



Surrounding you with the care you
need to remain in the home you love.

Newsletter

Summer 2022

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Letter from the CEO Jim Schlaman

Hello PACE family! I hope your summer is going well and you are able to enjoy the pleasant weather. In June, we received the results from our participant satisfaction survey. I am so appreciative of the feedback on what we are doing well and what we can improve upon to best care for each participant. We learn a lot from the comment section of the survey. Here are a few of the multiple comments that stand out: “I like the care overall. The staff and other people are very friendly. I have not met a single staff member

who is not kind and attentive.” “They listen to everything I have to say about my healthcare.” “I get too many calls from them. I am old and resting and sometimes I get four or five calls a day from PACE. I know they are trying to do their job, but some calls are not that important.” This is wonderful feedback as we are working to streamline our communication.

It is a pleasure to share our overall satisfaction is 87%; with Medical Care, Transportation, Day Center CNAs, Rehabilitation Therapy and Social Workers all scoring above 90% satisfaction. Satisfaction with meals was our lowest score at 69%. Please be sure to share anything we can do to enhance your experience with meals and the PACE mission in general.

We are here to serve you and surround you with love, compassion, and the clinical care you desire. On behalf of the PACE team, it is quite a privilege that you have chosen PACE of SWMI to partner with you as we journey through life.

Kind regards,

Jim

Participants Share Their Feedback

According to Health Care Trends, September 2021, This Spring 100 of our participants were asked for their opinions on many aspects of the PACE of Southwest Michigan program. Due to COVID-19, Vital Research had a trained interviewer complete the interviews by phone. 100 of our participants completed the survey.

Overall satisfaction with PACE is high (87%) and consistent with last year (88%). Areas of highest satisfaction include Social Workers (98%), Center Aides (96%), and Rehabilitation Therapy (94%). The one area with the most room for improvement is meals (69%).

In terms of general service delivery, 96% of participants feel there is someone to talk to about complaints or problems, and 86% feel they are given all the services needed. Three out of four participants find the center services are well coordinated.

Medical Care

Satisfaction with medical care is solid with 91% finding the doctor or nurse is good at explaining health care information, 91% feeling included in decisions concerning care, and 92% saying the staff is responsive to needs when in pain. Staff takes health concerns seriously (86%) and the participant is as involved in decisions about care as they want to be (93%).

Satisfaction with the health care specialist is good in explaining health care information (82%), has confidence in specialist doctor who provides care (84%), and specialist doctor includes the participant in decisions about medical care (92%).

Social Workers

Social workers seem to be doing a phenomenal job with 99% finding their social worker listens carefully, and 97% trusting their social worker.

Therapy

When it comes to recreational therapy, 88% of participants feel there are enough activities, 85% find the activities to be entertaining, and 75% report being asked in which activities or entertainment the participant wants to participate.

Participant satisfaction with rehabilitation therapy and exercise is good with participants finding people who work at PACE encourage physical exercises (87%), exercise staff helpful (98%), and exercises are helpful (81%).

Aides

With Center Aides participants feel they get the amount of help wanted from the aides (96%), aides come quickly when help is needed (94%), and aides are gentle when helping (97%).

While participants trust their home care workers (90%), and feel the home care worker does his/her job well (84%), there is room for improvement when it comes to usually sending the same home care worker(s) (76%).

Meals

Meals are an area for improvement. Only 58% expressed that meals look good and 56% felt meals taste good. The variety of foods seems good with a 93% satisfaction rating.

Transportation

When it comes to transportation, participants feel they get the amount of help wanted from van drivers (96%), feel safe when riding in the van (90%), and for the most part feel the amount of time spent riding in the van is ok (86%).

In Their Words

When asked “What do you like best about the PACE program?” here are some participant quotes:

- “The staff and other people are very friendly. I have not met a single staff member who is not kind and attentive.”
- “They are willing to listen and let me make my own decisions.”
- “They provide what they told me they would. They really care and want to help me. I can be pretty critical and they really take good care of me.”
- “The people there are very helpful. They listen to



Social Workers



Therapy



Transportation



Clinic

complaints and work on them.”

- “The socialization. Getting out of my house helps me with my depression. It helps me to mingle with other people.”
- “I don’t have to worry about the transportation. They set up appointments and deliver medications.”
- “They listen to everything I have to say about my health care.”
- “I like the way PACE schedules my appointments and picks me up.”

- “The medical care is what I like the best. The delivery of medicine and such.”
- “They are quick about responding to my calls. They call me right back.”
- “They are very caring and not judgmental.”

PACE of Southwest Michigan appreciates the positive results and comments and also notes areas for improvement. For information on the study methodology or detailed results, please contact Sandi at 269-408-4370.

Farm Fresh Food for Seniors

PACE of SWMI is proud of our dedicated dietitians who have collaborated with MDHHS to bring many of our participants the option of farm fresh food. Senior Project Fresh is a national program funded by the USDA Farm Bill. The program is designed to assist seniors into consuming more fruits and vegetables by offering vouchers to be used at registered farmers markets and roadside stands. Unlike some government subsidized programs, Project FRESH is a dollar-for-dollar match which provides local farmers the consequent benefit of increased cash flow.

Melissa Powell, PACE dietitian, recounted that it was a representative from the State of Michigan who first reached out with information about this unique initiative, hoping PACE participants could have the opportunity to access local produce. Melissa Powell and Shannon Kramer, both PACE dietitians, worked behind the scenes to identify eligible PACE participants and assist them through the application process to receive vouchers.

Eligibility for Senior Project Fresh

- Must be 60 years of age or older at the time of receiving coupons OR aged 55 and older and a member of a Michigan federally recognized tribe or urban tribal group
- Must live in the county in which coupons are obtained
- Must have a total household income of 185% of poverty

- Automatically eligible if receiving SNAP or CSFP

Each county has a designated Lead Agency that is responsible for issuing vouchers as well as the nutrition education component the USDA imposes for this program. Nutrition education is meant to be person-centered and can include virtual classes, group classes, food demonstrations at markets along with the written material that is handed out. In Berrien County, vouchers were handed out at the Benton Harbor Farmers Market and education was provided on the spot by a representative from Michigan State University Extension Office, the county’s lead agency. Vouchers are available on a first come basis and each person is given twenty-five dollars’ worth to spend as cash on approved items. An option of assigning a proxy to select produce on your behalf is a program benefit for those who rely on caregivers for community errands. Vouchers are valid May 1st through October 31st.

Approved Items

- Unprocessed
- Fruits and vegetables grown in Michigan or bordering states of Wisconsin, Ohio or Indiana
- Honey

Although this project promoting healthy choices has been around since 2000, it continues to grow each year, with a program vision for PACE centers to ensure all eligible PACE participants are given access to this opportunity. Melissa shares

her reflection on this first year connecting PACE participants with local produce; “I think it’s a great way to connect PPTs to healthy food options. A lot of people want to take control of their own health to make good choices and this program gives them

that autonomy.”

For more information regarding this program, please contact your county MDHHS office.

“I’m excited to help facilitate this special opportunity to be able to offer fresh, local food for our seniors in addition to providing support for the farmers in our area.”

~ Shannon, PACE Registered Dietician



Day Center FUN!!



New Faces *at* PACE!

Please join us in welcoming these professionals to PACE: Rosalinda Brink, Clinic MA; Tammy Everett, RN/HCC/PRN; Kayla Flournoy, Day Center CNA; Ida Furgeson, HR Assistant; Brandi Hunt, Clinic MA; Kati Lemons, RN/Clinic; Kendall Linscheid, Activities Coordinator; Becky Lyons, Clinic MA; Jayladine Mingo, Home Care CNA; Yvonne Moore, Day Center CNA; Vernika Peterson, Day Center CNA; Paula Shimulunas, Clinical Operations Manager; Anika Shane, Medical Records Clerk; Kourtney Smith, Physical Therapist; Ale Soto, Receptionist; Donna Weberg, CFO; Julie Williams, Accounting Assistant; Monica Williams, Home Care CNA



Rosalinda Brink, Clinic MA



Tammy Everett, RN/HCC/PRN



Kayla Flournoy, Day Center CNA



Ida Furgeson, HR Assistant



Brandi Hunt, Clinic MA



Kati Lemons, RN/Clinic/Part time



Kendall Linscheid, Activities Coord.



Becky Lyons, Clinic MA



Jayladine Mingo, Home Care CNA



Yvonne Moore, Day Center CNA



Vernika Peterson, Day Center



Paula Shimulunas, Clinical Operations



Anika Shane, Med. Records Clerk



Kourtney Smith, Physical Therapist



Ale Soto, Receptionist



Donna Weberg, CFO



Julie Williams, Accounting Assist.



Monica Williams, Home Care CNA

Participant Story Irvin "Allen"



Allen May grew up in southern Illinois. "It was a little town – a farming community," Allen said. "I was the oldest in the family." Allen had three younger sisters. "Mom had her hands full. My youngest sister was born when I was graduating high school." Allen's father was employed at the Pfizer pharmaceutical plant, working with horses that were used to make the rabies vaccine for dogs.

When he was six or seven years old, Allen was along for the sendoff as his father was about to board a bus carrying servicemen to WWII. But his father was informed at the last minute that the age limit had been changed and he was too old to serve. The scene was etched in his mind because of the emotion displayed by his mother and grandmother.

Two decades later, Allen was also turned away when he wanted to serve in Vietnam. “They didn’t take me because I had a heart murmur. I was mad about it,” he said. “I really wanted to serve. My uncle served. I looked up to him quite a bit. I wanted to follow in his footsteps.”

Allen and his sisters attended Sunday services in their one-church town. “Mom and Dad didn’t go, but they would always send us kids.” Their one-room schoolhouse had the same teacher throughout grade school. “She taught all eight grades,” Allen recalls.

Allen worked on a farm for several years. “Then I went to work at a factory that made high-explosive gun powder for bombs,” Allen said. His duties included placing nitroglycerin into gun powder. “The nitro made me sick. I got headaches,” he said. A glitch in the process caused an explosion. “It blew me off a 20-foot ladder,” Allen recalls. He was shaken, but uninjured. “I was back in there the next day.”

For 20 years, Allen drove a truck and hauled mud in the oil fields of Oklahoma. He met his second wife, Joanne, at church. They lived at a state park in Oklahoma for eight years. “We had a big camper. After my wife died, I stayed there for a little while.” Allen moved back to Illinois at the urging of his sister there. “Then my son finally got a hold of me and wanted me to come up to Michigan.” Allen was living with his son and daughter-in-law until “Loren found me an apartment at Timber Ridge in Berrien Springs,” Allen said of his PACE social worker.

“I like Jim,” Allen said of the PACE CEO. “He’s a pretty good guy. He goes around and talks and jokes and cuts up with us, just like he’s one of us. The doctor and staff are pretty nice, too. I like all the CNAs. I get to acting silly and they tell me I’m nuts. I’m a jokester. Otherwise, it makes the day go long.”

At home, Allen likes to watch television and keeps his apartment clean. “Mom taught us to be neat in the house,” he said. He enjoys cooking. “But I don’t like to do the dishes. I guess I’m just a grouchy old man,” he adds with a laugh that tells us that’s really not true!

Participants may be fully and personally responsible for the costs of unauthorized or out-of-PACE program agreement services. H0390-PSWMMI-08/2022