



## Health Mentors Program Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 1 — Fall/Winter 2015

Dear Health Mentors,

As we move through another school year, you have helped bring a new perspective to us once again. Hearing how you have lived with your conditions and carried out daily activities, along with your life goals, has opened our minds to how we want to shape our identities as health professionals now and in the future. Empathy cannot be taught from textbooks or lectures, but this program has helped enhance our ability to listen to your stories and put ourselves in your shoes. We have learned the importance of treating each person as an individual, rather than as a representative of a health condition, and of deeply considering the impact of these conditions on patients' daily lives. Taking part in the Health Mentors Program provides us with a more well-rounded view of serving patients and what a picture of "good health" means to each individual. Your resilience, positive attitude towards life, and willingness to talk openly to us about your abilities, limitations, and aspirations have inspired us to become better health care providers.

This fall, first-year students from different health disciplines met with Health Mentors to complete a life history form and an assignment regarding the impact of health conditions on their mentors' lives and activities. Collectively, students gained a more concrete sense of how each profession contributes to the health care team. Through the Health Mentors Program, we develop an appreciation for the ways that clear and effective communication is the foundation for interprofessional collaboration and quality care. The program culminates with the second-year students visiting their Health Mentors' homes to perform safety evaluations and address an issue that affects the mentor's home life. This experience fostered our creativity in creating interventions that better serve our patients and further developed our respect for the unique strengths that all professions bring to the health care team. This was an incredibly rewarding experience for all of us who participated; we sincerely appreciate how you have dedicated your time and energy to helping us to advance and enrich our learning.

Thank you for being a Health Mentor, and we look forward to seeing you again in the spring of 2016! Until then, we hope you stay warm and healthy in this season.

Best Wishes,

Iris Chiu, Occupational Therapy Student

And the rest of the Newsletter Editor Team:

Couple & Family Therapy Students

Colby Agostinelli  
Emily Short

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Medical Students

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Nursing Students

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Physical Therapy Student

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# The ABC's of Type II Diabetes

*(adapted from the National Diabetes Education Program and the Mayo Clinic)*

The three measurements below can help you learn more about your Diabetes and work together with your physician to control it. When you visit the doctor or get blood work done, keep track of your results to set health care goals moving forward!

## **A1C Test:**

An A1C blood test measures your average blood sugar level over the past 2-3 months to give your physician a view of your health over time. This blood test is carried out just like any other lab work that your physician might order. For many people, the long-term target is an A1C of 7, but it may be different for you—ask your physician!

## **Blood Pressure:**

Your blood pressure is the force of your blood against the walls of your blood vessels as it moves throughout your body. Blood pressure is an important measurement for healthcare teams because it illustrates how hard your heart is working. For many people the target blood pressure with diabetes is 140/90 or below, but it may be different for you—ask your physician!

## **Cholesterol:**

LDL cholesterol is “bad” cholesterol that can block your blood vessels, causing heart attack or stroke. HDL cholesterol is “good” cholesterol that works to remove LDL cholesterol. Both types can be monitored through a simple blood test called a lipid panel. Check with your physician to see what your target values should be!

## Stuffed Green Peppers

Cook time: 50 minutes

Makes: 4 servings

Total Cost: \$6.10

Serving Cost: \$1.53

### **Ingredients:**

4 green peppers (large, washed)

1 pound turkey, ground

1 cup rice, uncooked

1/2 cup onion (peeled and chopped)

1 1/2 cup tomato sauce, no added salt

black pepper to taste

### **Preparation:**

Cut around the stems of the green peppers. Remove the seeds and the pulpy part of the peppers.

Wash, and then cook green peppers in boiling water for five minutes. Drain well.

In saucepan, brown turkey. Add rice, onion, 1/2 cup tomato sauce and black pepper.

Stuff each pepper with the mixture and place in casserole dish.

Pour the remaining tomato sauce over the green peppers. Cover and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees.

## **Community Resources and Events!**

Counseling Services available at these locations:

### **Philadelphia Senior Center**

(215) 546-5879

509 Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147

### **St Charles Senior Community Center**

(215) 790-9530

1941 Christian Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146

### **South Philadelphia Older Adult Center**

(215) 686-8847

1430 E Passyunk Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19147

### **Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Information**

(215) 765-9040 Monday-Friday 8:30AM-5:00PM

# Health Mentors Program: Student Reflections

With the end of fall and the start of winter, another inspiring semester of Health Mentors is coming to a close. The first-year students have met and bonded with their teams and mentors, while those in their second year continued their collaboration and glimpsed how they have impacted their mentors' lives. This is the perfect time for students to reflect not only on what they have learned from this journey thus far, but also what they want to get out of the program moving forward.

Most students' time at Jefferson flies by as they focus on the often stressful task of mastering their chosen professions. However, it is in unique curriculum opportunities such as the Health Mentors Program that a Jefferson education really shines. It is an opportunity to understand the professions of different health care providers that we all will undoubtedly work with in teams in our future careers. First year medical student Jonathan described how he "really wanted to know what everyone else was learning. It is important to know your weaknesses relative to others. I was surprised how well my gaps in knowledge were filled by the other professions." At the same time,

students develop a deeper sense of empathy as they strive to improve a patient's life for the better by bringing their own unique perspectives to the team. For most first- and second-year students, the Health Mentors Program is their primary opportunity to meet students from other disciplines and to work with a patient so closely over an extended period of time.

Second-year students echoed Jonathan's praises for the program and expressed sadness that their Health Mentors experience will soon draw to a close. Medical student Hermandeep commented that he would have liked to spend more time with his team and mentor; he also commented that with "healthcare moving in this new team-oriented approach to care, it has been a helpful process to understand the roles every specialty can bring to [the] table. It is important Jefferson continues this program if they want to create healthcare professionals that respect each other and know how to work as a team. We are lucky to have this as part of our curriculum."

Many students related similar experiences of personal growth, even if they have just begun their Health Mentors journey. We all hope that Jefferson makes the continuation and further development of this program a top priority, since it clearly offers so much to the students and mentors alike.



Y2 T# 56- HM invited his student team to visit his houseboat; from left: Benton Lindaman (PT), Dena Lehmann (Pharm), Bryan Lerner (Med), George Valdes (Health Mentor), Lorenzo Albala (Med), Kimberly Price (Nursing)



# What Our Health Mentors Have to Say About the Program

One health mentor who has participated in the program since it began talked about how it helps her stay focused on her own personal health goals and learn new ways to achieve those goals. Her experience in the program goes beyond her own health; she enjoys seeing students learn about their own roles on a healthcare team and come together as a collaborative group. She loves being a facilitator of that learning process and feeling like she is on the same team as the students she works with: “I found my experience in the program very interesting and rewarding. The interview session reminded me of my days as a teacher, as I got a chance to share the techniques and tools I have used to overcome many of the challenges of my disability. I enjoyed sharing my experience with the students who were very friendly, polite, and organized in their approach to conducting the interviews and gathering information. I wish them all the best of luck in the future.”

*“Teamwork. Togetherness. One Decision.”*

“Participating in the health mentor program has enhanced my health as well as my own awareness. I enjoy watching the teams of students develop teamwork, collaborate with each other and me. There is a sense of togetherness. Together we make one decision that leads to better health.”

Health mentors report that not only does the program foster more awareness about healthy living, but it also empowers them to feel like they are integral members of their own health care teams!

## Know a Potential Health Mentor?

If you know anyone who enjoys sharing their personal health experiences, please ask them to connect with us! We have a variety of Health Mentors from all different backgrounds who are at least 18 years of age and are living with chronic conditions or impairments (high blood pressure, asthma, arthritis, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, blindness, etc.). If you know someone who is interested in learning more about the Health Mentors Program, please have them contact Sarah Dallas by phone at 215-955-8601 or by email at [Sarah.Dallas@jefferson.edu](mailto:Sarah.Dallas@jefferson.edu). They can also visit our website to complete an online application: [www.jefferson.edu/health-mentor](http://www.jefferson.edu/health-mentor)



Y2 T# 128- Clockwise from bottom left: Tetiana Lyubovich (Nursing), Tony Kang (Med), Margaretta Williams (Health Mentor), Madeline Winters (Nursing), Sarah Weingarten (Med), Renee Tallman (OT)

## Upcoming Spring Modules

### **Year One Health Mentors: Module 2, Preparing a Self-Management Support Plan for Wellness and Healthy Behavior**

For this module, students will come prepared to ask you questions about wellness, in areas ranging from physical health to intellectual wellness to spirituality. With your input, your team will develop a personalized Support Plan for Wellness and Healthy Behavior. Meetings take place February-March.

**Year Two Health Mentors:** Module 4 has been revised and students will no longer be meeting with their Health Mentor in the spring. Thank you for your participation in and dedication to the program! Faculty will be in touch in late spring/early summer to confirm if you are available to sign up to meet with a new team.