2021 CALENDAR

Compliments of
MaineHealth
CARE AT HOME
To our Community,

Before we speak to our agency’s experience in the last year, we would like to first welcome you all to a new format—the Care at Home Calendar! We hope that you find the information and layout useful as we all welcome in a new beginning in 2021.

Since our inception, we have viewed our responsibility toward the health of our communities as our number one priority. With this priority in the forefront, we have continued onward through these challenging times to continue our work in home health care, hospice, and community health.

We are proud to report that in the last year, our teams of clinicians traveled over 1,500,000 miles to bring care to community members across our vast service area. In total, we provided over 144,000 visits to patients across the age spectrum and with varying conditions.

As a trusted member of the health care infrastructure in southern and MidCoast Maine, we have been at the forefront of the pandemic, working in accordance with public health requirements and recommendations to continue our much-needed services and meet the demand for in-home health care services for COVID-19 patients. To support these efforts, we have bolstered our telehealth program, outfitted clinicians to provide care in a safe and risk-averse manner, and worked hand-in-hand with our partners across the MaineHealth system to appropriately transition patients into home health services as the ability to provide inpatient care has been impacted.

Through all of this, our patient-centered, mission-directed mindset and commitment to our values have only strengthened. We want to commend our board of directors, care team members, employees, donors, community members, and MaineHealth partners who have taken this responsibility and stepped up to the plate, often through sacrifices of their own.

We thank you for you continued trust in our agency and stand ready to take on whatever 2021 has to offer—together!

Sincerely,

Donna DeBlois
President

Patricia Camire
Board Chair
*Please note that not all photos included in this report were taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. MaineHealth has instituted a universal masking requirement, distancing guidelines, and other preventive measures.
MaineHealth Care at Home (MHCAH) will offer **SNF at Home**, a new model for a reimagined service.

As a result of COVID-19, more patients are opting to receive care at home. This is accelerating the need for health care innovations as more high-acuity patients opt to return home.

“MaineHealth Care at Home is excited by the development of this program and what it means to enhance the care that we deliver to our communities. SNF at Home offers the patient an opportunity to receive highly reliable, evidence-based, patient/family centered, and quality interprofessional care in the comfort and safety of their own home.”

– Robert Abel, Chief Nursing Officer

Telehealth will be utilized for each patient to provide enhanced oversight and patient care. Every patient will be registered in the telehealth program, and virtual visits will be conducted on an ongoing basis.

MaineHealth Care at Home has a goal to begin delivering our new, innovative SNF at Home program in 2021.
**DID YOU KNOW?:** MaineHealth Care at Home services the residents of over 10 islands off the coast of Maine.
MaineHealth Care at Home offers specialized cardiac care through a coordinated plan of care tailored to the needs of each patient.

Cardiac nurses provide education and monitoring of various cardiac or cardiac-related diagnoses such as chronic heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, atrial fibrillation, those living with a ventricular assist device, etc. Cardiac nurses do assessments on advanced CHF patients that are on the home diuretic protocol. Cardiac nurses work closely with multiple disciplines such as PTs, OTs, Social Workers, Dietitians, and telehealth staff, providing information on diet, disease processes, and the various resources available for patients in need of cardiology care within the MaineHealth system.

“It is important to integrate technology with clinical care to help to promote the health and wellness of our patients. One area we do this is through the Home Diuretic Protocol with advanced CHF patients to reduce the risk of being re-hospitalized.”

– Amanda Smith, RN, Clinical Director of Population Health and Telehealth
DID YOU KNOW?: Smoking causes and exacerbated almost every cardio-pulmonary disease. The Maine Tobacco Helpline and the Quitlink have merged to create the Maine Quitlink. This one-stop-shop for Mainers looking to quit can be accessed at 800-207-1230 or at mainequitlink.com.
At MaineHealth Care at Home, we help patients at home who are dealing with an advanced illness or long-term medical condition.

We recognize that coming home from the hospital or learning to live with a long-term illness is more than just a physical adjustment. You or a loved one may feel anxious, upset, or sad. Our medical social workers help patients with feelings and emotions that may occur because of illness, injury, or major life changes.

For these patients, we offer counseling and emotional support as a part of our home health plan of care.

Patients may need counseling and support to improve their emotional wellbeing and to adjust to the challenges associated with a serious or chronic health conditions. Talk to your physician to learn if counseling and emotional support at home is right for you or a loved one.

We also help family members, including parents and children, adjust to caregiving responsibility and to the more challenging aspects of serious illness. Through this experience, we have found that being in the patient’s home helps build trust, provide comfort, and improve outcomes.

“Medical social workers advocate for patients’ rights and philosophy of self-determination. We navigate patients through a complex health care system. We walk side by side with our patients and families on their journey — a reflection of their values, goals and suffering, never judging but being present to serve not “help” — treating each human being with dignity, compassion, empathy, and patience.”

– Heidi McCaffery, Vice President, Hospice
DID YOU KNOW?: MaineHealth Care at Home offers a service, HomeSafe, which provides in-home assessment and treatment for individuals at risk (or with a history) of falling.
As a home health agency, we are guided by our goal to improve every patient’s overall condition, allowing them to do what they want to do, where they want to do it, and how. To this end, occupational therapy plays an essential role in the overall in-home rehabilitation process for many patients.

Through the therapeutic utilization of common activities, occupational therapists allow patients to improve their overall functionality in addition to their health. This functionally-based treatment works to improve areas that have impacted an individual’s ability to perform daily activities as a result of an illness, injury, developmental delay, or post-surgical challenge.

“Being an occupational therapist for MaineHealth Care at Home allows me the gratifying experience of improving the function and quality of life of community members on the comfort of their homes.”

– Jana Campbell, OT
DID YOU KNOW?: Palliative services are available and beneficial to patients regardless of prognosis or ongoing curative treatment.
Visiting nurses have been a force of good within our Maine communities for over 100 years. As the successor of multiple public health nursing associations across the region, we take our responsibility to honor this past and continue this essential work to heart.

At MaineHealth Care at Home, we provide a full range of skilled services structured around our strong team of over 150 registered nurses. With clinical expertise and experience to care for patients of all ages, our nurses provide the service that allows us to support the needs of patients recuperating from an acute episode or otherwise requiring in-home nursing support.

With nursing coverage throughout Cumberland, York, Lincoln, Waldo, Knox, Sagadahoc, and southern Oxford counties, our nurses are capable of bringing their skilled service to the homes of patients across southern and MidCoast Maine.

“It’s an honor to be invited into someone’s home, especially when that person is dealing with new vulnerabilities such as a recent surgery or exacerbation of chronic illness. I am humbled each time I am welcomed inside a patient’s home whether the patient is a wealthy businessman or a recent immigrant with little more than the clothes on their back. We all need someone to advocate for us and provide us care at times and I’m privileged to be able to be that person for my patients.”

– Lisa Freeman, RN
DID YOU KNOW?: Regulations regarding telehealth payment have been shifting in a positive direction from CMS since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Read up on these changes at cms.gov.
At MHCAH, our in-home services provide relief to children and their families and the peace of mind that comes with continuous, skilled monitoring and management from dedicated pediatric clinicians.

“Our primary goal is to strengthen a multidisciplinary team of home care clinicians — RN, PT, OT, SLP, MSW — in partnership with the MaineHealth Pediatric Service Line to ensure evidence-based care across patient care settings. This means that sick children and their parents will receive care in the home that supports the goals of the medical teams throughout MaineHealth.

Pediatric home care includes supporting new moms and babies as they transition through newborn to infancy. And, a critical piece of pediatric home care involves providing precise, technical interventions such as medication infusion, g-tube care, cardiac monitoring, wound care, head-to-toe assessment and education.

I am especially excited to collaborate with the various medical teams throughout the MaineHealth Pediatric Service Line.”

– Kristine Rogers, Manager of Children & Family Health
DID YOU KNOW?: Doctors of Podiatric Medicine (DPM), Doctors of Medicine (MD), and Doctors of Osteopathy (DO) are all eligible to sign home health care orders under Medicare regulation.
As a provider of telehealth services to home health patients since 2001, we utilized our extensive experience to continually improve the availability and effectiveness of the service throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

We offer a telehealth service that equips patients with a tablet system that is accompanied by peripheral devices to track vital signs. With the use of Bluetooth equipment, measurements are synchronously transmitted to our telehealth team for monitoring.

With support from local donors and foundations, we expanded our offering to include COVID-specific information as well as a new, bring-your-own-device platform.

The program has remained responsive to the dynamic needs of patients receiving in-home care, connecting them with direct services that are otherwise difficult to receive.

“Our telehealth program plays a crucial role in keeping our patients monitored closely at home. With the telehealth video capabilities we are able to complete assessments and intervene when necessary. We use this information to collaborate with providers with the goal of patient-centered care. I am so proud to be a part of a team that has proven to adapt and grow with technology.”

– Amanda Belanger, Telehealth RN
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**FUN FACT:** Patients enrolled in telehealth at MHCAH have 24/7 access to nursing support.

**INDEPENDENCE DAY**
It is often said that preventative care is the most important step an individual can take toward maintaining and/or improving their health. As health care providers, we stress the importance of healthy eating, physical activity, sleep, etc. — and when the season comes around, immunizations for the common flu.

As part of the response to COVID-19, health officials across the country and in our Maine communities have identified the flu vaccine as an asset to be utilized in an effort to lower the incidence of flu, limit the burden on care providers, and ultimately improve health outcomes for our communities collectively.

With the health of our community in mind, the decision was made to move all flu clinics outdoors, with patients simply driving up to a nurse and receiving their vaccination in the safety of their vehicle. From late September through mid-November, the nurses and supporting team members provided hundreds of vaccinations.

“It has been wonderful to see everyone come together and put a focus on flu this year. Despite all of the logistical challenges we have faced, we have had so many folks come through the clinics and thank us for providing such an accessible and creative solution to vaccination. Those kind words have meant the world to our team.”

— Christina Thurlow, PCH & Community Health Assistant
DID YOU KNOW?: MaineHealth’s Let’s Go! program offers a multitude of obesity programs to help support the health of children at schools, early care programs, health care practices and workplaces.
MHCAH is a proud partner of Philips Lifeline, a leading medical alert solution providing safety and peace of mind for those at risk of falls or other emergency events.

As a home health provider, safety and mobility around the home is central to our efforts in enabling vulnerable patients to be independent and healthy. Many chronic illnesses increase fall risk, and these events can range from minor occurrences to serious, sometimes deadly emergencies. Across this range, Lifeline can help.

With Philips’ GoSafe 2 and HomeSafe systems, MHCAH can meet the needs of all patients and align the services with the desires and lifestyle of any individual.

Jon Murray, Lifeline Coordinator, puts his passion for the technology to use and works directly with patients, families, and health care providers to match individuals with the most appropriate solutions.

“I try to get it in everyone’s head that I speak to — I’ve talked to far too many folks who tell me how they wish they had this service available to them prior to an accident. Getting ahead of these sort of situations is the best way to limit their consequences, and the technology these days is so effective that it is a no-brainer to at least have the discussion.”

— Jon Murray, Lifeline Coordinator
**FUN FACT:** Currently, MHCAH has provided over 862 Lifeline buttons to community members.
Whether a patient is recovering from an orthopedic procedure, learning to recuperate after a stroke, or managing any other condition that can make movement and functioning difficult or painful, physical therapy can plan a significant role in the healing process. As a home health provider, our ultimate goal is to allow patients to be as healthy and independent as possible where they live. Often, intervention from a physical therapist is critical in reaching this goal.

Jon Lyons, PT, has seen physical therapy continue to be an asset for patients as they work toward improving their health, mobility, and quality of life.

“As physical therapists we are healers at heart. With so many patients cooped up at home, our ability to safely come in and provide care has been so positively received over the last year. Making strides and maintaining progress despite the challenges that we have all faced has been a positive for our patients and so rewarding for the team.”

– John Lyons, Physical Therapist
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**FUN FACT:** Techniques used today in physical therapy can be traced back thousands of years.
In the MidCoast region, MaineHealth Care at Home provides a dedicated hospice service both in the home and at the Sussman House, seen at right, in Rockport.

Our hospice program offers a support system of medical, social, emotional, and spiritual services that promote dignity and affirm quality of life. We adopt a holistic approach to care using specialized teams that include nurses, social workers, volunteers, home health aides, counselors, chaplains, and even some friendly dog friends!

Under the guidance of our hospice medical director, the interdisciplinary team helps patients and family members adjust to medical changes, provide patients with relief from pain and symptoms associated with serious illness, and promote comfort through complementary therapies such as massage, reflexology, Reiki, acupuncture, and music.

“It is without question that here at the house, our greatest focus is preparing and delivering a comfortable and safe end-of-life experience. My favorite piece of advice — loss is inevitable, so is death. We are all going to die, we are all going to lose a loved one. That’s a fact of living. Regret, however, is optional. When a family asks for advice for what to do, what to say, when to come, when to leave… I remind them that loss is inevitable. Regret is an option. Don’t make regret your option.”

— Mary Therese Cully-Onoshko, Sussman House Manager
DID YOU KNOW?: Hospice a covered benefit under Medicare, MaineCare, and most private insurance plans.
At MaineHealth Care at Home, volunteers have been an essential part of our identity since the beginning. It is always a joy to see recognition for the efforts of our volunteers, and just recently our very own Carolyn Gray has seen her work highlighted by the press.

Earlier this fall, Carolyn was featured by news sources in the MidCoast region and in greater Bangor for her work with the Memory Bear program. Given to the family of recently passed hospice patients, the bears are made from clothing items of the loved one that is used to create a one-of-a-kind and sentimental stuffed friend.

Carolyn, a volunteer of the organization and member of the hospice choir, has taken on the task and continued the work well into her nineties!

“When you’re doing something like this, you don’t need a lot of feedback. You don’t need people to be constantly thanking you. This is something you just ‘do’ because it’s important and, let’s face it, it makes you feel good also. You can’t help but feel good.”

— Carolyn Gray, Volunteer
**HEALTH TIP:** Studies have indicated that many of these who volunteer improvements in social connectedness and stress management.
TO ALL OF OUR DONORS: THANK YOU. Your contributions have supported numerous agency programs, technologies, operations, education initiatives, and, most significantly, our patients.

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Nathan Clark & Kathryn Burnham
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MaineHealth Care at Home is a fully-licensed 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and a member of MaineHealth