the label to ensure the yogurt contains probiotics.

# Midwifery: Offering a Traditional Model of Care at Your Community Hospital

Despite the perception that midwifery is unconventional, it's actually an ancient practice. The word "midwife," meaning "with woman," dates all the way back to the 14th century.

In addition to working with the Institute for Family Health, the Family Birth Place at the HealthAlliance Broadway Campus has partnered with River & Mountain Midwives and Capital Region Midwifery to provide planned hospital births. Midwifery promotes nonsurgical, physiologic birth — the spontaneous onset and progression of labor. All New York state midwives receive extensive education and are licensed by the state.

A woman may opt to give birth with an independent midwife at the Family Birth Place for many reasons, including having a living situation uncondusive to home birth, insurance not adequately covering the costs of a home birth, a health condition that makes a hospital birth a safer option, or simply a preference for the hospital.

Susanrachel Condon, co-owner of River & Mountain, says they're excited about the partnership because of the great staff and facilities at the Family Birth Place, including the birthing tub, and the hospital's commitment to childbirth

education and breastfeeding. Condon, a certified nurse midwife, nurse practitioner and a licensed midwife, feels there is a strong, collaborative approach among the midwives, obstetricians, nurses and family physicians when it comes to caring for the women, the newborns and their families.

"One of the great things about the Family Birth Place is that it has been underutilized and is ripe with potential, especially for Ulster County families," she says. "The midwifery groups are honored to help make the Family Birth Place a centerpiece for childbirth in the Hudson Valley."

Both groups have already facilitated successful, planned hospital births at the Family Birth Place and are eager to offer their services to more families. To educate families on this new program, Capital Region Midwifery will offer a monthly meet and greet at the hospital.

"We are very excited to bring our special brand of midwifery to the beautiful Family Birth Place," says Liz Pickett, a master's-prepared certified midwife and licensed midwife with Capital Region

Midwifery. "Women and families can attend the Capital Region Midwifery meet and greet to gain knowledge about our practice, ask us questions about midwifery care options, get to know us and see the Family Birth Place facility."

## Capital Region Midwives Meet and Greet!

Time: 6 p.m.

Date: Third Wednesday of the month

Location: Family Birth Place, HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus.

For more information, call **845-331-3131 ext. 2241.**



Liz Pickett and Megan O'Connor of Capital Region Midwifery

River & Mountain Midwives with the birthing tub at HealthAlliance's Family Birth Place

Photo courtesy of Kelly Marsh/Times Herald-Record

## The Family Birth Place

The Family Birth Place offers many proven methods of low-intervention labor management, such as birthing balls, hydrotherapy tubs or showers, and pain management. Most staff are certified lactation counselors and offer breastfeeding support. The center has state-of-the-art infant security, a 24-hour emergency new-parent hotline and highly skilled and trained surgeons to perform surgeries such as cesarean sections when needed. To learn more or to schedule a tour, call 845-331-3131, ext. 2241.



## Barbara Chatr-Aryamontri, M.D.

Medical Director, Dr. Joseph and Esther B. Hartman Sleep Center,  
HealthAlliance Board Certified in Pulmonology

### Q. Is Thanksgiving turkey responsible for sleepiness?

A: Thanksgiving conjures up visions of family, food, long afternoons, kids laughing . . . and Grandpa snoozing in the armchair after the meal. Truth or myth? Could it really be that the turkey made Grandpa fall asleep?

The answer turns out to be a little complex. Turkey is rich in tryptophan, a substance that gets converted into serotonin, and serotonin helps the brain initiate sleep. But we also need a load of carbohydrates for the tryptophan to do that. Therefore, at Thanksgiving, those sweet potatoes with marshmallows and the great-tasting stuffing work synergistically with the turkey to make you drowsy.

Many foods contain tryptophan. These include milk, nuts, fish, chicken, red meat, tofu and cheese. But, again, you need additional carbohydrates to get the serotonin boost for sleep. Here's a tip: Having a light, 1-ounce carbohydrate snack just before bed.

The large amounts of food people traditionally eat on Thanksgiving also play a role in drowsiness, as blood and energy focus on the gut rather than the brain, which makes us sleepy. (That's also why we often feel sleepy after lunch.) Add wine and other alcohol and we're almost ready to hibernate. No big secret that alcohol alone causes sleepiness.

Take-home message? Grab the milk and add some cookies for sweet dreams. Drink responsibly. And enjoy your turkey!

For more information about the Sleep Center, call **845-334-3126**.

Need help finding a doctor? Visit our website at [hahv.org](http://hahv.org).

Then click the "Find a Doctor" link at the top of the page.



## HealthAlliance & Art

This issue's cover features a watercolor landscape by painter and mixed-media artist Mira Fink of Kingston. Her "Bonticou Crag in Fall" depicts a high rocky spot popular among hikers in New Paltz's Mohonk Preserve.

The painting promoted the Sept. 10 Fall for Art show in Kingston, showcasing some 400 works by 26 local artists. Proceeds funded local social services agencies.

The organizer, the Jewish Federation of Ulster County, also let HealthAlliance Mental Health Services select artwork this year to display in its Mary's Avenue Campus facility. The hospital is working with local artists and arts groups to bring much more art to the hospital.

"Art can illuminate our inner lives, enrich our emotional world and help us heal," HealthAlliance President and CEO David Scarpino says. "Increasing it in our hospital also reflects the prominence of the arts and artists in Ulster County."

At Fall for Art, nine MHS staffers and Scarpino selected two acrylic-on-canvas paintings by Hillary Korn Fontana, two photographs by Michael Citron and a mixed-media piece by Glenn Grubard.

Fontana's "Balance, Calm, Serenity," of yin and yang opposites living in harmony, now hangs in the department's adolescent Partial Hospitalization Program. Her "Grow, Nurture, Shine," of seedlings emerging from soil beneath a life-giving sun symbolized by a sunflower, hangs in the adult PHP.



Citron's colorful, blurry "Running Through the Woods" hangs near the MHS entrance, and his black-and-white "Ominous Sky" is exhibited in Psychiatric Emergency Services.

Finally, Grubard's "How Wonderful," a giclée overlay, laser cut and hand-painted piece with acrylic inks, hangs in the Activity Room. From Elton John's 1970 ballad "Your Song," it proclaims "How Wonderful Life Is While You're in the World."



LEARN MORE

Email your healthcare questions to [YOU@hahv.org](mailto:YOU@hahv.org). We'll feature one of them in a future issue of this newsletter.



# New Kidney, New Beginning

## One woman's journey through kidney failure.

Christine Nadramia's "tiny but mighty" email address perfectly suits her. Since November 2009, Christine has been fighting with all her might and a positive attitude after being diagnosed with kidney failure. When the kidneys function at less than 15 percent, it's considered kidney failure. Christine's functioned at only 6 percent, no longer living up to the "tiny but mighty" title.

When kidneys don't work properly, they can wreak havoc on the body. Each kidney, roughly the size of a conventional computer mouse or a fist, is essential to proper body function. Both of the human body's kidneys help control blood pressure and filter out excess water and waste from the blood, producing urine.

For most people, kidney damage occurs slowly, often due to diabetes or high blood pressure. At the time of her diagnosis, Christine had already had one kidney removed 17 years earlier due to high blood pressure. But people often don't have any signs or symptoms of kidney problems until the condition is advanced or the kidneys are already failing.

"I wasn't hungry and started to feel tired all the time," says Christine, 55, a Hudson Valley resident for more than 10 years. "Even if I did want something to eat, it was an effort for me to walk to the kitchen."

These issues — loss of appetite and fatigue — are common symptoms of kidney failure. Others include leg cramps, sleep problems, depression, joint problems, itching and weak bones.

Once kidneys fail, dialysis or a transplant is necessary for the kidneys, and the body, to function properly. Christine couldn't receive a kidney transplant from family or friends, so she had to wait on the deceased donor transplant list. To be placed on the list, Christine underwent numerous medical tests — mammogram, chest X-ray, colonoscopy and more — to ensure she was healthy.



After passing all the tests, she had to wait for a matching donor kidney and still maintain her health in the meantime. The average wait time for an individual's first kidney transplant is 3.6 years. This varies, depending on the patient's health and the availability of compatible kidneys. As of October 2015, some 101,000 people were waiting for a kidney transplant in the United States.

While waiting, Christine underwent dialysis treatment at the HealthAlliance Dialysis Center in Kingston. Dialysis is the medical procedure of removing the wastes

and extra fluid from the blood — like the kidneys would normally do. There are two types of dialysis, peritoneal dialysis, where the blood is cleaned inside the body through a membrane, and hemodialysis, where the blood is removed from the body and filtered through a machine. Christine had hemodialysis treatment, which required her to go to the HealthAlliance Dialysis Center three or four times a week for about 12 hours total.

"Everyone at the Dialysis Center is fantastic. Fantastic isn't even a good enough word," says Christine. "They don't



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just stick you in a chair; they make you feel comfortable. They take the sting out of being on dialysis.”

The HealthAlliance Dialysis Center is a 34-station outpatient dialysis unit — the only one in Ulster County. The center also offers predialysis education as well as training and support for patients receiving dialysis from home. So far this year, seven patients at the Dialysis Center have received kidney transplants — the most in one year since 2011.

“I would absolutely recommend the HealthAlliance Dialysis Center to someone, without a doubt,” says Christine. “The entire staff is just so caring.”

**“Everyone at the Dialysis Center is fantastic...They don't just stick you in a chair; they make you feel comfortable. They take the sting out of being on dialysis.”**

Christine completed three years and nine months of dialysis before receiving her transplant in May 2014. In less than a month after the transplant, she started feeling better. According to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, between 85 and 90 percent of transplants from deceased donors are working within one year of surgery.

“When you're on dialysis, it's an effort just to get a glass of water for yourself,” Christine says. “But after the transplant, I regained all of my energy and my appetite.”

Today, Christine's kidney continues to work well. She walks her 6-year-old dog, Ziggy, five times a day and is even off blood-pressure medication.

“When I got that new kidney, I felt like I had a new life in front of me, a new beginning to be and do what I wanted,” says Christine. “I'm as happy as anything. I feel absolutely wonderful. When you're given a second chance on life, you're not going to waste it.”



## Tips to Keep Your Kidneys Healthy

- Keep your blood pressure at the target set by your healthcare provider — typically less than 140/90 mm Hg.
- If you have diabetes, manage your blood glucose level.
- Keep your cholesterol levels in the target range.
- Eat a diet low in fat and salt. Aim for fewer than 2,300 milligrams of sodium each day.
- Choose foods that are healthy for your heart: fresh fruits, fresh or frozen vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy foods.
- Limit your alcohol intake.
- Be physically active.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Avoid tobacco. If you smoke, take steps to quit.

**Dialysis Center**  
37 Albany Ave.  
Kingston, NY 12401  
Phone 845-334-2821

## HealthAlliance Foundation Donation to Dialysis Center

The HealthAlliance Dialysis Center has 34 brand-new medical recliners, thanks to the generosity of the HealthAlliance Foundation and Klock Kingston Foundation. The Klock Kingston Foundation contributed \$25,000 toward the replacement recliners and the HealthAlliance Foundation funded the chairs' remaining cost.

The Dialysis Center serves 140 people who receive dialysis treatment for about 12 hours each week. After 14 years of heavy use, the old chairs were no longer comfortable for patients required to sit for 3 to 4 hours at a time. According to staff at the center, patients are finding the new chairs much more comfortable.

“The Dialysis Center provides a great service to our community,” says Steffen T. Kraehmer, Executive Director of the HealthAlliance Foundation. “We are pleased to partner with the Klock Kingston Foundation to enhance the experience of our patients.”



## Woodland Pond Dining Program Adapted

Woodland Pond residents play an integral role in shaping how they live their lives in the continuing care retirement community. A recent service-plan change resulting from a resident task force gives residents the flexibility to pay less for their monthly dining allowance.

Now residents can pay for a \$300 monthly dining allowance, if they prefer that instead of the traditional \$450 monthly allowance. Both plans let everyone eat in the dining room, bistro, pub and Market Basket convenience store.

The community, where residents can live for the rest of their lives and know they'll receive whatever care they need, has witnessed a growing arrival of younger retirees. These 60- to 70-year-olds especially say they value the dining-allowance flexibility.

A new resident satisfaction survey validates that resident referrals remain the No. 1 source of inquiries among those choosing this dynamic community as their new home. Visit [wpatnp.org](http://wpatnp.org) to learn more about Woodland Pond.



Woodland Pond residents enjoy great food and lively conversation.

## Choosing the Right Nursing Home for a Loved One

Choosing the right nursing home can be daunting. Fortunately, there are many online resources to help, from AARP.org to Medicare.gov. These websites rate facilities based on state Department of Health survey results, staffing, official complaints and 11 different physical and clinical quality measures.

The measures offer information about how well different nursing homes care for their residents' physical and clinical needs, including the homes' use of antipsychotic medications. They also calculate pain management, bedsores and the use of restraints, among other measurements.

Beyond online ratings, you'll have an "in-person advantage" if you visit a nursing home you're considering, alone and with your loved one. You may think that's obvious, but not everyone does this.

Every facility has someone, generally from Admissions, who'll provide you with a tour. This gives you a great overview and a chance to ask questions and hear important information. For instance: How does the facility approach end-of-life? And how do its answers align with your family's values?

Later, make time to sit in a lounge or dining room where residents and staff interact. You'll be amazed by how fast you can "fade into the wallpaper" when you sit in a corner for a while. This anonymity lets you observe how residents appear.

- Do they look content?
- How are the room temperature and noise level?
- Are their clothes clean and suitable for the temperature?
- Do residents remain in one spot for extended periods?
- How does the staff interact with them? Do they know the residents' names? Are they courteous and person-centered? Does the respect go both ways?
- Do staff members respond to resident requests promptly?
- Does the staff appear confident and relaxed? Or do they appear rushed and haggard?
- Do residents have a variety of things to do?

Lastly, if you have time, visit again. Any nursing home may have a "bad day," when something disrupts an otherwise quality operation. Perhaps go back at a different time — if you were there on a weekday, return at night or on a weekend. This could give you a more rounded understanding.

And don't be afraid to let caregivers know if you're dissatisfied. Quality institutions welcome an opportunity to improve their care. Indeed, good nursing homes will welcome you as part of the caregiving team and value your insights, suggestions and understanding.

If you're pursuing nursing-home placement for either a long- or short-term stay, please consider Mountainside Residential Care Center. It has a Five-Star Quality Rating from Medicare.gov, along with many honors, including the American College of Health Care Administrators' highest leadership award. Give Mountainside an opportunity to provide the Person-Centered Care for which it has become so well known.

To learn more about Mountainside, consistently ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the state's "Best Nursing Homes," visit [www.hahv.org/mountainside](http://www.hahv.org/mountainside) or call 845-586-1800.

**E**lva Arroyo-Schlecht loves life. She also cares for people. As HealthAlliance Hospital's Mental Health Services Unit Coordinator on the Mary's Avenue Campus, she practices compassion, understanding, support and comfort.

"These are things everyone needs, especially our patients," she says. "Our patients are human beings who happen to be vulnerable with a mental illness and in distress, and I'm here to alleviate that distress as well as I can."

One way she does this is by making sure she hears her patients. "I listen to them and can feel their pain, and I let them know I really get it. I find myself saying things like, 'I'm so sorry; that must be awful for you,' or 'I really understand what you must be going through.'"

Elva also shows them respect and humility. She is courteous and acknowledging, recognizing their unique qualities and dignifying them. She also apologizes, even for taking a moment to do something. "I apologize whenever anything is inconvenient, painful or interrupts a patient in any way," she says.

And when she's with patients, she sits with them whenever she can. "I don't want to walk in, say my piece and walk out. I want to really be with the patient, on the same level," she says. "After all, that patient could be me."

This empathy also infuses Elva's other HealthAlliance role, as one of the hospital's 11 certified Spanish medical interpreters, ensuring patients with limited or no English proficiency communicate effectively with hospital providers, and vice versa, which is key to patient care.

But Elva does more than simply provide bilingual interpretation. She brings a cultural competence, connecting with Hispanic patients on their terms, understanding their cultural characteristics, values and beliefs. This gives them a more genuine voice than if Elva were simply facilitating interpretation.

"I'm a Cuban refugee and, being an immigrant myself, I know what it's like to be vulnerable and in distress," the Kingston resident says. "I know what it's like to be treated like a cultural intruder who is unable to understand what other people are saying and unable to express my needs and my wants."

Different cultures shape people's perceptions differently, Elva explains. "So in many ways, I'm not just interpreting languages at HealthAlliance; I'm also interpreting cultures."

Elva herself experienced the disorientation of immigration when she was flown to the United States at age 8 in December 1960. She was in the first wave of a two-year exodus of some 14,000 children from Cuba. Many Cuban parents had feared the Castro regime would take away their parental authority.

The emigration, known as Operation Pedro Pan, was the largest exodus of unaccompanied minors in the Western Hemisphere.

Elva and her 13-year-old brother arrived in Miami. They had no family there — their father had died four years earlier and their mother remained in Havana. So they were cared for by the Catholic Welfare Bureau, now known as Catholic Charities. The bureau placed them in a local camp, then moved them to a Pennsylvania boarding school.

"A couple of years later, when my older sister turned 21, she immigrated to the United States, took us out of that system and made a home for us with her," Elva says. Another brother later immigrated and the four of them lived together in Manhattan.

Their mother managed to migrate to Spain in 1966 and a year later flew to the United States, where she reunited with her children. Four other siblings remained in Cuba.

"Going through the process has given me strength to go on, to live," Elva says. "Life is beautiful."

## Faces of HAHV: Elva Arroyo-Schlecht



# BUILDING A **Strong** FOUNDATION

>> Our Foundations build lifelong relationships with members of the community, raise funds and dedicate their resources to support the needs of each facility and the community we serve.

## GIVING TUESDAY

The holiday season is the perfect time to give to your community, especially on Giving Tuesday. Giving Tuesday, held this year on December 1, is a day to launch the holiday charitable giving season after the shopping frenzy of Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

Thinking of donating this year? Consider one of the four foundations that bolster HealthAlliance services — the HealthAlliance Foundation, which supports the mission of HealthAlliance at the Broadway and Mary's Avenue Campuses; Benedictine Health Foundation, which works to develop and distribute resources for care that improve physical, psychological and spiritual well-being; Margaretville Health Foundation, which supports the needs of Margaretville Hospital and Mountainside Residential Care Center; and Woodland Pond Foundation, which works to benefit the residents and services at Woodland Pond at New Paltz. Besides ensuring that vital healthcare programs are available for generations to come, donating to these foundations through planned giving can benefit you and your family today and establish a legacy for the future.

A planned gift is any major gift made from the assets of a donor, in lifetime or death, as part of overall financial and estate planning. Such assets could be stocks, real estate or a no-longer-needed life insurance policy. You do not have to be wealthy to

make a planned gift. In fact, you can make a gift that does not cost anything during your lifetime.

There are three types of planned gifts:

- Outright gifts that use appreciated assets as a substitute for cash
- Gifts that return income or other financial benefits to the donor in exchange for the contribution
- Gifts payable upon the donors death

Regardless of the size of your estate, proper planning is important to ensure that the assets you have accumulated are distributed according to your wishes. Consult with your legal and financial advisers if you are interested in planned giving with our foundations.

## Planned Giving Benefits for You

Donating to one of our foundations through planned giving provides you with many advantages as well. Possible benefits include:

- Estate tax relief
- A lifelong income stream
- Receiving a current income tax deduction
- Up-front capital gains tax relief
- Professional management of assets available
- The opportunity to make a much larger gift than you thought possible
- Determining the legacy you leave behind
- Supporting the vital work of the foundations



# Ways to Give

Learn more about your donation options and calculate payments using Gift Illustrator, accessible by visiting [FoundationUpdate.org](http://FoundationUpdate.org).

## BARGAIN SALE

With a bargain sale, you sell real estate or other appreciated assets for less than fair market value to a foundation. The difference between the actual value and the sale price is the gift, for which you are eligible to receive tax benefits.

## BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

Most assets can pass to your intended beneficiaries by the terms of your will. However, other assets, such as retirement or life insurance plans, are not controlled by the terms of your will. These assets instead require separate beneficiary forms. With individual retirement accounts, retirement plans, life insurance policies and insurance annuities, the beneficiaries can be easily modified at any time and may include a foundation.

## BEQUEST

A bequest, one of the most popular forms of planned giving, is a donation in your will or living trust that allows you to support the work of the foundation without parting with assets today. Your gift can be a percentage of your estate or a certain amount of cash, securities or property. After your lifetime, the foundation receives your gift. A bequest is easy to set up and can be changed at any time.

## CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

With a CGA, the foundation makes fixed annual payments to you, or to someone you name, for life. Payments are based on your age at the time you make the gift. After your lifetime, the remaining balance of your gift supports the foundation.

## CHARITABLE LEAD TRUST

If your estate is at a taxable level, a CLT is a powerful way to pass more to your heirs and make a gift to the foundation. How it works:

1. You transfer assets into a lead trust.
2. The trust pays the foundation for a specified term.
3. At the end of the term, the principal passes to your heirs with reduced tax liability.

## CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST

With a CRT, you can receive income each year for the rest of your life from assets — cash, stock or real estate — that you give to the trust. Your income can be either variable or a fixed amount. After your lifetime, the remaining balance of your gift supports the foundation.

## OUTRIGHT GIFT

You can meet some of the foundations' most pressing needs by donating cash. Simply write a check to the foundation of your choice and mail it in or submit a donation through one of their online portals, which can be accessed by visiting the foundations' websites.

## RETAINED LIFE ESTATE

You can donate your house to a foundation, but still retain the right to live in it for the rest of your life. By doing so, you receive an income tax deduction and avoid the hassle of selling the real estate while supporting the goals of the foundation.

## Foundations

### Benedictine Health Foundation

105 Mary's Ave.  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-334-3186  
BKlassen@bhfoundation.org  
[www.benedictinehealthfoundation.org](http://www.benedictinehealthfoundation.org)

### HealthAlliance Foundation

396 Broadway  
Kingston, NY 12401  
845-334-2760  
Steffen.kraehmer@hahv.org  
[foundationupdate.org](http://foundationupdate.org)

### Margaretville/Mountainside Health Foundation

42084 State Highway 28  
Margaretville, NY 12455  
845-586-2631 ext. 3181  
liz.warren@hahv.org  
[www.hahv.org/margaretvillehospital/margaretville-health-foundation](http://www.hahv.org/margaretvillehospital/margaretville-health-foundation)

### Woodland Pond Foundation

100 Woodland Pond Circle  
New Paltz, NY 12561  
shull@wpatnp.org

**Buying Gifts on Amazon.com? Use AmazonSmile instead, and Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of your purchase to a charity of your choice — make yours the HealthAlliance Foundation!**

## Join Us! Benedictine Health Foundation's Annual Gala

Passport to Holidays Around the World  
Friday, Dec. 11, 2015  
6 p.m.–12 midnight  
Diamond Mills Hotel, Saugerties, NY  
\$175 per person  
Black tie preferred.  
Call **845-334-3017** to reserve your seats or for more information.

# Top High School Seniors Intern at HealthAlliance

An innovative scholastic program lets advanced high school seniors learn what healthcare is all about from doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other clinical and administrative professionals at HealthAlliance.

The highly competitive New Visions career-exploration internship of Ulster BOCES “provides students with a total overview of healthcare, from medicine and information systems to housekeeping and maintenance, and everything else in between,” says Marita Kitchell, BOCES’ Director of Career and Technical Education and the Pre-University New Visions program.

The healthcare track is one of five New Visions BOCES programs. The others are in advanced robotics and engineering, audio engineering and music studio production, education, and media and game design.

For the healthcare track, HealthAlliance Hospital: Mary’s Avenue Campus, receives 30 honors seniors from high schools around the county. For these students, HealthAlliance becomes a “teaching hospital” where they spend a half day, every day of their senior year.

Their packed half day has real-life medical and classroom components.

They get experiences in all parts of the hospital with practicing professionals, witnessing a wide variety of healthcare career options firsthand.

At the same time, they take honors-level English, government and economics courses in HealthAlliance classrooms, with the integrative-learning curriculum customized to apply to the healthcare industry.

During the other half of the school day, the seniors go to their home-district high school for additional 12th-grade classwork.

“For the first month at HealthAlliance, we went over health policy and how to act in a hospital. Then we went to our clinicals,” says Binghamton University pre-med student Matthew Urrutia, who graduated from Saugerties High School in June after going through the New Visions program at HealthAlliance.

His clinical rotations three days a week included General Surgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology (on the Broadway Campus), Pediatrics, the Pharmacy, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Radiology, Neurology, Oncology, the Emergency Department and Pathology Services. Nonclinical rotations included Engineering, Environmental Services and Administration.

“The other two days we juggled English, social studies and other classes,” Urrutia says.

“Throughout the year, I learned subjects contextually, making connections between academic knowledge and applied practice,” he says. “I also learned right away that I’d be in serious trouble academically if I procrastinated. The program set me on a good track for university work. I can now handle two to three hours of homework a night.”

Urrutia says he was particularly impressed with one doctor in the hospital’s medical-imaging catheterization angiography laboratory.

“He was really up on his game,” Urrutia says.

“I would sometimes be nervous in some testing or operating rooms, but not in that room. The confidence of that doctor was unbelievable. It was a feeling I wanted to generate. It was really inspiring.”

Urrutia noted the doctor was also young:

“I thought, ‘Wow, I could do all this and still be a young guy!’”



Matthew Urrutia  
Pre-Med Student  
New Visions Alumnus



Marita Kitchell  
New Visions Director  
Ulster BOCES

For more information or to apply to the New Visions program, contact Marita Kitchell at the Ulster BOCES Career & Technical Center at **845-331-6680** or email **[mkitchel@ulsterboces.org](mailto:mkitchel@ulsterboces.org)**.

# Wellness, Education & Support Programs

## Oncology Support Program: Caring for Those with Cancer

Professionals and volunteers offer compassionate support. Programs usually take place in the homelike Reuner Cancer Support House, 80 Mary's Ave., Kingston. Call 845-339-2071 or email [doris.blaha@hahv.org](mailto:doris.blaha@hahv.org).

### Women's Cancer Support Group

First and third Thursdays, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Second and fourth Saturdays, 10–11:30 a.m.

### Linda Young Ovarian Cancer Support Group

Last Wednesday of the month, 7–8:30 p.m.

### Family and Caregiver Cancer Support Group

Third Monday of the month, 5:30–7 p.m.

### Men's Cancer Support Group

Second Wednesday of the month, 5:30–7 p.m.

### Metastatic Cancer Support Group

Call 845-339-2071.

### Coping Skills for Cancer

Reduce stresses related to diagnosis, treatment and fears using awareness and body-centered techniques.

### Kid/Teen Connection: Support for Youth Facing Cancer in the Family

Support group for parents takes place concurrently.

### Nurturing Neighborhood Network Program

Connect with trained peer volunteers for individual support.

### Advanced Directives Workshop

Define end-of-life choices and treatment guidelines.

### Explorations on Being Mortal

First and Third Wednesdays, 2–3:30 p.m.

Reuner Cancer Support House

For those with a catastrophic illness, including very advanced or recurrent cancer, explore purposeful living. 845-339-2071, ext. 102, or [elise.lark@hahv.org](mailto:elise.lark@hahv.org).

### Healthy Living Support Group: Change for Good

Enhancing our lives during and after cancer treatment

Second and Fourth Mondays, 5:30–7:30 p.m.

845 339-2071 or [ellen.marshall@hahv.org](mailto:ellen.marshall@hahv.org).

### Holiday Potluck Celebration

Dec. 6, 6–8:30 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

Bring family and friends to this festive OSP dinner.

Bring your favorite healthy appetizer or dessert to share.

Chat with friends, meet new folks, enjoy holiday fun.

Register by Dec. 1, 845-339-2071, ext. 100, or [doris.blaha@hahv.org](mailto:doris.blaha@hahv.org).

## Exercise and Wellness Classes

\$8 suggested donation for exercise classes

### Gentle Yoga, with Deb Albright

Wednesdays, 9:30–10:45 a.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

Mats provided.

### Jazzercise, with Cathy Shaw

Tuesdays, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

Combines dance, resistance training, Pilates, yoga, kickboxing.

### Qigong, with Jeff Bartfeld

Tuesdays, 7–8 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

Train the breath, body, mind.

### SmartBells<sup>®</sup>, with Angel Ortloff

Thursdays, 9:30–10:45 a.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

Healthy fun using sculpted weights.

### Tai Chi, with Annie LaBarge

Mondays, 10–11 a.m.

Reuner Cancer Support House

Moving meditation for strength, balance, flexibility.

### Miso Happy Cooking Club, with Kathy Sheldon

Fourth Tuesday of the month, 10:30 a.m.–1 p.m.

Reuner Cancer Support House

Nutrition education and cooking with macrobiotic principles.

Registration required.

### Hypnosis to Stop Smoking with Frayda Kafka, Certified Hypnotist

First Wednesday of the month, 5:30–7 p.m.

Reuner Cancer Support House

\$25 a session — FREE to HealthAlliance employees.

## HealthAlliance Seniors Health & Wellness Breakfast Club

Third Wednesday of the month, 8:30–10 a.m.

Hudson Valley Mall Community Room

Enjoy a heart-healthy breakfast, socialize and engage with HealthAlliance medical and wellness experts.

Nov. 18 — Lung Cancer Awareness, with pulmonologist Dr. Nirmal Parikh.

Dec. 16 — Holiday Party, with food, music and fun!

## Support Groups

### Childbirth, Breast-Feeding, CPR, New Moms

Family Birth Place

HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus

845-331-3131, ext. 2241.

### Diabetes

Third Wednesday of the month, 4:30–5:30 p.m.

Diabetes Education Center, 37 Albany Ave.

845-334-4249, ext. 1 (Cynthia Bell).

### Myasthenia Gravis

Second Saturday of the month, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus

Second Floor Conference Room

Lambert–Eaton myasthenic syndrome patients also

welcome. Family members welcome too.

845-331-3131 ext. 2288 (Patricia Bohcali).

### Ostomy

Second Tuesday of the month, 4–5 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus, Spellman Pavilion

Center for Orthopedic Specialties Gym

845-334-3125 (Barbara Peterson).

### Stroke/Dementia/Alzheimer's Caregivers

First Thursday of the month, 6–7:30 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital: Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

845-331-3131, ext. 2615 (Laura Gambino).

## Community Services

### Pre-Op Total Knee/Total Hip Education

Every Monday (except holidays), 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital: Mary's Avenue Campus, Spellman

Pavilion Center for Orthopedic Specialties Gym

845-334-3130 (Chip Alsdorf).

Note: Not for total-shoulder or reverse total-shoulder replacement surgeries.

### Alcoholics Anonymous: Common Solution

Every Wednesday, 7–8 p.m.

HealthAlliance Hospital:

Mary's Avenue Campus Auditorium

### CPR Training & Certification

Learn life-saving skills from experts.

845-331-3131, ext. 2543 (Barbara Naccarato).

### Blood Drive

Nov. 10

HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus

Dec. 1

HealthAlliance Hospital: Mary's Avenue Campus

HealthAlliance hosts blood drives throughout the

year. Support your community by donating.

845-334-2761 or 845-334-4712 (Amy McAden) or [amy.mcaden@hahv.org](mailto:amy.mcaden@hahv.org).



HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley  
741 Grant Avenue  
Lake Katrine, NY 12449  
845-334-3151

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Your health shouldn't be  
a "Hail Mary" pass.



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