



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

Vicki Jackson
MD, MPH

For several years, the Division of Palliative Care and Geriatric Medicine (PCGM) has been working to expand the tenets of geriatric medicine into the entire hospital system. Older adults can have complex medical needs, yet they get the best care when their medical team members focus on how to help them to age well and to deliver care in a manner that supports them as they age. This effort has been led by Sharon Levine, MD, Section Head for Geriatric Medicine, in partnership with the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). The IHI is leading a worldwide movement to improve the care for older adults by designating certain healthcare providers as Age Friendly Health Systems (AFHS). We are thrilled to announce that in February Mass General Brigham achieved full AFHS status. This means that the hospital has created programs large and small to change the quality of care and that these programs have demonstrated real results. You can read more about this in the newsletter.

It's important to note that these innovations are ongoing. For example, the division recently produced wallet-sized ID cards for people living with dementia. This allows people to self-identify as needing a little extra support from clinicians and administrative staff. The cards also leave room for critical information such as contact information for caregivers. There is a companion card for caregivers. We have had them translated into seven different languages. Please email Judy Willett the PCGM Sr. Project Manager, at jwillett@mgh.harvard.edu if you would like to have some for distribution.

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Division Helps Mass General Earn Age Friendly Status

Recently, Mass General earned national recognition as an Age Friendly Health System from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). The hospital has been recognized as “Committed to Care Excellence” in serving the needs of older adults. The IHI initiated this national and international movement to improve care for older adults, many of whom have complex medical needs. This movement is important now because the number of older adults is expected to double in the next 30 years. **Sharon Levine, MD**, Section Head for Geriatric Medicine has been leading the hospital-wide program to identify ways to improve care for elder patients in every setting across the hospital system. This involved working throughout the hospital to identify and initiate programs both large and small that demonstrate effectiveness in elevating patient care.



The framework provided by IHI includes practicing the 4Ms of elder care. These are: What Matters Most, Medication, Mentation (mood and cognitive function) and Mobility.

What matters most: At every point of care, clinicians will be asking patients about what matters most to them in terms of their care.

Medication: As people get older, their bodies respond differently to some medications. So, clinicians will review their medications to see if they are still necessary, and to make sure that they aren't interfering with mobility or mood or cognitive function.

Mentation: Clinicians will actively work to prevent, identify and manage any mood or cognitive issues.

Mobility: People are healthier if they get up and move around regularly. Clinicians should focus on making sure older adults have mobility to do the things that matter to them.

According to Dr. Levine, it's important to practice all of the 4Ms together because each one affects the other three. She uses the example of medication. “Some medications may make people more confused, which affects mentation. Some may make people more likely to fall, impacting mobility. If patients say they don't want to take a cabinet full of medications, that addresses what's most important to them,” she says. ▲



Welcome New Medical Director for the Cognitive Care Clinic



Palliative Care and Geriatrics is thrilled to welcome **Kathryn Hanley MD**, a geriatric specialist who will establish a new Cognitive Care Clinic inside the division where she will provide geriatric consultations and offer primary care to patients. She will also co-manage geriatric fracture trauma with Orthopedics on the Geriatric Inpatient Fracture Service (GIFTS) service. Previously, she was Clinical Director of Geriatrics and Memory Care at the Medical College of Wisconsin in Milwaukee while also working as an inpatient and nursing home attending in geriatrics at the VA Medical Center in Milwaukee. Kathryn is an experienced primary care physician who fell in love with the care of older adults and pursued a fellowship in geriatrics five years ago. She was also recently nominated to be on the Public Education Committee at the American Geriatrics Society.

Kathryn graduated from Amherst College and attended medical school at the University of Chicago. Her residency was at the University of Minnesota where she was also chief resident. Prior to medical school, she was a Peace Corps Volunteer teaching English in Botswana. Outside of work Kathryn enjoys cooking Ina Garten recipes, hiking, and walking her black lab, Lucy. She recently stepped back from offering aid and assistance to Alpine Valley skiers as part of the National Ski Patrol, something she did every winter Sunday for five years.

ID Cards for Patients with Dementia and their Caregivers - Available now

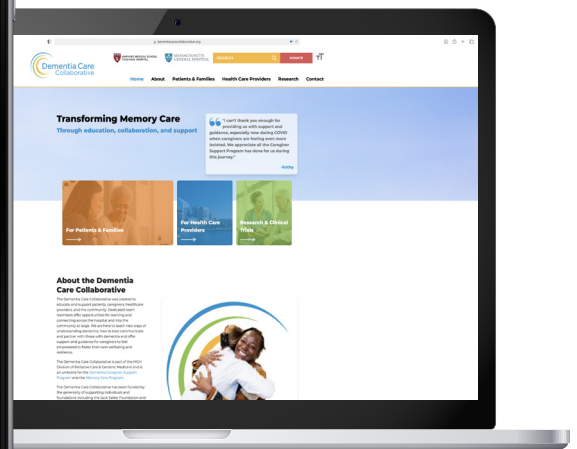
Patients with cognitive issues and their caregivers will soon have a new tool to help them communicate their needs to clinicians and staff at Mass General. The Division has created wallet-sized ID cards for patients to present when they are receiving care. In one example, the card reads, "I am living with dementia." There is space for the patient's name. On the back of the card, you can write in caregiver contact information and identify primary care provider. Its companion card reads, "I am a caregiver of someone living with dementia," with space on the back for additional information. This project was led by Judy Willett, who says that these cards will help remind clinicians that some patients need extra support during appointments and may need to have a caregiver in the room with them. The cards have been translated into multiple languages including Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Italian, Haitian Creole, and Chinese. ▲



DCC Website Launched!

The Division's Dementia Care Collaborative (DCC) has launched its 2021 website <https://dementiacarecollaborative.org/>

Explore today to learn information on MGH's critical resources on dementia care, education and caregiver support.



Palliative Care Webinar in Vietnam

In the September of 2021, the University of Hanoi hosted an online webinar for medical professionals called “Psychosocial Support for COVID-19 Patients and Families.” It featured several clinicians from Palliative Care, including Quynh Xuan Nguyen Truong who is a social worker completing an internship at Mass General and Eric L. Krakauer, MD, PhD.

At the time, clinicians in Vietnam were in an unusual situation. Public mitigation efforts contained COVID-19 well until the Delta wave began in the spring of 2021. By mid-summer, major cities had gone into lockdown and hospitalized patients were kept in isolation from their families. This was a stark departure from the norm in which families would stay in the hospital with their loved ones. Palliative care is limited in Vietnam and clinicians were struggling to initiate goals of care conversations, sometimes by phone, with patients and caregivers unaccustomed to talking about outcomes.

In response to this need, Quynh organized an online webinar that would help educate caregivers about how to approach goals of care conversations. Some sessions would describe how to offer psychological and spiritual support for patients and caregivers. It was an immediate success. There were between 500 to 1,000 people on each Zoom session with hundreds more attending via Facebook live. These included doctors and other clinicians, psychologists, social workers, and even medical students. What surprised Quynh was the number of attendees outside of Vietnam. “People told us they were logging on from Russia, from Poland, or Hungary. They told us it was 1 a.m. or 3 a.m. where they were. And they had stayed up to see the talks. It was amazing,” says Quynh

One of the standout sessions was given by Sarah Byrne-Martelli, Inpatient Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator in the division. The title of the talk was “Spiritual Care, Grief and Bereavement during the COVID-19 Pandemic.” In it, she talked about the spiritual needs of patients who are isolated from family while hospitalized. She described what triggers identify those patients who may be struggling spiritually, and how to have these meaningful discussions even if they are not in person. ▲



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

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It is also my pleasure to welcome geriatric specialist Kathryn Hanley, MD, to the division. She will establish a new Cognitive Care clinic inside the division where she will provide geriatric consultations and offer primary care to patients. Kathryn is an experienced primary care physician who fell in love with the care of older adults and pursued a Geriatrics fellowship later in her career. She is a skilled geriatric clinician, having worked with an outstanding team for several years in Wisconsin. She is also warm, caring, and funny.

The division has been looking for opportunities to teach and talk about palliative care internationally. You will read about one of these efforts, a webinar hosted by the University of Hanoi this past September. The webinar was organized by Quynh Xuan Nguyen Truong a dedicated palliative care social worker who is completing an internship with us. It also featured sessions by Erik Krakauer, MD, PhD and one by Sarah Byrne-Martelli, Inpatient Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator in the division. Her session described how to support the spiritual needs of patients and families during COVID-19 isolation and uncertainty. The webinar as a whole was a tremendous success, with nearly 1,000 people attending virtually. Some of them were logging in from countries such as Poland and Hungary and has stayed up all night to attend these sessions. This is more proof that there is a global need for palliative care, and specifically for a multi-disciplinary approach to palliative care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vicki Jackson".

Vicki Jackson, MD, MPH

Blum Family Endowed Chair in
Palliative Care
Chief, Division of Palliative Care
and Geriatric Medicine

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Palliative Care providers **Kirsten Engel, MD, Vicki Jackson, MD, Samantha Berliss, NP, Nancy Mason, NP, and Michaela Rowland, NP** are participating in a pilot study evaluating the benefits of inpatient palliative care for patients with advanced liver disease.

Nancy Mason, NP, has been invited along with **transplant hepatologist, Nneka Ufere**, to participate in the Master Clinician Series hosted by the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC). In November, Nneka and Nancy will present a case from the pilot study on palliative care interventions for patients with advanced liver disease.

Ali Kavanaugh MSN, ACNP, ACHPN is the Lead NP for the Inpatient Palliative Care Consult Service. Her academic work, which focuses on the provision of palliative care to patients with AML, has been included in four publications in this past year: Cancer, JPM, Bone Marrow Transplant, and JAMA Oncology.

Samantha Berliss, MS, FNP-C, ACHPN, has been selected as a member of the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC) Examination Development Committee (EDC) beginning in 2022.

Janet Sweeney Rico PhD, MBA, APRN-BC is a member of the Emergency Department (ED) Geriatric Optimization Task Force which was selected to receive a MGB Pillars of Excellence Award. The team was nominated for its work in the category of Commitment to an Exceptional Patient Experience.

Sindhura Pulluru, MSN, ACNP, ACHPN, Andrea Kurkul, MSN, AGPCNP-BC, and Haley Shainker, MSN, AGPCNP-BC are participating in a 6-month online program on Geriatric Practice Leadership. This team project is based on the Institute of Healthcare Improvement Age-Friendly framework. They will identify current clinical challenges at our practice, apply proven quality improvement techniques while developing additional leadership skills to help in moving our institution forward in this work.

Sarah Byrne-Martelli's book titled "Memory Eternal: Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians" was published by Ancient Faith Publications in August.

Kirsten Engel, MD, was selected to be a fellow in the HMS Academy Fellowship in Medical Education and Scholarship.

Steph Kiser, MD, MPH, will be co-presenting with **Sharl Azar, MD**, at a CAPC Master Clinician session on the work they are currently doing to help patients with sickle cell disease.

Bethany-Rose Daubman, MD, and Kathleen Doyle, MD, are nominees for the McGovern Award for Clinical Excellence.

EVENTS All held virtually or by phone (EST).

Most events are recorded and can be viewed on the [Division website](#).



For all Dementia Care Collaborative events, RSVP to dementiacaregiversupport@mgh.harvard.edu.
<https://dementiacarecollaborative.org/>

The Dementia Care Collaborative was created to educate and support patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, and the community. Dedicated team members offer opportunities for learning through monthly programs like our Conversation with Caregivers and our Health and Resiliency evenings, along with weekly exercise, Ageless Grace classes. We also offer individual clinical support for caregivers, support groups and fundamental skill classes. We are here to teach new ways of understanding dementia, how to best communicate and partner with those with dementia and offer support and guidance for caregivers to feel empowered to foster their own well-being and resilience.

The Dementia Care Collaborative has been funded by the generosity of supporting individuals and foundations including the Jack Satter Foundation and the Bresky Foundation, since its inception in 2017.

Conversations with Caregivers | Third Tuesday of every month 5:30PM-7:00PM

January 17: "Managing Care Planning After Your Diagnosis—In the Community" led by Jennifer Pilcher

February 21: "What to do if you are worried about your memory?" led by Dr. Matt Russell

Health & Resiliency Programs | First Tuesday of every month 5:30pm-6:30pm

December 5: "Restorative Yoga," led by Kristy Harvey

January 10: "Violin Concert for Resilience," led by Jason Wang

February 7: "Transformative Rest—Meditation" led by Kristy Harvey

Ageless Grace Classes | Tuesdays 10:30AM-11:30AM

Zoom into a seated movement class with upbeat music based on neuroplasticity. Boost brain and body health in a fun community!

www.massgeneral.org/medicine/pcgm/

WAYS TO GIVE



For information about ways to support the Division of Palliative Care and Geriatrics at Mass General, please contact **Patrick Rooney at 857.260.4873**
patrick.rooney@mgh.harvard.edu.

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