Diabetes: Managing a Chronic Disease

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Gift Planning Turns Goals into Legacies

By Director of Gift Planning Cynthia W. O’Donnell, JD

What I love most about my job as director of gift planning for the Health Foundation is spending time with donors and listening to their fascinating stories. I appreciate their wisdom and relish hearing about their life experiences. Many survived the Great Depression and served our country during the World Wars. Each conversation reveals a particular slice of history. Many also share stories about the excellent care they received at Morristown Memorial and tell me about wanting to give back to the hospital that has served them and their families so well over the years.

During these meetings, I share with them the rich history of Morristown Memorial. In 1889, Myra Brookfield, a Morristown resident, bequeathed her home to build a hospital. The property was to be transferred after her mother’s death on the condition that the community raise $15,000 within three years to equip the facility. When Miss Brookfield’s mother died, town resident Augusta Stone took over the lagging fundraising initiative and the community surpassed the goal by more than $1,000. From these pioneering efforts, Morristown Memorial was founded, its name harkening back to the many gifts donated by families in memory of loved ones.

To honor the hospital’s first benefactor, the Brookfield Society was formed in 1992 and today its council is chaired by William D. Bruen, Jr. By making a planned gift to the hospital, donors join the Brookfield Society and enjoy benefits, including an annual recognition luncheon, financial planning and health seminars, special amenities when hospitalized, recognition on the Founders Wall and tax incentives.

When a person or a family wants to join the Brookfield Society, we discuss how their wishes can best be fulfilled. I listen to their goals — perhaps leaving a gift to grandchildren or supporting a favorite charity while receiving tax breaks — and I help them select the appropriate giving vehicle.*

For Norman and Barbara Tomlinson, who relocated to Florida, the perfect plan was to donate their home to Morristown Memorial. The Tomlinsons were spared real estate hassles, gained a tax deduction and eliminated capital gains taxes. Plus they now have the pleasure of knowing their gift is funding a new medical Intensive Care Unit and nurse training.

In the case of Harry and Ruth Kalish of East Hanover, a charitable remainder trust best fit their needs. This giving vehicle enables donors to transfer cash, securities and property into a trust that pays a fixed percentage annually and provides a tax deduction. For the Kalishes, their plans include a gift for their dear friends and generous provisions for four major beneficiaries, including Morristown Memorial.

Nelson and Nancy Schaenen of Madison joined the Brookfield Society by leaving a bequest to Morristown Memorial in their wills. This approach allows the couple to keep control of their assets while avoiding a federal estate tax on their gift.

For Calvin Shen, MD, and Lucy Chen, MD, their deferred gift annuity serves as a smart estate-planning vehicle and a way of saying thank you to Morristown Memorial, where both work. This gift can be established with cash, securities or property, and donors receive fixed payments for life and a tax deduction.

Through the creation of a charitable gift annuity, Grant Parr, MD, and his wife, Helen, receive a guaranteed life income, a charitable tax deduction and the elimination of capital gains taxes. Their names, along with the other donors, are listed on Founders Wall.

If you would like to join these Brookfield Society members and leave a legacy to Morristown Memorial, please contact me at 973-593-2418 or cynthia.donnell@atlantichealth.org to set up a time to talk. I can’t wait to hear your story.

* Individual donor examples are included with permission
**Cruise Helps Patients Breathe Easy**

To benefit Morristown Memorial’s Cystic Fibrosis Program — both adult and pediatric — 250 people cruised the New York Harbor on the Skyline Princess, April 5, enjoying four hours of dining and dancing. The sold-out “Breathe Easy” event raised $12,000 and included a silent auction with prizes donated by families of cystic fibrosis patients. Top bids claimed a signed and numbered print by artist Marc Chagall and a New York Jets jersey autographed by former Jets quarterback, Boomer Esiason.

“It was a great time for fellowship and for people to come together outside of work and have fun,” says Sue Fitzgerald, respiratory care registered nurse and cruise committee chair, who noted that ticket sales were boosted by the efforts of Stanley Fiel, MD, chair of the Department of Internal Medicine; Arthur Atlas, MD, director of the Pediatric Pulmonary Division; and Beverly Natale, manager of respiratory care.

**Employee Raffle Boosts PDP**

When it comes to raising money for a good cause at Morristown Memorial, Sue Fitzgerald, respiratory care registered nurse, goes all out. To publicize the May 15 employee basket raffle, which benefited the Professional Development Program (PDP), she sauntered into the crowded cafeteria with a yellow balloon bouncing above her head. Standing on a chair, she sang a self-composed ditty to encourage diners to buy tickets. “I’m not afraid to put myself out there to benefit a cause,” she says.

Her promotion worked. This year’s raffle, organized by 39 volunteer committee members and featuring 86 baskets donated by Atlantic Health employees, raised $12,040.

The PDP, established through an endowment from Norman and Barbara Tomlinson and their daughter, Kate, underwrites tuition costs for students in nursing and certification programs. In exchange, students agree to work for Morristown Memorial and have their loan forgiven over time.

www.mmhf.org
Sir William Osler, known as the Father of Modern Medicine, said the way to live a long life is to contract a chronic disease and take care of it. This favorite adage of Harold Starkman, MD, certainly applies to the patients he treats as director of the BD Diabetes Center for Children and Adolescents at Goryeb Children’s Hospital.

Since founding the center 25 years ago, Dr. Starkman and his team have helped patients and their families manage diabetes through clinical care and educational and psychosocial programs.

“Diabetes is a family problem and the family needs to work together,” says Dr. Starkman. “How well a pediatric patient handles diabetes correlates to how well a family deals with it. If they take the challenge and learn about the disease, it’s a better way of coping as opposed to living under a cloud. If diabetes is treated right, there’s no reason a child should not live to 100 and be healthy.”

Even though the cure for diabetes remains a mystery, one thing is certain — the number of Americans affected by the disease is rising. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) estimates that 23.6 million children and adults in the United States have diabetes. This is a 13.5 percent increase from 2005 to 2007. For children born after 2000, the ADA predicts that one out of every three will develop diabetes.

With type 1 diabetes, the body fails to produce insulin, a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy for daily life. In type 2 diabetes, the body does not produce enough insulin or fails to properly use the hormone, starving the body’s cells of needed energy. Left untreated, both forms can cause heart disease, blindness, and nerve and kidney damage.

Despite the growing numbers, new treatments, such as insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors, are improving patient outcomes. “Before, I knew all the eye and kidney doctors in town; now, the new technology has helped normalize blood sugar levels and minimize the risk of complications,” says Dr. Starkman. “In the old days, patients were on a tight schedule of medication, eating and exercise, and they were limited to a restrictive diet. Now, patients can decide how many grams of carbohydrate to eat and then calculate their insulin dose. The responsibility for technical aspects of diabetes care has shifted to the families.”

The BD Center, which treats over 1,000 patients with diabetes, offers an array of educational and psychosocial programs, including family retreats, cooking and caretaker classes, and support groups. In addition, the center works closely with schools to ensure that diabetes is managed properly while children are in the classroom. The center also launched an adolescent web site (thinklikeapancreas.com) that averages 1,000 hits per month. Two BD Center educational videos, “Staying in Balance” and “Diabetes: A Team Effort,” are given to all new patients and distributed nationally as well.

The center’s new Diabetes High Risk Intervention Program provides education and support to youths with poorly controlled diabetes. This high-risk group accounts for 90 percent of hospital readmissions and many die by age 40, Dr. Starkman says. The program offers families, caregivers and patients weekend retreats to learn about diabetes management and improve family communication and problem-solving skills. In addition, a BD Center staff member makes home visits to provide interventions tailored to each family. Families also receive assistance in interpreting and responding to blood sugar results.

Funding for the new program comes in part from an endowment established through the generosity of the late Hazel Balch as well as pledged funds from Hoop-A-Paluzu and supplemental funds from Becton, Dickinson and Company, for which the center is named. The BD Center is seeking additional funds to expand this program as well as other initiatives that will provide families with tools to help their diabetic child live a long and healthy life.

“If diabetes is treated right, there’s no reason a child should not live to 100 and be healthy.”

–Harold Starkman, MD

Photos: Shelley Kusnetz
Pediatric patients with diabetes typically transition between ages 18 and 20 to the Adult Diabetes Center, directed by Robert Melfi, MD. When a young adult demonstrates readiness — by being able to fill prescriptions, make appointments and monitor blood sugar levels — the change is made.

Recognized by the ADA for excellence in diabetes education, the center offers nutritional counseling, sessions with nurses to learn about managing insulin therapy, including the use of insulin pumps, and classes on planning meals, monitoring blood glucose levels and self-administering medication. Support groups are also available for patients and families. “Overall, our mission is to serve as a resource to the community to improve diabetes care across the spectrum,” he says.

Calling diabetes a rapidly growing national epidemic, Dr. Melfi cites lack of exercise, poor diet and obesity as contributing factors. In the general population over age 60, every one or two people out of 10 have the disease, but with African Americans and Hispanics, the ratio rises to one out of every four.

To deal with this epidemic, especially in the undiagnosed, the center has established hospital-wide protocols and staff educational programs to improve blood sugar control and outcomes for all hospitalized patients with diabetes as well as those who develop high blood sugar in response to an acute illness. In July, the hospital initiated a hyperglycemia order set to enhance the safety and effectiveness of insulin therapy. The center was also instrumental in implementing a hospital-wide hypoglycemic protocol to treat patients with low blood sugar, and its staff worked with the open heart surgery team to develop postoperative care standards for open heart surgery patients to tighten control of blood sugar levels and thus improve patient outcomes.

To better serve the poor with diabetes, the center has partnered with the Family Health Center (FHC) in Morristown, a full-health clinic housed in Town Hall and run by Morristown Memorial. “Teaching physicians in training how to care for people with a chronic disease is wedded with expanding care to the underprivileged community,” he says.

At the FHC, clinicians from the Adult Diabetes Center aid in the treatment of approximately 400 patients a year with diabetes. Thanks to a $116,500 grant from the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, the center hired a nurse practitioner to oversee diabetes patient care and a bilingual patient advocate to improve communication between patients and physicians. Johnson & Johnson’s New Jersey Health Initiatives also provided funding at the FHC for the Staged Diabetes Management Program, which integrates education and support for diabetes management.

For this partnership to thrive, more funds are needed. “Without an endowment to support the bottom line, it’s hard for the hospital to grow the program and continue funding the Diabetes Program at the Family Health Center,” says Dr. Melfi.

Funding is also needed to continue providing patients at the Adult Diabetes Center with effective care as well as educational and support programs. Many services are reimbursed by insurance at a level that does not cover the expenses of the center.

“The center is responsible to the community to support patient needs and provide services that aren’t profitable,” he says. “We can’t bill insurance for the time it takes to develop these programs and protocols. We’re providing a service beyond the business model — we’re helping people live their lives with a chronic disease.”

To lend your support to Drs. Melfi and Starkman, please contact the Health Foundation at 973-593-2400.
Couple’s Tragedy Spurs Action

R Baby Grant Targets Communication

Short Hills residents Andrew and Phyllis Rabinowitz have transformed the tragedy of losing their nine-day-old baby daughter, Rebecca, into an opportunity to reduce infant mortality rates at hospitals nationwide. After their loss, the couple established R Baby Foundation, which funds projects to improve communication between health care professionals and patients with the hope of reducing medical errors.

On July 31, Mrs. Rabinowitz spoke before a crowd of 70 doctors, parents and staff at Morristown Memorial’s Goryeb Children’s Hospital to unveil a new initiative, “Patient- and Family-Centered Care,” begun through a $100,000 R Baby Foundation grant.

There was not a dry eye in the room as Mrs. Rabinowitz told her story.

In 2006, Rebecca died from a misdiagnosed, untreated viral infection, after she was taken to another area hospital. “We felt the physician did not listen to our high level of concern for our daughter’s health, and we left very frustrated, as she refused to re-admit or do further testing,” says Mrs. Rabinowitz. “We are confident that this new program at Goryeb Children’s Hospital will help other families to have increased confidence and communication, ultimately leading to the best possible health care outcome.”

The grant will support a collaborative effort with the Maryland-based Institute for Family Centered Care (IFCC), which is assessing current methods at the hospital and helping it transition from a traditional provider-focused approach to one in which the patient and family are at the center. The project has already enabled Goryeb to expand its parent advisory board and create the Goryeb Family Advisory Council, a group of parents who advise hospital administrators and medical leaders about patient needs and hospital priorities from a family perspective. In addition, Goryeb sent parents and staff to a series of workshops at the IFCC. As initial assessments with the IFCC are completed within the Edward and Joan Foley Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and Gagnon Children’s Emergency Department, additional programs will be added.

“At Goryeb, we have made significant strides to welcome our families, but adopting this model of ‘Families First’ care will further empower patients and parents to work together with their health care providers on quality initiatives and improving the delivery of pediatric care,” says Walter Rosenfeld, MD, FAAP, chairman of Pediatrics at Goryeb.

Accolades

Distinguished Hospital Award for Patient Safety from HealthGrades

Gold Seal of Approval for our joint replacement program from The Joint Commission

Outstanding Achievement Award from the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons

One of the 50 best places to work by NJBiz

One of the 50 best employers in the nation for workers over 50 by AARP

‘Happy Home’ Welcomes 18,000

The 14th Mansion in May, hosted by the Women’s Association of Morristown Memorial, attracted 18,000 visitors to Froh Heim in Far Hills and raised $586,000 for the Valerie Fund Children’s Center at Goryeb Children’s Hospital. Funds will be directed to the expansion of inpatient and outpatient pediatric hematology and oncology services at the center.

Over 1,000 volunteers, many of them Morristown Memorial employees, helped make the fundraiser a stunning success. Throughout the month, Atlantic Health provided a shuttle service from the parking area to the estate for house and garden tours and special events, including wine and cheese parties, fashion shows and talks on floral design, wedding planning and travel.

Froh Heim (German for “happy home”) is a circa 1923 Mediterranean-style stone and stucco house with a red-tiled roof, situated on 11.4 acres.
When a patient is seen at The Carol W. and Julius A. Rippel Breast Center, a host of incidental issues can arise. Perhaps an older child in the waiting room wants a book to read. Maybe a husband needs to know how long a procedure will last. Or maybe an elderly patient needs a ride home.

Soon, all of these scenarios will be resolved by a breast center concierge who will be hired to handle all non-medical aspects of patient care. The concierge salary will be funded through a $130,000 grant over two years from the William E. Simon Foundation. The gift honors the tenth anniversary of the Carol G. Simon Cancer Center and the memory of Mrs. Simon, for whom the center is named.

The creation of the concierge position demonstrates the center’s effort to provide another level of exceptional care to patients, says Paul Friedman, DO, director of the Rippel Breast Center. “The purpose of the concierge is to put the patient at ease as soon as possible and to help the patient with anything needed along the way,” he says. This includes answering insurance questions, scheduling appointments and relating support group information.

The center is also hiring a nurse navigator to provide support, information and guidance if a patient is diagnosed with breast cancer. Funded by the hospital, the nurse navigator will serve as a clinical resource throughout the treatment process, following patients before, during and after surgery and throughout cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy and endocrine and radiation therapies.

‘Bling’ Lifts Spirits in Oncology

Chris Ferdinand, founder of Operation Bling Foundation, hopes to spread good cheer with each piece of sparkling jewelry she gives to oncology patients at Morristown Memorial and Overlook hospitals. Each week, a “bling angel” presents patients with the choice of a free sterling silver cubic zirconium ring, earrings, necklace or bracelet to keep.

“It’s such a simple idea, but it makes everyone smile,” says Mrs. Ferdinand, owner of Ferdinand Jewelers in New Providence with her husband, Bill.

Mrs. Ferdinand started the not-for-profit last March, after visiting her long-time customer, Barbara, who was battling ovarian cancer at Morristown Memorial. Barbara complained that she missed her bling, the custom-made diamond ring the Ferdinands had fashioned; she didn’t want to wear expensive jewelry at the hospital.

The next morning, after Mrs. Ferdinand’s prayers, an idea ignited. “I thought, I can’t bring flowers to the oncology floor, but I can bring bling,” she says. Then she ordered rings with stones similar to Barbara’s. “I told her she could have one for every finger, and she picked one for each hand; she had her bling back,” she says.

From that first gift, the foundation was born. Bringing joy to oncology patients resonates with Mrs. Ferdinand, whose mother died from ovarian cancer in 1991.

To date, the foundation has raised over $16,065, with $4,000 generated from a swim-a-thon on July 28 at Cromwell Pool in Convent Station. The event, planned by the Ferdinand’s daughter, Gwendolyn, featured over 90 swimmers ranging from age 3 to 26.

Health Foundation Names New Trustee

John A. Gerson is senior managing director and chief financial officer for Paladin Realty Partners, LLC, and Craton Equity Partners, LLC, in Morristown and Los Angeles, CA. He has served on Morristown Memorial’s Financial Oversight Committee and co-chaired its Accounting Sub-Committee. The Madison resident and his wife, Jean, have one daughter, Jaclyn. “Morristown Memorial employs excellent people who dedicate their time and talents to make the hospital one of the premier health facilities in the metropolitan area,” he says.
Golfers ♥ Gagnon, Raising Record Sum

Records were broken at this year’s 19th Annual Morristown Memorial Golf Classic, with the exceptional weather and the tremendous support. The 204 golfers who played at Baltusrol on June 2, raised $404,650 — beating last year’s rainy day record-setting sum by $21,500.

All proceeds of the event, sponsored by ASCO, will support the Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute and its Heart Success Program, an educational initiative for heart failure patients. When it opens in January 2009, all cardiac services will be consolidated in the $200 million, 250,000-square-foot facility, including open-heart surgery, valve replacement and repair, minimally invasive heart valve surgery and aortic aneurysm repair.

We thank our golfers, our volunteers, and our generous sponsors: BUCKL Architects; Genesis HealthCare; Massey Quick & Co.; ARMDS; Corporate Express; Francis Cauffman Inc.; Di Stasio & Van Buren Inc.; Goldman, Sachs & Co.; Jersey Central Power & Light; JPMorgan Chase; McKesson; MedAssets; and Verizon Business. We are also grateful to Tri-State Lincoln Mercury Dealers for sponsoring the “Hole in One” contests, Yukon Graphics for signage and those who donated raffle prizes.

We extend our sincerest apologies for the following errors and omissions in the 2007 Report on Gifts. Brookfield Society: Mr. Jacob Poppele. Adams Fellows: Richard P. and Susan A. Diegnan; J. Lloyd and Dorothy B. Huck; William and Cathy Huff; Dr. and Mrs. Grant Van S. Parr; Mr. and Mrs. William W. Rooke. Hamilton Fellows: Mr. and Mrs. George N. Allport; the Honorable and Mrs. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen; Mr. and Mrs. Richard W. Herbst; Mr. and Mrs. William H. Longfield; Arlene and Kermit Meade; Nancy and Nelson Schaeenen, Jr. Franklin Fellows: Mr. and Mrs. Daniel D. Harding. Madison Associates: Mr. and Mrs. William D. Baird, Jr.; Marge and Joe Goryeb; Mr. and Mrs. William M. Kearnns, Jr.; William and Jane McKnight; Mr. and Mrs. Marc E. Robinson; Mr. and Mrs. Michael Tanenbaum. Jefferson Associates: Mr. and Mrs. Alan S. Painter. Centennial Club: Mr. and Mrs. John O. Downing; Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Mulcahy III. Corporations & Foundations, Madison Associates: Ross, Rosenthal & Company; Medical & Dental Staff, Adams Fellows: Anesthesia Associates of Morristown. Madison Associates: Dr. Mark D. Widmann and Ms. Kim Hirsch. Thomas Paine Associates: Dr. and Mrs. Dean A. Dent. Jefferson Associates: Dr. and Mrs. Donald Casev, Jr.

About the Staff

Morristown Memorial Health Foundation is a nonprofit public foundation whose mission is to inspire community philanthropy to advance exceptional healthcare for patients at Morristown Memorial Hospital. Our objective is to utilize philanthropy to preserve and expand the hospital’s programs and services in direct patient care, clinical research, medical and public health education, and preventive medicine.