

aligning excellence

A Message from Paula Thomas

When this message was originally penned, COVID-19 was an unfamiliar term and issue far from our lives in Central Pennsylvania. Now just a few weeks later, COVID-19 is impacting all of us – those whose health is directly at risk, those whose jobs have been suspended, those who are now teaching kids at home, and those facing countless other circumstances. Daily life looks nothing like it did such a short time ago.

Please be assured that our teams in UPMC Home Healthcare of Central Pennsylvania, Family Hospice, and Home Nursing Agency Community Services are making decisions with our patients, clients, families, and staff as top priority. Being part of UPMC has allowed us to access vital protective equipment and safety practices to ensure the protection of those who are both giving and receiving care.

Even before COVID-19, our teams have demonstrated an uncompromising commitment to you – our Central PA residents – as they navigate the ever-changing healthcare system.

As you will read, this patient-centered care is the reason our Private Duty Home Care was chosen among the nation's best home care providers for the eighth consecutive year.

We hope you enjoy the stories in this magazine sharing how lives have been changed through our services, like Jim Maher, an unsung hero who learned how to walk again with UPMC Home Healthcare. Also, new mom Morgan Hittie, who is confidently working toward a bright future after being mentored by her nurse Lisa through our Nurse-Family Partnership® program.

Just as constant in our legacy of service is your investment to helping others through us! This is exemplified in the collaborative support of our Healing Patch Children's Grief Program. The Patched Together Committee raised \$13,000 last year to sustain these free services, and it was a team effort that made a new Blair home for the Healing Patch a reality at our Sheraton Drive, Altoona office.

Your generosity is also seen in memorial donations for Family Hospice patients who have passed away. These gifts are used to help and enrich the lives of future patients and families. Recently your support allowed the Novaks to have family photos taken, capturing treasured memories before their young son passed away in December. It is in the brevity and blessing of life that we are reminded that each day is a gift.

That is one reason palliative care physician Dr. Ric Baxter rode his bicycle throughout Pennsylvania last year to spread a message of "Don't Wait." Don't wait... to get care for you or a loved one, to fulfill your life goals, and to answer the call to help others in need.

I am grateful to be part of a network of skilled healthcare providers who are changing lives each day through their compassionate care of others. You are a life changer, too. Donations to the Home Nursing Agency Foundation and supporting fundraisers like Mercedes Moment make a profound difference for so many. As we face COVID-19 together, your critical support allows us to meet the emergency needs of patients and families. Thank you.

Paula Thomas

President, UPMC Home Healthcare & Family Hospice

HEADLINES

9th Annual Patched Together Raises \$13,000 for **Healing Patch**

The planning committee for Patched Together: A Day of Music recently presented a check for \$13,000 from the November 19, 2019 event to benefit the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program. Patched Together showcases live music, kids' activities, and fun for the whole family, harnessing the power of music and community to raise more than \$130,000 since 2011. The 10th Annual Patched Together will be held on Saturday, November 21, 2020 at the Bayarian Hall. Altoona.

"This amazing group of committed people works to ensure a safe place for grieving families remains in the community," shares Melody Ray, Healing Patch Coordinator. "We all have a piece in what is done to support grieving children, and I am so thankful for these volunteers and their countless hours of work to raise funds for the Healing Patch!"

Front row from left are Shalen Steinbugl, Healing Patch Volunteer Coordinator/Grief Specialist; Melody Ray, Healing Patch Coordinator; Patched Together Committee Members Sherry Hayford, Nicole Gampe, Georgia Gampe, and Sue LeCrone; back row from left are Committee Members Jordanna Gerraughty, Gil Gampe, Kent and Missy Tonkin, Matthew McCaulley, James Gerraughty, and Gabrielle Cronin, Patched Together Chairperson.



UPMC Home Healthcare of Central



Pennsylvania Named to Top 100 Organizations

The Pennsylvania Business Central recognized UPMC Home Healthcare of Central Pennsylvania as one of the region's Top 100 Organizations for 2020. Organizations are selected by an editorial committee due to their positive impacts in the business community of Central Pennsylvania. Honorees exemplify the hard work and dedication necessary to move forward and thrive in their specific fields, and the compassion to make a difference within their communities through volunteer work, outreach, and public services.

Home Nursing Agency Private Duty Home Care Papeats



Care Repeats
as a Best of Home
Care Provider of Choice

For the eighth year, Home Nursing Agency Private Duty Home Care has been recognized as one of the topranking home care providers in the nation, based on client satisfaction scores gathered by Home Care Pulse, an independent satisfaction research firm for home care.



9/11 Recovery Worker Trusts UPMC Home Healthcare Team to Heal at Home

When Altoona native James "Jim" Maher began his career cleaning up commercial plane crashes, he couldn't have imagined where it would take him – to nearly every state in America, to the tunnels of the Twin Towers after Sept. 11, 2001, and to his current home in Saxton. Through it all and with the assistance of the UPMC Home Healthcare team, Jim embodies the lesson he has learned: *Live each day one day at a time*.

Launching his career at the US Navy School for aviation electronics, Jim enlisted in the Navy before family obligations called him home. A short time later, Jim was sought out by a company who put him to work at man-made and natural disaster sites all over the country. With Jim demonstrating a willingness to travel and take on any assignment, his role evolved as he became Pennsylvania's first Disaster Recovery Specialist.

"It allowed me to help people in a way that I could never have thought," he says. "Although, you almost have to become numb in some sense, or you can get too emotionally involved." Sorting through wreckage to recover items from deceased passengers to return to their families was daunting and emotional work. The greatest tumult of his career came when he was called to New York City to take a lead role in recovery efforts for the Twin Towers after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Arriving at Ground Zero on the second day, Jim was given maps to go into the tunnels under the Twin Towers and recover as much as he could.

Working 15-hour days, seven days a week, Jim was on site at the World Trade Center for 90 days before being summoned to another plane crash in nearby Queens. The "World Trade Center dust" began impacting the health of those who were near to Ground Zero, and Jim was no exception. He was diagnosed with asthma and later COPD. Even while taking powerful steroid medications, his lung disease worsened.

"Once you can no longer wear a respirator, you're out of a job," Jim explains. He retired at age 42 and bought property in Saxton, where he enjoys the rural scenery and helping his aging neighbors. Several years into retirement, Jim began suffering from broken bones in unusually minor incidents.

In May 2018, Jim suffered a fall in his local pharmacy and broke his back in three places. While hospitalized in Pittsburgh and reeling from the pain of his injury, Jim learned that the steroids he had been taking for ten years caused osteoporosis, aging his bones to that of an 80-year-old man.

"The doctor in the hospital told me I was one step away from being a Christopher Reeves and paralyzed for life," Jim says. "I found out that nothing could be done for my back. Surgery wasn't an option because of the osteoporosis, so they discharged me and sent me home."

After he was home with a 'tortoise shell' brace, the team from UPMC Home Healthcare of Central Pennsylvania stepped into action, with nursing and therapy services to help Jim regain his independence. Dealing with PTSD after his extensive work in disaster recovery, Jim was hesitant to have strangers in his home to take care of him, but he quickly learned he could be himself around this "terrific team."

"I felt so comfortable with them right away," Jim says. "They were personable and took such good care of me. They treated me like a person, not a number, and they were with me each step."

personable and took such good care of me. They treated me like a person, not a number, and they were with me each step."

-Jim Maher









I am grateful, and I am glad to wake up each morning." -Jim Maher

Previous page: Jim Maher of Saxton and his dog Dory proudly display mementos from his involvement in the 9/11 recovery efforts. After years of disaster recovery work, Jim dealt with PTSD and benefitted from the companionship of his therapy dog Bella for many years before she passed away. Now Dory provides a comforting presence.

This spread: Jim had a lead role recovering items from the tunnels of the Twin Towers after 9/11 (photos at left). After taking lung steroids for 10 years, Jim developed osteoporosis. He broke his back in three places after falling in his local pharmacy and was told surgery was not an option. He was discharged to home and relied on the team from UPMC Home Healthcare of Central Pennsylvania to help him rehab. Physical Therapist Brad Stern (above at left), Occupational Therapist Rhonda Litzinger (above at right), and Senior Professional Staff Nurse Bobbie Sue Husick collaborated in their care to help Jim regain independence after his devastating injury.

Bobbie Sue Husick, Senior Professional Staff Nurse, served as his case manager, checking his vital signs and communicating with his physicians as needed.

"I helped with upper body strengthening, endurance, and pulmonary exercises," shares Occupational Therapist Rhonda Litzinger. "He probably didn't like me, but it was so important for his lungs that he use the incentive spirometer." The prescribed exercises gave Jim the unexpected benefit of improved breathing in his daily life.

Physical Therapist Brad Stern focused on Jim's goal of getting out of the house by strengthening his legs and in time, learning how to walk again.

"Brad really challenged me to get moving and to keep walking." Jim rose to the challenge, and now Jim can maneuver smoothly around his home and relies on a cane primarily only on trips away from home. He proceeds with caution in normal activities given his susceptibility to broken bones, as he was reminded in November when he missed a step on a stepladder and broke his wrist.

Jim is grateful for the team that helped him get back to independence and knows where to turn in the future. "They were wonderful. Bobbie Sue, Rhonda, and Brad – they are the ones I remember the most out of the people who helped me. Should I need help again, they are the only ones I trust!"

For now, Jim faces each day as it comes. Still using his life to serve others, he makes soup to share with his older neighbors and checks in on them regularly. Having spent so many years entrenched in tragedy, he knows life is a gift: "I am grateful, and I am glad to wake up each morning."

To learn more about UPMC Home Healthcare, call 1-800-445-6262. To support additional resources for Home Health patients, return your donation in the enclosed envelope or visit homenursingagency.com.

giving inspiration

Family Hospice Welcomes Doctor on a Mission

Family Hospice and UPMC Home Healthcare employees welcomed Dr. Ric Baxter (front right) at a

In September 2019, Family Hospice staff in Altoona became part of an 800-mile journey for Dr. Ric Baxter, a board member of Pennsylvania's Hospice and Palliative Care Network and palliative care physician at St. Luke's University Health Network, as he made a stop in his statewide bike ride to spread the message: Don't Wait.

At age 67, Dr. Baxter hoped his journey would encourage others to make the most of their time and live life to the fullest before it's too late. The message was inspired by Dr. Baxter's time working in end-of-life care and helping patients to fulfill their last wishes.

While in Altoona, Dr. Baxter presented the film "Being Mortal" at UPMC Altoona and served on a Q&A discussion panel with Family Hospice team members to address questions on end-of-life topics.

"Riding a bike long distance over hills is really about living," said Baxter. "Hospice tends to be focused on dying, and that scares people. So we want to make it about the living part, helping people to see how well they can live and the benefits of care that are available to help them live as well as possible."





Your Donations Fund Treasured Photos

"The families are so used to getting bad news and being told 'nothing can be done',"

said Krista Swindell, Family Hospice Professional Staff Nurse in Bedford County. "Being able to say, 'Let's get some photos of your family, and it's paid for' is amazing."

Krista was able to share this news with the Novak family of New Paris last winter when their 17-month-old son William was a Family Hospice patient. He had a rare and aggressive disease when Krista began seeing William. She enjoyed the warmth of their home with family photos filling their walls, but she realized there were very few recent photos of William. After being diagnosed, the family focused on caring for him, not knowing what the next day would bring. Finding the time and opportunity to get updated family photos was nearly impossible.

That's when Krista suggested using funds from the Home Nursing Agency Foundation to make memories with pictures, supporting quality of life for William and his family.

With William's mother Cassie, father Daniel, older brother Jameson, and their dog Carmen joining in on the photos, Miranda Lee Photography caught precious moments that the family will treasure for years to come.

"It makes you realize how important capturing memories is," Krista shares. "Unfortunately, William passed away shortly after, and these were the last photos the family has of him. I hope these photos will allow Jameson to remember his brother as he grows and remember the strong bond they had."

Support Family Hospice by returning your donation in the enclosed envelope, visiting homenursinagency.com, or calling 1-855-GIVE-HNA.



Nurse-Family
Partnership
Expands Across
Commonwealth,
Graduates
First Somerset
County Client

growth [grōth] noun

the process of increasing or developing

Growth is seen in the empowerment of first-time moms to transform their lives for a better future for themselves and their babies.

Growth characterizes the evolution of Home Nursing Agency's Nurse-Family Partnership® program.

Over the past 18 years, the HNA Nurse-Family Partnership program has matured from its infancy of five nurses in two counties to 29 nurses in eight counties impacting the lives of more than 500 first-time moms each year. As the largest NFP provider in the Commonwealth, last year HNA NFP marked the graduation of its first Somerset County client.



A PERSONAL JOURNEY

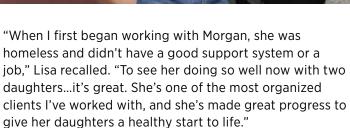
When Morgan Hittie found out she was pregnant, she knew she would need help to become the mom she wanted to be.

At 28 weeks pregnant, she enrolled in Nurse-Family Partnership as the first Somerset County client. She was paired with NFP Supervisor and nurse Lisa Miller, who visited her regularly to mentor her and check on her and the baby's health as her pregnancy progressed. After delivering her baby girl in September 2017, Morgan relied on Lisa's guidance as they walked together through Audriella's first two years.

"Having that support system was important to me," Morgan explained. "I appreciated just knowing that I could reach out to Lisa with questions. She helped me to reach certain milestones and to know what milestones Audriella should be reaching."

By the time Morgan graduated from Nurse-Family Partnership two years later, she was not only celebrating Audriella as a healthy two-year-old but also preparing for the birth of her second daughter Delilah, who joined their family in January 2020. She continues to reflect gratefully on the roadmap that Lisa provided for her.

"I know every pregnancy and child is different, but it's helpful to look back and see what I did then with Lisa and make sure I'm on track with Delilah now," Morgan said. As Morgan welcomed Lisa's education and encouragement throughout her NFP journey, she was equipped to make decisions for her family and set goals for herself, like maintaining a stable job that she enjoys.



A PATTERN OF GROWTH

The tremendous change in Morgan's life is typical of many Nurse-Family Partnership clients. Nurses like Lisa provide new moms with the confidence and tools they need, not only to assure a healthy start for their babies but to envision a life of stability and opportunities for success for both mom and child. Proven outcomes include reduced premature births and low birth weights and improved parental engagement with children being better prepared for school.

HNA Nurse-Family Partnership also recently expanded into Bedford County, making NFP services available free of charge to income-eligible women expecting their first baby in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Huntingdon, Jefferson, and Somerset counties.

To enroll in HNA NFP, call 1-800-315-4358. For more information, visit nursefamilypartnership.org.

Home Nursing Agency Nurse-Family Partnership is grateful for these community partners: the 1889 Foundation, American Association for University Women, Centre County Council of Human Services, Community Foundation for the Alleghenies, DuBois Area United Way, Home Nursing Agency Foundation, Lee Initiatives Inc., United Way of Blair County, United Way of Huntingdon County, United Way of the Laurel Highlands, and the Ward Family Fund.

Left page: Somerset resident and Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) graduate Morgan Hittie plays with her young daughter Audriella. Above left: This photo ran in the Tribune-Democrat two years ago, sharing Somerset resident Morgan Hittie (right) clowning with her two-month-old daughter Audriella and nurse Lisa Miller of NFP as the first clients to enroll in the program in Somerset County. Photo credit: The Tribune-Democrat. Above right: Morgan and Audriella connected with Lisa again since Audriella's graduation from NFP when she turned two. Newly promoted to a big sister, Audriella is a healthy and vibrant two year old.

giving together

New Blair Home for the Healing Patch Fosters Hope for Grieving Families

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." Helen Keller

The Healing Patch Children's Grief Program showcases the collaboration of staff, volunteers, donors, and community organizations joining forces to ensure grieving children of Blair County and surrounding areas have a place to share freely and find hope after the death of a loved one.

The Healing Patch moved to a new home at the UPMC Home Healthcare office on Sheraton Drive, Altoona last fall. Thanks to a generous gift from the Michael E. Ward Family Foundation, the group meeting rooms got new paint and versatile furniture to meet office needs and those of Healing Patch families and volunteers who gather two evenings each month through the school year.

"We needed 'our' room and 'our' space for the kids to feel comfortable," shares Marilyn "Mickey" Port, the longest-serving Blair Healing Patch volunteer. "I was absolutely thrilled to come here. This space fits us and our materials and is so welcoming."

Over the previous few years when the program did not have a permanent home and groups met elsewhere,

including space graciously extended at the Hollidaysburg Area High School, Mickey and fellow volunteers were the consistent presence that allowed these vital services to continue for local families. The Healing Patch provides a "soft place to fall" for families to discover they are not alone in their grief by interacting with others who have encountered similar losses. By sharing memories and experiences, families realize what they are going through is normal and that hope and healing are possible.

Mickey fondly recalls one particularly emotional group night with a "Magic Carpet Ride" activity. They invited the kids to sit on the floor, close their eyes, and imagine that they were transported anywhere they wanted to go. As the Tweens imagined interactions with those they dearly loved, emotions ran high, and one young man was visibly upset after the activity ended.

"Another group member asked him, 'Can I give you a hug?' Then said, 'I've been where you are, and you will be okay,'" Mickey shares.

continued on page 13









Photo at left: A Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony was held on November 21, Children's Grief Awareness Day, to inaugurate the new Blair County Healing Patch location at 20 Sheraton Drive, Altoona.

Photos this page: Bottom, Middles Room volunteers from left Matthew McCaulley, Jody Christen, and Mickey Port with some of the participants. Top left, Melody Ray, Healing Patch Coordinator, and Shalen Steinbugl, Volunteer Coordinator/Grief Specialist



You can support the free services of the **Healing Patch in** Blair, Cambria, and surrounding counties in a variety of ways:

VOLUNTEER

Learn more about volunteer roles online at homenursingagency.com or by contacting Shalen Steinbugl, **Volunteer Coordinator/Grief** Specialist, at 814-947-7140 or steinbuglsm@upmc.edu.

DONATE

Mail donations to Healing Patch, 20 Sheraton Drive, Altoona, PA 16601

- Make an outright gift of any amount. Donations can be made online at: homenursingagency.com or by phone at 1-855-GIVE-HNA.
- Donate in memory of someone. You can share the name of a relative or loved one who should be notified of your gift.
- · Support events that benefit the **Healing Patch:**
- Dine Out Nights: Dine at local restaurants throughout 2020 with a portion of your meal price benefiting the Healing Patch. Visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/ homenursingagency to see upcoming events.
- Decades Club Saturday, October 10, 2020 **Blair County Convention Center,** Altoona
- **Patched Together** Saturday, November 21, 2020 Bavarian Hall, Altoona
- Hold a small fundraiser, like a casual day at your office or pajama day at school, with donations benefiting the Healing Patch.

"Although it's not therapy or counseling, there is such power in peer connection," says Melody Ray, Healing Patch Coordinator. "Everyone is at a different place in their grief journey, and those who are further along can bring hope to newer members."

While activities and discussions vary with four children's groups and two adult groups convening, all groups are structured to provide a safe environment where participants are free to share - or to pass, if they choose - and talk about the heartbreaking loss that is often avoided.

Volunteer Jody Christen explains, "The children and parents don't want to talk about it at home. They don't want to make each other sad. We can talk here, and that opens the door to facilitate conversation between parents/adults and kids."

Along with opportunities for improved dialogue within families, the connections made between children and adults within their groups can form the foundation of friendships that last a lifetime.

Melody shares, "These relationships extend far beyond the walls of the Healing Patch, but those relationships wouldn't exist without what happens within our walls."

Local artist Billie Hollen donated her time and talent to create a beautiful mural in the Littles Room in memory of her great nephew Wyatt Lansberry.





RECOGNIZING OUR SUPPORTERS

The generosity of community partners - individuals, businesses, local governments, and organizations helps to ensure that our mission of providing care and services for those in need will continue.

Every dollar matters. Every gift has a story. The following donations were received January 1, 2019 -December 31, 2019.

We apologize for any errors or omissions to this list. Every effort is made to assure that proper information is recorded. Please call the Home Nursing Agency Foundation at 1-855-GIVE-HNA to make us aware of any corrections or changes.

Thank you to the following donors who have helped make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and our communities:

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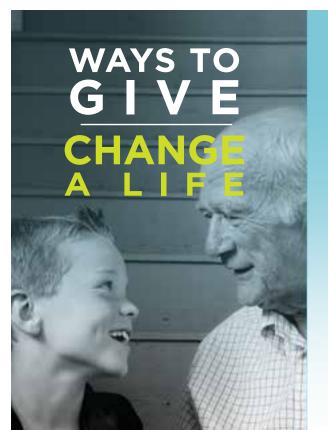
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 - 201 Chestnut Avenue, Altoona, PA 16601

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 Volunteer to share your time and talents through Family Hospice or the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program, Learn more about volunteer opportunities by checking out our website at homenursingagency.com.

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For more information about ways you can help, please contact: Kim Helsel, Director of Development/Marketing Communications, 814-947-7024 or khelsel@homenursingagency.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MERCEDES MOMENT

May 19, 2020

DECADES CLUB

October 3, 2020

Blair County Convention Center, Altoona To benefit the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program

PATCHED TOGETHER

November 21, 2020 Bavarian Hall, Altoona To benefit the Healing Patch Children's Grief Program



TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2020

MERCEDES MOMENT

TO BENEFIT ALL SERVICES SUPPORTED BY HOME NURSING AGENCY FOUNDATION

WIN A 2020 MERCEDES or \$30,000!*

ONLY \$100 A TICKET!

Mercedes Moment supports emergency needs for patients, including those caused by the current COVID-19 crisis. Your Mercedes Moment ticket purchase not only gives you a chance to win a new Mercedes or \$30,000, but also ensures that patients and families have access to the resources they need. Your support in this time of uncertainty is greatly appreciated.

The Home Nursing Agency Foundation Mercedes Moment supports charitable needs through in-home and community-based services.

The Mercedes drawing is based on the first 3-digit PA lottery (excludes Wild Ball) on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. Only 1,000 tickets are sold. Tickets are only \$100 each for a chance to win a 2020 Mercedes GLA 250 4-MATIC SUV or \$30.000.*

Ticket numbers will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Specific number requests will be taken but cannot be guaranteed.

To reserve your tickets:

- Complete the ticket order form on the reverse side and return it to Home Nursing Agency Foundation,
 201 Chestnut Avenue, PO Box 352, Altoona, PA 16601
- Call the Mercedes Moment Hotline at **1-855-GIVE-HNA** (1-855-448-3462)
- Or email foundation@homenursingagency.com

*Taxes not included.

The GLA 250 is packed with advanced tech, turbo power, and Mercedes-Benz luxury. With variable-torque 4MATIC all-wheel drive and rugged SUV engineering, you can get even more out of a GLA.



NIGHT AT THE CURVE

Our Mercedes Moment Night at the Altoona Curve has been postponed. Mercedes Moment ticket buyers will receive a voucher for TWO free grandstand tickets for a new date that will be scheduled later in the 2020 season. Stay tuned for additional details!



MERCEDES MOMENT

TO BENEFIT ALL SERVICES SUPPORTED BY HOME NURSING AGENCY FOUNDATION

YES! Please reserve my ticket(s) to win a new 2020 Mercedes!

STEP ONE	Name
STEP TWO	# of Tickets If you would like a specific 3-digit number, please list your top three choices. x \$100 per ticket Note: If each of your top three choices have been sold, you will be given a random number. Sorry, no numbers can be guaranteed. Total Cost \$
STEP THREE	☐ I have enclosed a (please circle one): check cash money order (Please make checks payable: Home Nursing Agency Foundation) ☐ Charge my credit card (please circle one): Visa Master Card Discover Name on Card

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