

# Caregiver Connection

Called to CARE<sup>®</sup>  
A program of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

A publication that connects caregivers with resources, support and each other

January/February 2020

## Caregiver Cafés

**Jan. 23 & Feb. 20, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.**

The Soul Center at Beth El Congregation  
8101 Park Heights Ave., Pikesville, MD 21208

**Info./Register:** [rachels@bethelbalto.com](mailto:rachels@bethelbalto.com) or  
410-484-0411, ext. 1103

**Jan. 29 & Feb. 26, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Schmidt Conference Room  
Alpha Commons Building, 4th floor  
Johns Hopkins Bayview campus  
5300 Alpha Commons Dr., Baltimore, MD 21224

**Info.:** 410-550-8018 (*no registration is required*)

## Lunch & Learns

**Jan. 10 – Caring For Your Loved One With Dementia**

*Gain a better understanding of dementia and how to manage your role as a caregiver. Lunch is provided.*

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Schmidt Conference Room  
Alpha Commons Building, 4th floor  
Johns Hopkins Bayview campus  
5300 Alpha Commons Dr., Baltimore, MD 21224

**RSVP by Jan. 7:** [lstewa27@jhmi.edu](mailto:lstewa27@jhmi.edu)

**Feb 6. – Using Mindfulness for Stress Reduction**

*Learn mindfulness techniques to manage stress and bring a sense of greater peace and well-being into your life. Lunch is provided.*

12 to 1 p.m.

Knott Conference Center  
Johns Hopkins Bayview campus  
4940 Eastern Ave., Baltimore, MD 21224

**RSVP by Feb. 3:** [lstewa27@jhmi.edu](mailto:lstewa27@jhmi.edu)

## Community Partner Spotlight: Mental Health Association of Maryland



The Mental Health Association of Maryland (MHAMD) is dedicated to offering the latest mental health research,

education and training to the community through outreach, advocacy and oversight of select mental health programs.

In 2001, MHAMD established its Older Adult Program to address the need for widespread education and advocacy regarding mental wellness and the aging process. For the past two decades, they have built partnerships, resources and important initiatives to destigmatize mental illness, enhance access to treatment and optimize quality of life for individuals living with mental disorders and their caregivers.

To learn more about the Older Adult Program, contact Kim Burton at **443-901-1550, ext. 210** or [kburton@mhamd.org](mailto:kburton@mhamd.org).

For more information about MHAMD, visit [mhamd.org](http://mhamd.org).

## Free Educational Resource: Caregiver Teleconnection

The Caregiver Teleconnection is a free program call-in program that provides information about medical conditions and treatments, and caregiver-related issues. Calls are led by a topic expert and usually last one hour. Participants are able to get expert advice, ask questions and talk to other people who are also providing care.



For a complete schedule and list of upcoming topics, visit [wellmedcharitablefoundation.org/caregiver-support/caregiver-teleconnection](http://wellmedcharitablefoundation.org/caregiver-support/caregiver-teleconnection). Registration is required to participate. Call **866-390-6491** to reserve your spot.

## VOICE OF THE CAREGIVER: DAVID FELZENBERG

The day-to-day responsibilities of caring for his wife after her Alzheimer's diagnosis were beginning to take a toll on **David Felzenberg**, but thankfully, Johns Hopkins Bayview's Called to Care program was there to support him.

"As a caregiver, you have to think for two people," he says. "Even in the best of circumstances, it wears you down. Called to Care teaches you how to build cooperative relationships and work with your healthcare professionals as a team."

Felzenberg says Called to Care has also provided him with a sense of community. "It's nice to be with others who are going through similar things – you're speaking the same language. You can relate even if your loved one may not be in the same stage," he says. "We try to support each other and come up with helpful alternatives. We talk through situations, and if someone's gone through something similar, they can offer suggestions."

*The excerpt above was featured in an article written by Johns Hopkins Medicine News & Publications, and was reprinted with permission. The complete article may be viewed at [hopkinsmedicine.org/news/articles/helping-caregivers-to-feel-empowered-and-encouraged](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/news/articles/helping-caregivers-to-feel-empowered-and-encouraged).*



*Felzenberg with his wife, Janice.*

## HELP FOR MANAGING MULTIPLE MEDICATIONS

If dealing with multiple medications is a daily challenge for you or a loved one, you're not alone. Nearly 40 percent of older adults take five or more prescription drugs. The best approach: "When you're using several medications, be proactive," says **Jessica Merrey, PharmD**, clinical pharmacy specialist at The Johns Hopkins Hospital and certified geriatric pharmacist. "Taking medications as directed by your doctor, getting refills on time, and staying alert to side effects and interactions all help keep you healthy."

These strategies can make managing multiple medications easier – and safer.

- **Fill your prescriptions at once.** This makes getting prescription refills simpler. It also helps your pharmacist protect you from drug interaction.
- **Use a pill dispenser or other reminder system.** "A pill box with compartments for each day of the week – and for morning, noon and night if you take medications several times a day – lets you know at a glance whether you've take your medicines yet," Merrey says. "Try setting a timer on your phone, watch or alarm clock."
- **Get prescriptions refilled early.** Running out could allow health conditions to worsen. Check expiration dates frequently and discard any medicines that are out of date.
- **Make a list and update it regularly.** Keep a list of the medications you take – with the name of the drug, the dose, how often you take it and why. Put a copy in your medical files at home, carry one in your wallet to show your doctor, and give a copy to a loved one or friend in case you have a medical emergency.
- **Get a yearly "brown bag" review.** Toss everything you take, including over-the-counter remedies and supplements into a bag and take it to your annual checkup for a review. "With age, the body absorbs and breaks down medications differently. Your doctor may change the dose of something you've used for a long time," Merrey says.



*Caregiver Connection* is published 6 times a year by Johns Hopkins Bayview's Called to Care program. **W. Daniel Hale, Ph.D.**, director, Healthy Community Partnership; **Meghan Rossbach**, editor and designer; **Linda Stewart**, contributor.

**Phone:** 410-550-8018; **Web:** [hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/c2c](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/c2c)