



# The Hamaspik Gazette

News of Hamaspik Agencies and General Health

SEPTEMBER '19 • ISSUE NO. 173



## GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

**DO YOU USE SUNSCREEN TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND/OR YOUR CHILDREN AGAINST THE SUN?**

A: YES; B: NO



## HEALTH STAT

### OLDER PATIENTS, GREATER TRUST IN DOCTORS

Percentage of patients saying doctors do a good job "all or most of the time":

Under 50	Over 50
42%	56%

Source: survey, Pew Research Center, Aug. 2, 2019



## HEALTH TIP

**LEAVE MOSQUITOS HIGH AND DRY: SPILL OUT STANDING WATER**  
Pesky, disease-carrying mosquitoes and other bugs breed and feed in and around standing water—so keep those trashcans and gutters rainwater-free to bug-proof your property!

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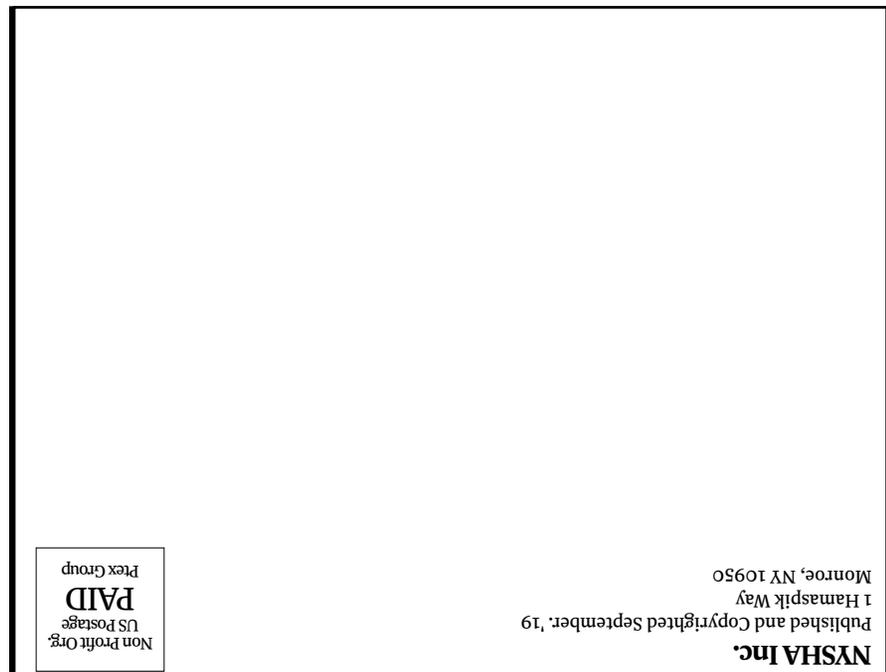


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## HAMASPIK HOMECARE NEWS

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## PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLICY NEWS

### Pharmacy Giant CVS Health to Open 1,500 HealthHub Clinics Nationwide by late 2021

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# Services Provided by NYSHA AGENCIES

## OPWDD SERVICES

### INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA)

A supervised residence for individuals who need out-of-home placement.

### INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES (ISS)

Paid housing expenses and support for individuals who can live independently.

### HOME FAMILY CARE (HFC)

Places individuals with developmental disabilities into private homes to care and support the individual.

### DAY HABILITATION (DH)

A day program for adults with disabilities designed to develop skills, greater independence, community inclusion etc.

**Site Based:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility.

**Without Walls:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in a community-based setting.

**Stars Day Program:** Day Habilitation Service delivered in an OPWDD certified facility for higher-functioning individuals.

### COMMUNITY HABILITATION (CH)

Working one-on-one with individuals in their home or in the community to achieve valued outcomes by helping them develop daily living skills and achieve long-term goals.

### COMMUNITY PRE VOCATIONAL

Working with individual to prepare them for paid community employment- Teaching individuals job skills and other related social skills to enhance their ability to obtain employment in the future.

### SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT (SEMP)

Working with individual to support and provide them with necessary coaching so they can successfully engage in paid competitive employment.

### FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (FSS)

Support for the individual's family by reimbursing them for certain qualifying items or services, otherwise not available to them.

### INTENSIVE BEHAVIORAL SERVICES (IBS)

Short-term interventional services for people with behavioral issues and their family members.

### RESPITE:

Home and Community-based respite services to provide a relief for the individual's caregiver and family.

**At-Home:** Respite services delivered in the home of the individual.

**After School:** Respite program provided every day after school hours.

**Sundays:** Respite program provided every Sunday.

**Legal Holidays:** Respite program provided on all legal holidays when school is not in session.

**Summer Break/Camp Neshomah:** Full day respite program during the summer break weeks.

**Stars Night Program:** Respite services delivered in the evening hours to high-functioning individuals by taking them out in the community and doing recreational and stimulating activities with them.

**Weekend Getaway:** A weekend retreat for individuals receiving respite services.

**Hamasmid:** After-School program for mainstreamed individuals engaging in recreational activities.

### SELF-DIRECTION

The Individual or their advocate takes direct responsibility to manage their services and self-direct their budget.

**Fiscal Intermediary (FI):** Assists individual or their advocate in implementing their Individual Support Agreement and to manage financial accountability and employer responsibilities.

**Brokerage:** Assisting individuals or their advocate in creating and managing their budget.

### PARENTAL RETREATS

Providing: Getaways and retreats for parents of individuals with disabilities

## DOH

### EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)

Providing a range of services to help young children (ages birth-3) who have a specific delay in their development.

**Group Development Model (GDM):** Providing Early Intervention services in a group-setting.

**Therapy:** Providing OT, PT, SLP, Vision, Nutrition, Play, Special Education, Family Training etc. to help the child develop appropriately.

**Evaluations:** Providing full evaluations to assess child's skills and development.

### NURSING HOME TRANSITION AND DIVERSION (NHTD)

Waiver services to help individuals who need nursing-home level of care safely remain home and avoid nursing home placement.

**Service Coordination (SC):** Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

**Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA):** Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

**Environmental Modifications (EMODS):** Provides Internal and external physical adaptations to the individual's home, that are necessary to assure the health, welfare and safety of the individual and avoid institutionalization.

**Vehicle Modification (VMODS):** Modifications to a vehicle that is used to improve the individual's independence and access to services and supports in the community.

**Assistive Technology:** Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

### TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

Waiver services to help individuals who had a traumatic brain injury.

**Service Coordination (SC):** Provides coordination to the individual in gaining access to needed waiver and Medicaid State Plan services, as well as other local, state, and federally funded educational, vocational, social, and medical services.

**Community Transitional Services (CTS) / Moving Assistance (MA):** Provides moving assistance with packing and transporting individual's possessions and furnishings when he/she must be moved from an inadequate or unsafe housing situation to a viable environment.

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**Assistive Technology:** Provides durable medical equipment and supplies for the individual to increase their level of independence, safety, and functional limitations.

### SENIOR DINING/SOCIAL DAY PROGRAM (SHNOIS CHAIM)

Providing: Daily onsite lunches and social/ educational activities for community seniors (Orange County only).

## HAMASPIK CHOICE

### MLTCP:

Providing: A managed long-term care plan (MLTCP) approved by New York State.

## HMO/INSURANCE

### ABA

Behavior modification services for children with autism.

**Social Group:** ABA service delivered in a group setting.

**One on One:** ABA service delivered on a one-on-one basis in the child's home or community.

## LHCSA - HAMASPIK HOMECARE

### PERSONAL CARE SERVICES

Our PCA/HHA assist individuals with personal care needs, activities of daily living, and light housekeeping. They are extensively trained, and screened, and are supervised by RN.

### SUPPORT SERVICES

Our HCSS Certified Aides assist those enrolled in the NHTD or TBI Medicaid Waiver Programs with oversight and supervision, in addition to personal care services.

### CDPAS/CDPAP

As an alternative to traditional homecare, this program empowers the client to hire, train, and set the schedule of their personal assistants (PA). The PAs may be family members and can even live in the same home.

### NURSING SERVICES

Providing: skilled observation and assessment - care planning - paraprofessional supervision - clinical monitoring and coordination - medication management - physician - ordered nursing interventions and skilled treatments.

### TRAINING

Providing: free PCA training and competency testing for those interested in a home care career.

## NYC HCR

### ACCESS TO HOME

Providing home modifications for people with physical disability.

## NYSED SERVICES

### ACCESS VR

Assist individuals to achieve and maintain employment and to support independent living through training, education, rehabilitation, and career development.

### PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT

Employment planning and support services that provide assistance for individuals to obtain, maintain or advance in competitive employment or self-employment.

## NYSHA

### ARTICLE 16 CLINIC

Providing: Physical therapy · occupational therapy · speech therapy · psychology · social work · psychiatry · nutrition

### TRAINING SESSIONS

Providing: SCIP · CPR and first aid · orientation · MSC CORE · AMAP · annual updates · Com Hab/ Respite · Family Care · Supported employment

### CENTRAL INTAKE

Providing: The first contact for a person or family in need of Hamaspik services

### THE HAMASPIK GAZETTE

Providing: A bilingual monthly newspaper keeping the community up-to-date on all major news in medicine, public health, disability, hospitals, senior care, and general Hamaspik news.

## OMH

### ADULT HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for Adults with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

### CHILDREN HEALTH HOME CARE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Intensive, comprehensive care management for children with chronic condition(s) and/or mental health issues at greater risk for relapse and/or lack of care.

### ADULT HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible adults over the age of twenty one.

**Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment:** Support and treatment to achieve functional improvement and stability, while working to attain the personal goals in a community setting.

**Family Support and Training:** Family training and support to engage the family in the treatment planning process and provide them with emotional and informational support to enhance their skills to assist in the recovery.

**Psychosocial Rehabilitation:** Assists with rehabilitating functional deficits and interpersonal or environmental hardships associated with the behavioral health condition.

**Empowerment Services-Peer Support:** Peer-delivered services designed to promote skills for coping with and managing behavioral health symptoms, while utilizing recovery-oriented principles.

**Habilitation:** Assist to acquire and improve skills such as: communication, self-care, socialization, mobility, etc. to successfully reside in home and community-based setting.

**Intensive Supported Employment:** Assists to obtain and keep competitive employment.

**Prevocational Services:** Prepares for employment, developing strengths and soft skills that contribute to employability.

**Transitional Employment:** Strengthens the work record and skills toward the goal of achieving assisted or unassisted competitive employment.

**Ongoing Supported Employment:** Ongoing follow-along support when holding down a job.

### CHILDREN HCBS SERVICES

Behavioral Health Home and Community-Based Services for eligible children from birth to twenty one.

**Prevocational Services:** Designed to prepare a youth (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work, volunteer work, or career exploration. Prevocational Services are not job-specific, but rather are geared toward facilitating success in any work environment.

**Caregiver Family Support and Services:** Teaches skills to caregiver/family's that will enhance their ability to care for the child/youth in the home and/or community.

**Community Self Advocacy Training and Support:** Provides family and caregivers with techniques and information not generally available so that they can better respond to the needs of the Individual related to their disabilities.

**Community Habilitation:** Provides assistance with learning social skills, daily living and health related duties by working with the individual on goal-oriented tasks.

**Supported Employment:** Designed to prepare youth with disabilities (age 14 or older) to engage in paid work.

**Planned Respite:** Provides short-term relief for the individual's family/caregiver while supporting the individual's mental health, substance use and/or health care goals.

**Day Habilitation:** Provides assistance with learning social and daily living skills in a certified agency setting.

●► NYSHA NEWS

# Behind the Scenes at Tri-County Care Intake: The Team, the Tech and the Touch that Gets You—and Gets You Approved for Care Coordination

It all begins with the call.

And in 25 counties across New York State, Tri-County Care's enrollment specialists—known in-house as Intake Specialists—get hundreds a day.

Some callers will be remarkably informed.

But most will be confused about what the OPWDD is and how to get its services.

Tri-County's Intake Specialists will first determine that the individual in question is eligible for those services under Medicaid, the health plan for the poor and people with disabilities.

(If Medicaid isn't in place, the caller is referred to Tri-County Care's Entitlements Team, which starts the process of obtaining Medicaid.)

The Intake Specialists then go to the next step: eligibility documents needed for OPWDD determinations. Specialists walk callers through the full needed list, how and where to get them—and what each is.

And if a caller's first language isn't English, Tri-County fields a team fluent in eight others—including Spanish, Yiddish, Creole and even Bengali and ASL (American Sign Language).

(A live translation hotline is also available for any other languages needed.)

At the very first call, each caller's name and basic info is saved and filed in the customer-relationship management (CRM) software used across Tri-County Care.



On an average day, Tri-County Intake staffers will spend considerable time maximizing the customer-tracking made possible by that software.

They'll call one parent to ask if they got their application packet in the mail (and if they signed and sent it back).

They'll return a message left by a second.

And they'll follow up with a third on scheduling a child's psychological or social evaluation.

All that real-time tracking results in one bottom line: No wait list. Inquirers and applicants are never left hanging.

Throughout it all, every applicant email, phone conversation or face-to-face meeting is recorded and tracked by the software.

This allows any Intake staffer to "read" any other staffer's caseload "like a story line," explains Regional

Intake Specialist Mimi Singer, should one staffer be out or on vacation. "We can continue the next chapter."

The software also accommodates Tri-County's regional staff meetings—weekly reviews at which supervisors and teams ensure that no applicant is left behind anywhere in the process.

"We pride ourselves on being as thorough and efficient as possible," says Regional Intake Specialist Hannah Fikes—juggling and following up on applicants at all stages of enrollment as the software supports them in doing, including ensuring that calls are returned.

"Callers never wait more than a day," she points out.

"It gives me great satisfaction to assist struggling families," says Ms. Singer, asked for the best part of her job.

"Every time a person gets enrolled, we celebrate!" adds Regional Intake Specialist Tress.

Both sentiments are echoed by Hannah Fikes.

Asked for the most satisfying part of doing Intake, she describes applicants who call in with tales of being "lost in the system for years," not knowing that there were available resources for their loved ones—and getting them through the entire process, from Medicaid to OPWDD eligibility and finally to Tri-County Care. "So it really is gratifying!"

To apply for Care Coordination services, call Tri-County Care at 844-504-8400 or visit [TriCountyCare.org](http://TriCountyCare.org).

●► HEALTH NEWS

# Cleveland Clinic CIO Personally Testifies to Wonders of Modern Medical Technology

**Chicago, Illinois** — To make the case for technology in medicine, just ask the chief information officer (CIO) of one of the best hospitals in the country.

To better make that case for technology in medicine, you might want to ask any recent heart-attack patient how much biomedical tech was involved in treating him.

Better yet, ask the chief information officer (CIO) of one of the best hospitals in the country after his recent heart attack.

Speaking at the Becker's Hospital Review 10th Annual Meeting, held recently in Chicago, Cleveland Clinic CIO Ed Marx said that not only can digital medicine improve and enhance patients' lives, but deserves credit for saving his own.

Mr. Marx, who is also a perfectly healthy and avid athlete, shared how he was struck by a totally unexpected heart attack in April 2018 while running a race.

He was first diagnosed in the event's medical tent by EMTs who were using

a portable electrocardiogram that connected to a smartphone.



A VIEW OF TECH FROM THE TOP: FOR CLEVELAND CLINIC CIO ED MARX, IT'S PERSONAL

"[Without the digital monitoring device,] I may have stayed in that medical tent a long, long time before they figured out what was wrong," he said.

Next, electronic images were sent ahead of him to the hospital while he was en route, allowing the ER team to determine an operating plan before he even got there.

Mr. Marx survived, and recovered from a stent procedure, within 90 days, all thanks to digital technology, he said—which also included daily near-real-time monitoring of his heart's condition thanks to medical software on personal portable devices.

## Hamaspik Gazette

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# Happening in Health Today

## MULTI-STUDY ANALYSIS: SMILING DOES MAKE YOU HAPPIER

**Knoxville, Tennessee** — Ancient wisdom has long said that smiling works its magic from the outside—that by taking the action of smiling (or any positive action, for that matter), you can make yourself feel better on the inside.

So, does smiling get you up when you're feeling down? Do your emotions drive your actions—or do your actions drive your emotions? In other words, do you feel your way into acting good, or do you act your way into feeling good? Psychology isn't so sure.

To get to the bottom of it, researchers at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville looked at what other researchers had found on whether smiling actually makes a difference.

They reviewed no less than 138 studies from the past half-century that had analyzed whether facial expressions like smiling can affect your mood. In the studies were a combined total of over 11,000 people worldwide.

Their conclusion? According to the massive analysis, smiling *does* in fact make people feel happier—and that scowling makes people feel angrier and frowning makes people feel sadder.

## INAUGURAL MOST-PRESCRIBED U.S. DRUGS LIST RELEASED— SUGGESTING OVERWEIGHT UNDERACTIVITY

**Santa Monica, California** — Prescription discount company GoodRx has released its inaugural quarterly report on the ten drugs most commonly prescribed in the United States.

According to the report, the #1 most-prescribed drug for 2019 thus far is Lipitor, a cholesterol-lowering statin—followed by Synthroid, which counters an underactive thyroid gland.

If those two are any indication, too many Americans have too much cholesterol due to excess weight and associated poor diet and health—as well as a too-sedentary lifestyle;

natural hormones made by the thyroid help maintain normal mental and physical activity levels.

As for the rest of the Top Ten? In descending order, they are: Prinivil and Zestril (high blood pressure); Neurontin (seizure prevention/shingles painkiller); Norvasc (high blood pressure); Vicodin and Norco (opioid/non-opioid combo severe pain reliever); Amoxil (antibiotic); Prilosec (stomach acid reducer); Glucophage (high blood-sugar controller); and Cozaar (high blood pressure).

The report is based on GoodRx's thorough analysis of U.S. drug prices and fill rates. It finds that, in the first

three months of 2019, the ten most commonly-prescribed drugs were generics that cost less than \$30 for a one-month supply.

## EXPERIMENTAL NEW DRUG GIVES HOPE TO PARENTS OF KIDS WITH RARE ANGELMAN SYNDROME

**New York, New York** — Angelman syndrome is a childhood disorder whose symptoms range widely in type and severity; it primarily affects movement, speech and sleep. It affects just a few thousand U.S. kids.

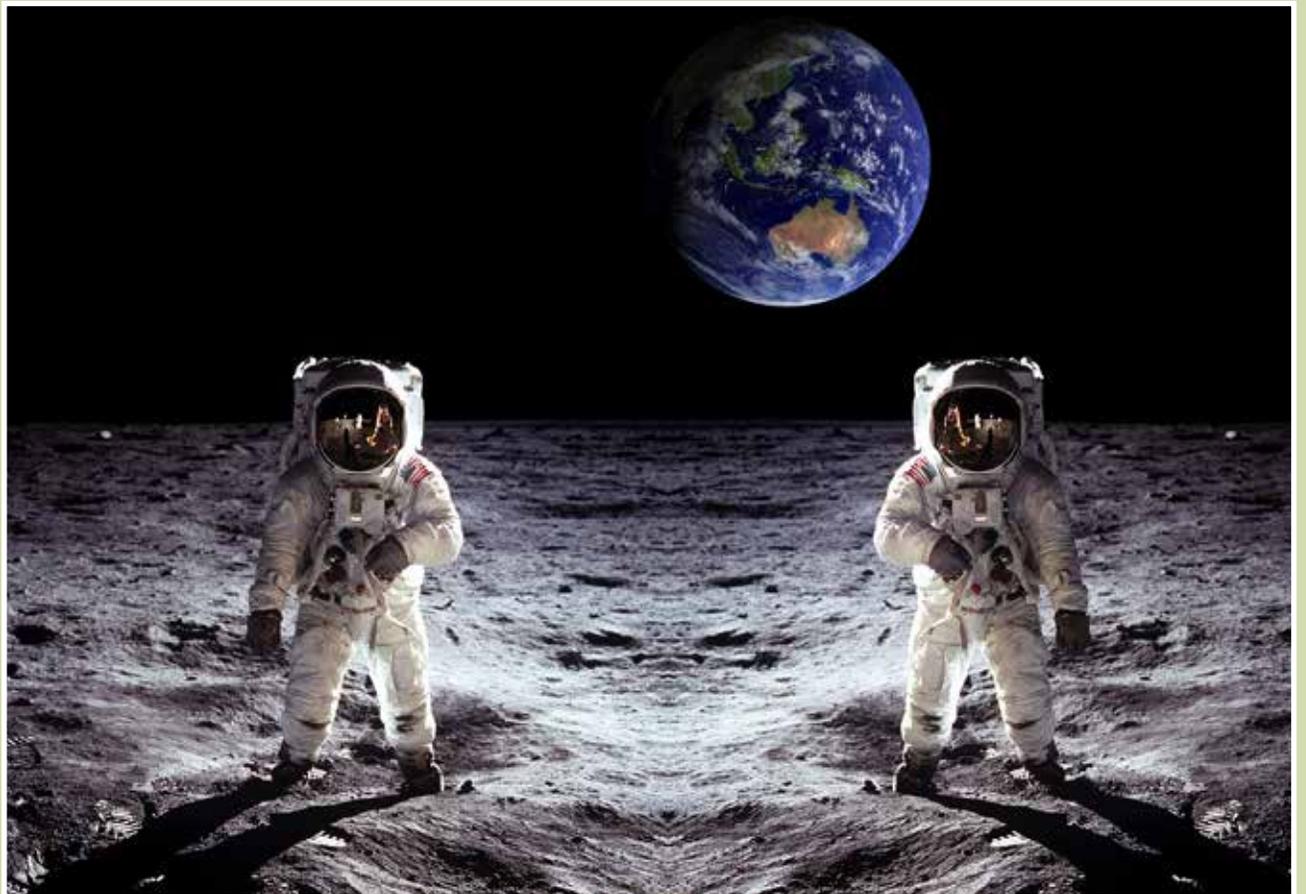
By cold, clinical specific numbers,

the experimental drug OV101 it hasn't done too well thus far. But as far as the overall picture is concerned, Ovid Therapeutics' new product is a groundbreaker.

That was the picture emerging from the recent annual meeting of the American Academy of Neurology (AAN) in Philadelphia, where OV101 was picked as one of three breakthrough drugs with the most promise.

A quick backgrounder: OV101 was tested on 88 patients with Angelman, who were given either the drug or a placebo. It only improved one of 17 specific measures and is still waiting for FDA approval.

So what did the AAN's top neurologists see that a scientific study did not? The Clinical Global Impressions of Improvement (CGI-I): a holistic seven-point scale doctors use to score whether patients are generally improving. And while the kids in Ovid's study didn't make specific improvements in sizable numbers, they did show signs of overall improvement on the CGI-I. ★



## NASA TWINS STUDY: BODY CHANGES OVER TIME IN SPACE

**Washington, D.C.** — A newly-completed comparison health study is quite literally out of this world: It was conducted on Mark and Scott Kelly, who are not only identical twin brothers but also NASA astronauts.

The NASA Twins Study began in March of 2015, when Scott Kelly began his fourth and longest space mission—commanding the International Space Station (ISS) for 340 days.

With one in space and the other on Earth, the

genetically identical men were closely, frequently and simultaneously tested—later producing a trove of medical information that NASA hopes to use for future long-term space missions.

Among the key findings of the NASA Twins Study are: a year in space caused Scott Kelly's carotid artery to thicken; reduced his cognitive abilities upon return to Earth; as well as structurally changed his *telomeres*, the microscopic "caps" at the ends of each cell's chromosomes. ★



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TOGETHER

● ► NYSHA NEWS

# Introducing: Hamaspik Theragen!

## “We Want to Make Sure that Families Feel Taken Care Of!”

*A Gazette Q&A with Upstate Regional Director Mrs. Shaindy Weisberger on the All-New Hamaspik Theragen Clinic*

*The Hamaspik family of agencies, and the New York State Hamaspik Association (NYSHA) parent organization standing behind it, doesn't just meet existing community demands—it also proactively preempts sure-to-rise community demands. As part of its ongoing mission of positive responsiveness and flexibility, NYSHA has rebranded its NYSHA Clinic “Article 16” therapy center as Hamaspik Theragen: a new name for new-and-improved therapeutic services, more grassroots outreach and a community flagship attracting and retaining the finest professionals. Gazette writer Mendy Hecht spoke with Upstate Regional Director Mrs. Shaindy Weisberger for a thorough discussion on all things Hamaspik Theragen.*

### The Hamaspik Gazette: Why “Hamaspik Theragen”? What does that mean?

**Mrs. Weisberger:** The word “Theragen” comes from “therapy” and “regenerate.”

### HG: What changes are you making besides the name?

**MW:** At the same time that we are rebranding the clinic, we're focusing on outreach and of course we are always improving different aspects of the clinic; both internally and the way in which we serve the community.

### HG: Who is Hamaspik Theragen's target audience?

**MW:** Anyone who has graduated school aged 18 to 21 and above. We welcome older people, too! We want to help as many people as possible. They must have OPWDD eligibility. We want to avoid a gap in therapeutic supports between graduation and beyond: Whatever services they were getting from the Department of Education will be provided for them at the clinic. It's especially important to note that there are two reasons for school graduates to continue therapy: One, to keep progressing, and two, to maintain their current level of ability. All the effort the educational system puts into students with special needs can be lost if therapy doesn't continue. So our staff has experience and really works well with this population—that's something we focus on when we hire staff; we get it!

### HG: What services does Hamaspik Theragen provide?

**MW:** Well, first, it's important to note the difference between a “regular” physical or occupational therapist, etc., who might treat someone who had a stroke or is just getting out of a cast, or recovering from an injury or accident, and ours. At Theragen, our PTs, OTs, etc. specialize in the I/DD population and know best how to work with people who have special needs.

So for adults 18 and up who are out of school, we provide OT, PT, SLP,

nutrition, psychiatry, psychological evaluations, and social work. For anyone younger than that—meaning, teenagers and children with disabilities—they can also receive psychiatry services and psychological evaluations but not any therapy, unfortunately. We get a lot of clients for evals, and while they're here, we'd love to see them receiving some related services as well.

### HG: What is your most popular or demanded service?

**MW:** Psychiatry and physical therapy.

### HG: Can you give me an example of a typical success story?

**MW:** After working with women at Hamaspik's Day Hab in Rockland County for an extended period, our speech therapists were ready to take it to the next level. They wanted to continue providing services but with added excitement and knowledge. They worked with each individual on a customized presentation. Lots of work went into this project. The women chose topics of interests and did months of research to produce some amazing presentations.

You know, sometimes people have the attitude to therapy that “you come in, you leave, and that's it.” Therapy at the clinic is often very maintenance-based. But now, the women were working towards an exciting goal, not just managing or mitigating an existing condition and it was an extremely positive experience for all involved.

### HG: What has been the clinic's biggest success so far?

**MW:** Just growing and meeting the needs of the people. We're working a lot on outreach. We're talking to schools. We're talking to transition counselors. They pass our info on to families, and a lot of them say, “I didn't know that an Article 16 [therapy clinic] existed!” When that happens, the more people we service and reach out to who wouldn't have been serviced otherwise, then I feel I accomplished something.

Another point is the flexibility we give to families. To the best of our ability, we

try to accommodate families' schedules, including providing early morning or late evening hours.

### HG: What if any background in disability services did you have when you started with NYSHA—and how will that help the people to be served by Hamaspik Theragen?

**MW:** Well, I worked at Hamaspik of Orange County for two years as an MSC [Medicaid Service Coordinator—ed.]. For the past four years, I've been doing

the clinic. I have a Masters in Special Education, and I have family members doing BCBA [Board Certified Behavior Analysis, a popular therapy for children on the autism spectrum—ed.]. I want to make sure that families feel taken care of! We'll try to have as many conversations and meetings as possible to figure out what they need. ★

*For more information or to obtain services from Hamaspik Theragen, please call 845-655-0600.*

## Evaluation and Therapy: What Hamaspik Theragen Does

When it comes to Hamaspik Theragen, the first thing people need to understand is that there is *evaluation* and there is *therapy*, notes Upstate Regional Director Mrs. Shaindy Weisberger.

“People need to know who is eligible for an evaluation and who is eligible after that for therapy,” she says. “A child suspected of having I/DD can get an evaluation at Hamaspik Theragen, but not therapy.” At any New York State “Article 16” Clinic like Hamaspik Theragen, only adults who have aged out (typically at 21 but as early as 18) of disability school services can get therapy.

But anyone can get an evaluation.

In fact, the evaluation is the gateway not just to the therapy provided at Hamaspik Theragen, but to the world of disability supports and services provided by the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and its many non-profit partners in the community. These partners include the Hamaspiks of Kings, Orange and Rockland.

Evaluations are also necessary to get Care Coordination for those actual disability supports and services from CCOs like Tri-County Care, which is a subsidiary of NYSHA. Care Coordination provides independent

advocates to qualifying individuals with I/DD; the advocates then get them the supports and services they need from the non-profits that suit them best. Care Coordinators work for new non-profits that were created last year by New York State that are called Care Coordination Organizations (CCOs).

So, if the individual in question gets evaluated at Hamaspik Theragen and qualifies for OPWDD supports and services, and/or for Care Coordination, the individual can then also get therapy services at Hamaspik Theragen—if he or she is an adult.

Ditto for any adult individual who's already in the system—anyone who got evaluated long ago and qualified for OPWDD services. That individual can naturally turn to Hamaspik Theragen for therapy services.

“Where Hamaspik Theragen comes in here is with two things,” Mrs. Weisberger elaborates. “One, we get individuals referred to us by other agencies or when parents call us directly, and our psychologists give them evaluations so that they can eventually get OPWDD services. And two, for adults who have disabilities and are already in the OPWDD system, we provide them with a wide range of therapies that they could benefit from.” ★

# Not just a service provider.

Hamaspik Theragen is dedicated to providing individualized care for members of the I/DD community. We provide life-changing care for a variety of OPWDD-eligible individuals—from those who have just graduated school to experienced seniors. Visit us for world-class competence, professionalism, and positive encouragement that result in newfound confidence and pride of progress.

Therapy  
Centered  
Around  
You.



Nutrition Services



Occupational Therapy



Physical Therapy



Speech Therapy



Social Work & Counseling



Psychiatry Services



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▶ HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK



## Happenings around Hamaspik

### Common Grounds



**IN THEIR PLACE:** AT BAIS SUREH'S CAMP, SPACIOUS BUNKHOUSES EMBRACE A SPRAWLING LANDSCAPE—AND CAMPER AND STAFF EMBRACE THEIR ACHOSAINU SISTERS

### Dedication is in the House



**IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE:** CARING LIVES WITHIN EVERY HAMASPIK INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA), INCLUDING THE 61ST ST. BRIDERHEIM SHOWN HERE

## For Four Summer Weeks, Joining the Mainstream Camp Achosainu Academy Students Spend Season at Bais Sureh's Upstate Site

During the school year, the Brooklyn-based Bais Sureh (Sarah's House) private-school system educates close to 1,000 girls of all ages.

And during the summer, at its sprawling campgrounds in the upstate Catskills, it engages in education, too—just of a different sort.

That fact came to the fore this past August, as a group of high-functioning young women with Hamaspik of Kings County's Achosainu Academy day program joined Bais Sureh's campers for a full month of mainstream overnight camping activities.

The fact that they have intellectual disabilities, whether visible or not, was at most of minor consequence—in fact, hardly noted at all.

And as far as disability integration and mainstreaming goes, isn't that the idea? For the campers and staff of Bais

Sureh—not to mention the campers and staff from Hamaspik—it sure was!

For nearly a month, the girls enjoyed a full-fledged, mainstream overnight camp experience—complete with counselors, head counselors, daily activities and meals together with the rest of the camp, and, of course, a bunkhouse of their own.

For well over a week, the Achosainu (which means “Our sisters”) contingent excitedly shopped, packed, and otherwise planned for their grand departure upstate to camp, which commenced on the last day of July.

It was the end of one hot summer month.

But it was the beginning of another.★

*For more information about Achosainu, please call Hamaspik of Kings County at 718-387-8400.*

## Hospital Staff Praise Hamaspik Team for Exemplary, Extraordinary Patient Care Resident of Hamaspik Kings' 61st St. Supported through Complex Facial Surgery

“I've been on this unit over 20 years, and what I saw yesterday, I don't remember ever seeing in my career—a group-home team providing such a high level of care, with so much care, heart and devotion!”

So stated a State Island Hospital department supervisor to Yossi Moskovits, Manager of Hamaspik of Kings County's 61st St. Briderheim residence, as Mr. Moskovits recalls the phone conversation.

It had all begun the previous morning, when a 61st St. resident underwent surgery at Staten Island Hospital.

That procedure began at 6:10 a.m., when Hamaspik of Kings County IRA Nurse Judy Schwartz, RN and 61st St. Briderheim Direct Support Professional (DSP) Yehudah “Yidy” Teichman accompanied the resident into the surgery center in the wee hours of the morning.

Considering Nurse Schwartz's attentive presence, the supervisor assumed she was the patient's mother, not a diligent, devoted and professional

Hamaspik nurse. Mr. Teichman was equally impressive.

With the surgery concluding uneventfully and successfully, the young man was discharged that very afternoon.

A hospital nurse called the next morning with the standard follow-up questions. The gentleman was doing fine, Mr. Moskovits gladly reported.

The nurse then asked if the manager could hold for a minute. Moskovits obliged. The supervisor then got on the phone.

The aforementioned accolades, and more, ensued—including that she had never seen group-home surgery patients with such consistently patient and caring staff from intake through discharge. But for Hamaspik, it was just another day.★

*For more information about Hamaspik Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in Kings County, including Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs), please call 718-387-8400.*

● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK

## Forshay Summer Voyage Begins with Bumper Boats, Ends with Lake Boat Tour

Ask David “Dudi” H., a resident of Hamaspik of Rockland County’s Forshay Biederheim residence, anytime for what kind of trip he likes most, and he’ll tell you: “The boat!”

Indeed, before embarking on recreational excursions of any significant length, Dudi will consistently opt for water-borne craft of any type, says Forshay Home Manager Mrs. Fischer.

And this time was no different.

Over a two-day vacation to the disability-friendly Chalet Hotel in upstate Woodbourne, Dudi and his fellow residents visited a hands-on family farm—where, among other things, they rode on-site bumper boats.

The following day was marked by a local trip to the regional Bailiwick Animal Park and Riding Stables in Catskill, where they got first-hand looks at a range of exotic creatures—including an American alligator and even a South American llama undergoing a live shearing. (“The amount of wool coming off it was unreal!” remarks Mrs. Fischer.)

With the park’s equestrian facilities

on hand, some of the gentlemen got to ride the gentle beasts, too. (Horses are famously sensitive to individuals with special needs.)

Following lunch and a return to the Chalet, the Forshay contingent enjoyed the hotel’s pool for a pleasant afternoon swim.

The second and last day of the trip was spent in two places. One group of “boys” chose to visit the Norwalk Aquarium in Norwalk, Connecticut... while the other, including Dudi, selected Monticello, New York’s Starlight Marina—where he and his fellow Forshay “crew members” practically sailed away on a boat-powered voyage of summertime fun.

They look forward to the season’s water rides all year, reports Mrs. Fischer. And with the thick of summer upon them, they sure didn’t miss that boat. ★

*For more information about Hamaspik Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in Rockland County, including Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs), please call 845-503-0200.*

## Helping Light Up Lives, Quite Literally Day Hab Visits Candle Factory

To those who love them most, they are the light of their lives.

But on a recent summer morning, the gentlemen who regularly attend Hamaspik of Rockland County’s Day Habilitation (Day Hab) program got to help light up other people’s lives.

Literally.

That’s what happens when you visit a candle factory, of course—especially if you help that candle factory pack up its life-lightening wares, too.

At the wax candle manufacturing facility of Ner Shava, Inc., located in New York’s upstate Highland Mills just off Interstate 87, the gentlemen positively lit up (pun intended) upon seeing first-hand how the candles that play such a recurring role in Jewish religious life are made.

For well over an hour, staff safely showed the gentlemen how the molten raw material is mixed and otherwise prepared for pouring into molds. They got to see an industrial machine dubbed the (self-explanatory) “Candle-Matic” in

action, turning masses of hot wax into hundreds of neatly formed and rapidly-cooling candles, wicks and all.

Once at room temperature, the tall wax cylinders were ready for packaging.

The “boys” were all too happy to harvest the freshly-made candles off their rows of racks, surrounding long work tables to stack them neatly into boxes from which they’d be sold off the shelves of retailers near and far.

They even got to take retail-ready complete candle packages home!

The start of the sacred Shabbos at Friday sundown, and its end a good 25 (or more) hours later, and the ushering in of the several joyous holidays around the year; these are all marked with the kindling of candles—and now, the gentlemen felt even more connected to this vital part of their community’s collective life. ★

*For more information about Day Hab, please call Hamaspik of Rockland County at 845-503-0200.*

### Not Missing the Boat



GIVING SUMMERTIME A BUMP: MAKING THE ROUNDS OF THE BUMPER BOAT POND



WELL, “WATER” YOU KNOW! THE FORSHAY CREW IN GOOD SPIRITS OUT ON THE LAKE

### A Bright Idea



ILLUMINATING EXPERIENCE: HAMASPIK OF ROCKLAND COUNTY MEN’S DAY HAB’S VISIT TO A WORKING BRINGS FIRST-HAND FAMILIARITY WITH MANUFACTURING TO LIGHT



LIGHT DUTIES: THE GENTLEMEN INSPECT FRESHLY-FORMED CANDLE PRODUCTS



SHINING FACES: STOCKED TO GO HOME WITH THEIR HAND-PACKED SOUVENIRS

# The Autism Update

*News and developments from the world of research and advocacy*

## AUSTRALIAN AIRLINE WELCOMES WOMAN WITH DOWN SYNDROME AS FLIGHT ATTENDANT FOR A DAY

**Mackay, Australia** — Chalk one up for disability employment and inclusion for one Australian airline.

Low-cost national carrier Jetstar, which services Australia and the greater South Pacific, reached out to 25-year-old Georgia Knoll, who has Down syndrome, and her family, after a video of Ms. Knoll acting as a flight attendant got major publicity.

The airline invited her to work as a flight attendant on an actual domestic flight. After that, Ms. Knoll's dream came true.

Outfitted in a Jetstar uniform, the employee-for-a-day assisted with greeting passengers, led a safety demonstration and served passengers

on a 590-mile flight from Brisbane to Mackay.

According to reports, Jetstar's employees said it was a joy working with Knoll for the day.

"Georgia is so full of life and is great with our customers, she was such a fantastic addition to our team and we all felt so lucky to have her spend the day with us," one flight attendant was quoted as saying.

## CDC: AUTISM RATES OF NJ FOUR-YEAR-OLDS UP 44 PERCENT FROM 2010 TO 2014

**Newark, New Jersey** — According to data by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the percentage of four-year-olds in New Jersey with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) rose 44 percent between 2010

and 2014.

The numbers come from the CDC's Early Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, which since 2000 has been surveilling ASD prevalence among eight-year-olds in seven communities across the U.S.

According to the latest data, 2.84 percent of New Jersey children aged four years old were identified in 2014 as having ASD—an increase over 2010, in which 1.97 percent were identified as such.

Several factors may explain why ASD rates have apparently risen for the Garden State.

For starters, the type of data available could have led to New Jersey overestimating its ASD rates. But greater awareness and detection of ASD

in recent years could also be leading to more kids getting diagnosed.

## "REACTOR ROOM" EVENTS GIVE AMBITIOUS YOUNG PEOPLE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

**Houston, Texas** — A Houston-based non-profit called Spectrum Fusion aims to match young people with autism with big-business moguls from several industries who can fund or otherwise facilitate their career or business dreams.

The panel-like program has participants who have autism, dubbed "Reactors," pitch themselves and/or their ideas before a group of "Activators." Spectrum Fusion calls this program the Reactor Room.

Reactor Room events are currently being held only a few times each year. Since the program's launch in 2017, eight Reactor Rooms have taken place.

Most importantly, the events have opened up viable job opportunities to a number of presenting "Reactors"—and opening the eyes of the business community to the largely-untapped work potential of people on the spectrum.

## FAMILIES WITH BRAIN-CONDITION HISTORIES TEND TO HAVE AUTISM: STUDY

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — New analysis of years of health data on well over a half-million children suggests that kids in families with a history of brain conditions are at increased odds of having autism.

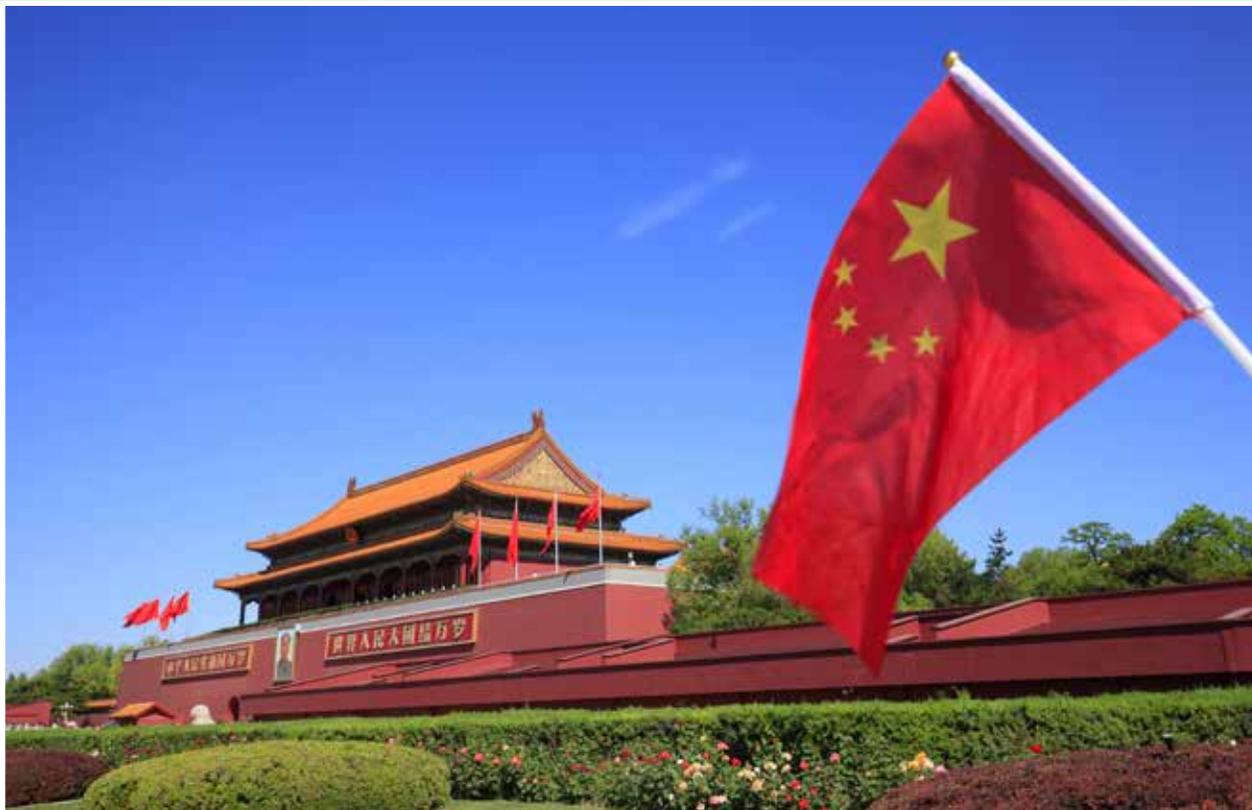
The research was conducted by Philadelphia's Drexel University.

It analyzed the Stockholm Youth Cohort, an ongoing study of children born in that Swedish city—reviewing records on over 556,000 typical children and just over 10,000 with autism.

The study found that kids with a first-degree relative (sibling or parent) with a brain condition other than autism have up to 4.7 times the usual odds of having autism.

It also found that they have up to 7.6 times the odds of having both autism and intellectual disability.

Other studies have reported similar trends. Those studies have found that a child's odds of having autism increase if she has a sibling with autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or intellectual disability, or a parent with schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder or anxiety. ★



## NEW CHINESE AUTISM RATES INDICATE IMPROVING AWARENESS, PREVIOUS NEGLECT

**Xiamen, China** — According to the most recent data, one in 59 kids has autism in the United States, arguably the world's most developed country. But now, research on children's autism prevalence in China, one of the world's most-powerful and fastest-developing countries, finds that there, about one in every 100 children have the condition.

There are several reasons for the disparity, according to researchers at the Xiamen, China-based Star Kay Bridge Research Centre for Children with Autism.

It wasn't until 1982 that autism was even recognized

in China. Secondly, earlier prevalence estimates accounted only for children with severe autism. What's more, many Chinese parents and doctors overlook autism traits like speech delays because of the country's cultural belief that bright children speak late.

The research was based on parental surveys sent home with schoolchildren ages six through ten in three Chinese cities. It found that millions of children with autism in China may be going without needed services, behavioral therapy and educational support. ★

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● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Hamaspik of Rockland County Direct Support Staff Ride Waves of Appreciation



**A FRIENDLY PORT: EMBARKING ON A CRUISE TO REMEMBER AND RECHARGE**



**EVERYONE HAS A SEAT AT THE TABLE: CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ALL**



**FUELING APPRECIATION: SERVING THOSE WHO PUT IN A YEAR OF GOOD SERVICE**



**A NOTE OF APPROVAL: EMCEE ROTENSTREICH MAKES A MUSICAL POINT**

If you've ever worked as a New York State-certified Direct Support Professional (DSP), then you know that the joys and rewards of the job are only matched by its challenges.

All too often, it's not easy—the patience, the equanimity, the grace under fire needed to interact one-on-one with people who are innocent of any ill will behind any adverse behavior.

And that's just on a single average day.

Try doing it day in and day out, and you just may find yourself asking the full-time DSP, "How do you do it every day?"

Yet do it every day is what Hamaspik DSPs do—and with a palpable love and fierce loyalty that has earned them, and their agency, the repeated respect of auditors and authorities at every level.

If anyone deserves appreciation, it's them.

And that's why Hamaspik of Rockland County's administration recently showed appreciation to the cadre of dozens of hardworking employees who form the backbone of the agency: the DSPs who staff its group homes, Day Habilitation (Day Hab) programs and After-School Respite (ASR) program.

Departing from the parking lot of Hamaspik of Rockland County's main office in the middle of Monsey, the group of employees rode a charter bus from the Hudson Valley to the World's Fair Marina in Flushing, Queens—where they boarded the Skyline Princess.

For the next several hours, as a glorious July sun set on a beautiful and balmy blue sky, that sleek multi-deck boat was the site of songs, games and other camaraderie-building group

activities.

In attendance were the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) who work day in, day out at Hamaspik of Rockland County's Arcadian, Concord, Forshay, Grandview and Wannamaker Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs).

Those residential program DSPs were joined by their day program counterparts: the DSPs of Hamaspik of Rockland County's flourishing, successful and ever-popular Day Habilitation (Day Hab) and After-School Respite (ASR) programs.

The festivities began as the craft wended its way from the marina. Spirits rose as it motored past La Guardia Airport, affording guests the uncommon thrill of planes landing nearly overhead.

Men sat side by side on deck and sang popular traditional melodies—joining voices against the inspiring natural backdrop of sun, sky and water.

Later inside the main ballroom of the boat, as it slowly plowed its way south on New York's famed East River past Manhattan's storied skyline, Hamaspik DSP and event emcee Yosef Chaim Rotenstreich hosted a rollicking "game show" of sorts.

Using screen-based graphics on a giant monitor and his own wit, Mr. Rotenstreich led fellow guests through a series of amusing multiple-choice questions about their line of work that had everyone laughing and otherwise interactively involved.

As the sun set, the boat passed under the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges, giving the crowd unsurpassable photographic opportunities, with many pulling out cameras to capture the rich twilight hues fronted by the picturesque and

evocative spans.

By the time the Skyline Princess had turned around and was headed back north to its point of origin, there had already been that immeasurable yet perceptible recharge in the good cheer and motivation among the staff members. They may have boarded as hardworking and devoted staff who could be forgiven for the occasional sense that their work was not acknowledged—but they came

away feeling hailed and saluted for everything that they do (which at Hamaspik is a lot!).

Upon return to the Queens dock, guests shortly disembarked, returned to their cars, went home, and showed up for work the next morning.

It may have been another day at Hamaspik. But, still riding waves of well-earned appreciation, the Hamaspik of Rockland County DSPs evinced a new bounce in their step. ★

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► PUBLIC HEALTH AND POLICY NEWS

# Pharmacy Giant CVS Health to Open 1,500 HealthHub Clinics Nationwide by late 2021

Woonsocket, Rhode Island — If national pharmacy chain CVS Health has its way, people coast to coast won't be walking into their local branch to fill prescriptions or buy soap and shampoo, but to consult with a medical professional on managing their diabetes, too.

According to a plan announced this summer, CVS Health will be opening some 1,500 HealthHub stores across the country by the end of 2021.

According to CVS, the HealthHubs are the company's redesigned health-focused concept stores that have space dedicated to helping customers manage chronic conditions like diabetes, hypertension or asthma.

Each HealthHub will feature an expanded health clinic with a lab for blood testing and health screenings. They'll also feature wellness rooms



**SPEARHEADING U.S. RETAIL HEALTH: 'HEALTHHUBS' WILL BE PART OF THE NEW WAVE**

equipped to handle yoga classes and seminars.

The first three CVS HealthHub locations opened this year in Houston,

Texas. The company plans more in Atlanta, Philadelphia, southern New Jersey and Tampa by the end of 2019—as well as another one in Houston.

The HealthHub expansion is part of the company's shift—and, in fact, the entire healthcare industry's shift—to retail health. Walk-in clinics are increasingly replacing or augmenting the traditional doctor's office or hospital visit, with such centers constantly popping up on urban streets and suburban shopping centers alike.

"Our goal is to fundamentally transform the consumer health experience for the millions of Americans we interact with every day, while creating value for our patients, members, partners, and shareholders," said Larry J. Merlo, President and Chief Executive Officer of CVS Health. ★

👩‍🍳 **HEALTHY EATING**

<h2 style="color: #008000; margin: 0;">SUGAR SNAP PEAS</h2>	<p><b>MEDIUM</b>   YIELDS: 6 SERVINGS</p> <p>PREP TIME: 0:15</p> <h3 style="color: #008000; margin: 0;">Snap Pea Salad</h3> <p><b>INGREDIENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1lb fresh sugar snap peas, cut in 1/4 inch</li> <li>• 1 purple onion, sliced</li> <li>• 1 can corn, drained</li> <li>• 1 box grape tomatoes, halved</li> <li>• 2 tablespoon fresh lemon juice</li> <li>• 2 tablespoon olive oil</li> <li>• Salt and pepper to taste</li> <li>• 2 tablespoon sesame seeds</li> </ul> <p><b>DIRECTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place all ingredients in large bowl and toss together</li> </ul>	<p><b>EASY</b>   YIELDS: 4-6 SERVINGS</p> <p>PREP TIME: 0:05   READY IN: 0:25</p> <h3 style="color: #008000; margin: 0;">Green Peas Roasted Snap Peas</h3> <p><b>THIS RECIPE CAN BE DONE WITH FRESH OR FROZEN SNAP PEAS.</b></p> <p><b>INGREDIENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1lb snap peas</li> <li>• 1 tablespoon olive oil</li> <li>• 1 teaspoon salt</li> <li>• 1/2 teaspoon black pepper</li> </ul> <p><b>DIRECTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preheat oven to 420°</li> <li>• Spread snap peas out on lined baking sheet</li> <li>• Drizzle with oil and season with salt, pepper</li> <li>• Roast for 20 minutes, stir halfway</li> </ul>	<p><b>EASY</b>   YIELDS: 4-6 SERVINGS</p> <p>PREP TIME: 0:05   READY IN: 0:25</p> <h3 style="color: #008000; margin: 0;">Simple Snap Peas</h3> <p><b>THIS RECIPE CAN BE DONE WITH FRESH OR FROZEN SNAP PEAS.</b></p> <p><b>INGREDIENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1lb snap peas</li> <li>• 1 onion, diced</li> <li>• 1 red pepper, diced</li> <li>• 1 tablespoon olive oil</li> <li>• 1 teaspoon salt</li> <li>• 1/2 teaspoon black pepper</li> <li>• 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder</li> </ul> <p><b>DIRECTIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sauté onion till golden</li> <li>• Add snap peas and red pepper</li> <li>• Season with salt, pepper, garlic powder</li> <li>• Cover; simmer for 15-20 minutes or till desired tenderness reached</li> </ul>
	<p><b>CHEF'S TIP:</b></p>		
	<p>If properly sealed and stored in the freezer, sugar snap peas can last over a year.</p>		
	<p><b>BENEFITS:</b></p> <p>Sugar snap peas contain many vitamins that benefit the entire body: their high fiber content can help keep your digestive system functioning properly, and they're an especially good source of soluble fiber, which helps regulate blood sugar levels to help maintain healthy weight. Sugar snap peas are also low in calories: one cup contains just 67 calories!</p>		

# Public Health and Policy News

practice of allowing medical device makers to conceal millions of reports of harm and malfunctions from the general public.

According to a statement, the FDA will be opening past records to the public within weeks.

The existence and breadth of the obscure program was revealed this past March by an investigation by Kaiser Health News (KHN), a leading industry outlet. According to KHN, the program had been launched some 20 years ago—and “was so little-known that forensic medical device experts and even a recent FDA commissioner were unaware of its existence.” It had also collected some 1.1 million reports since 2016 alone.

Most of the reports in the non-public program involved cosmetic medical implants, implantable cardiac defibrillators, pacemakers and tooth implants.

Going forward, according to KHN, device makers will be required to file individual reports describing each case of patient harm related to a medical device.

## FOLLOWING INVESTIGATION, FDA TO CLOSE PROGRAM THAT HID REPORTS ON FAULTY MEDICAL DEVICES

**Silver Spring, Maryland** — The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that it would be closing down its controversial “Alternative Summary Reporting” program.

The federal agency said it would also be ending its decades-long

## OVER 500 DRUG PRICES RISE IN EARLY 2019: REPORT

**Santa Monica, California** — According to a new report by drug price-tracker and discounter GoodRx, over 500 drugs saw price hikes at the beginning of 2019, including some generic drugs rising



**A PRICEY PILL TO SWALLOW:** A NEW REPORT SAYS DRUG PRICES ARE RISING IN 2019

as much as 3%. The average price-hike across all 500 items was 2.9%.

The report comes as prescription drug pricing remains one of the biggest healthcare issues in current politics, with both state and federal officials working on the issue. Alex Azar, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has made lowering drug prices a key agenda issue.

The report also lists the 20 most-expensive drugs in the United States—all of which are over \$25,000 a month. Horizon Pharma’s Actimmune, an immunosuppressant, tops that list at over \$52,000 a month.

## CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE REPORTS ON WHAT ‘SINGLE PAYER’ HEALTHCARE COULD LOOK LIKE

**Washington, D.C.** — Much time, energy, planning and consideration have been granted to “single-payer”—a system of healthcare in which a single payer (the federal government) would pay all doctors, hospitals and other healthcare bills. That money would come from taxes and go from the government directly to caregivers; patients would pay nothing (other than taxes).

According to a report released by the independent Congressional Budget Office (CBO), changes to the healthcare system would primarily depend on how any single-payer system is designed.

But according to a summary of the CBO report by *Becker’s Hospital Review*, single payer would mean three key things:

1. Substantial uncertainty on the part of all participants, both patients and caregivers, in terms of what would happen to the private insurance industry;

2. The question of coverage for 11 million undocumented immigrants; and

3. Costs, which could climb from the \$3.5 trillion the U.S. currently spends on healthcare to up to \$32 trillion over the course of a decade.

## STUDY ASSOCIATES STRONGER LIFE PURPOSE WITH LONGER LIFE

**Ann Arbor, Michigan** — According to a new University of Michigan survey published in *JAMA Current Open*, respondents reporting a strong life purpose—which the questionnaire defined as “a self-organizing life aim that stimulates goals” —were less likely to die (and specifically, of cardiovascular diseases) than those who did not.

The correlation was found after researchers analyzed questionnaires of nearly 7,000 American adults between the ages of 51 and 61. They found that respondents without a strong life purpose were over twice likelier to die between 2006 and 2010.

Researchers also found that the association between low life-purpose level and death remained true regardless of socioeconomic class, gender, race, or education level.

Most strikingly, researchers also found that the association appears to be more important for decreasing risk of death than drinking, smoking or exercising regularly.

“Just like people have basic physical needs, like to sleep and eat and drink, they have basic psychological needs,” says Prof. Alan Rozanski of New York’s Icahn School of Medicine, who was not involved in the research. “The need for meaning and purpose is No. 1,” he added.

“It’s the deepest driver of well-being there is.” ★



**SINGLE PAYER, MULTIPLE CHALLENGES:** NEW CBO DIRECTOR PHILLIP SWAGEL; A RECENT CBO REPORT SAYS ‘SINGLE-PAYER’ HEALTHCARE IS DOABLE BUT HIGHLY COMPLEX

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# In the Know

## ALL ABOUT... OSTEOPOROSIS

Information sources:  
Mayo Clinic, International  
Osteoporosis Foundation  
(IOF)

Osteoporosis (porous bone) is a disease in which the density and quality of bone are reduced.

Osteoporosis causes bones to become weak and brittle—to the extent that a fall or even bending over or coughing can cause a fracture. Osteoporosis-related fractures most commonly occur in the hip, wrist or spine.

Bone is living tissue that is constantly being broken down and replaced. Osteoporosis occurs when the creation of new bone doesn't keep up with the removal of old bone.

Osteoporosis affects men and women of all races. But white and Asian women—especially older women past child-bearing age—are at highest risk. Around the world, one in three women and one in five men 50 and up are at risk of osteoporosis. But the good news is that medications, healthy diet and weight-bearing exercise can help prevent loss of bone and strengthen weak bones.

### OVERVIEW

From the moment of birth until young adulthood, bones are developing and strengthening—and are constantly changing throughout life. Bones are at their most dense in the early 20s, a point medically called *peak bone mass*.

But as a person ages, some of the bone cells begin to dissolve what is called *bone matrix*—a process called *resorption*. At the same time, new bone cells deposit *osteoid*—a process called *formation*. This constant process is together known as *remodeling*.

In osteoporosis, old bone is lost faster than new bone is grown. As a result, bones get porous, brittle and prone to fracture. As bones get more porous with age, fracture risk greatly increases. This bone loss occurs silently and progressively—often with no symptoms until the first fracture hits.

The most common fractures occur at the hip, spine and wrist. Of particular concern are vertebral (spinal) and hip fractures. Vertebral fractures can result in serious consequences, including loss of height, intense back pain and deformity (sometimes called Dowager's Hump).

A hip fracture often requires surgery and may result in loss of independence, or worse.

How likely osteoporosis will develop depends partly on how much bone mass the person attained in youth.

The higher the peak bone mass, the more bone the person has “in the bank” and the less likely he or she is to develop osteoporosis with age.

Symptoms include: back pain, caused by a fractured or collapsed vertebra; loss of height over time and/or stooped posture; and bone fracture that occurs much more easily than expected.



### RISK FACTORS

#### Basics

- Gender. Women are much likelier to develop it
- Age. The older one gets, the greater the risk
- Race. People of Caucasian or Asian descent are at highest risk
- Family history. Having a parent or sibling with osteoporosis puts one at greater risk, especially if a parent experienced a hip fracture
- Body frame size. People with small body frames tend to have higher risk because they may have less bone mass to draw from with age

#### Hormone levels

Osteoporosis is more common in people who have too much or too little of certain hormones in their bodies, including:

- Lower estrogen, which tends to weaken bone. Dropping estrogen levels in older women is one of the strongest risk factors for osteoporosis
- Too much thyroid hormone can cause bone loss, which can occur if the thyroid is overactive or if too much thyroid hormone medication is being taken to treat an underactive thyroid
- Osteoporosis has also been associated with overactive *parathyroid* and *adrenal* glands

#### Dietary factors

Osteoporosis is more likely to occur in people with:

- Low calcium intake. Lifelong low calcium plays a role in osteoporosis—low intake contributes to lower bone density, early bone loss and increased fracture risk
- Eating disorders. Severely restricting food intake and being underweight weakens bone
- Gastrointestinal surgery. Surgery to reduce stomach size or remove part of the intestine limits the amount of surface area available to absorb nutrients, including calcium
- Steroids and other medications. Long-term use of *corticosteroids* like

prednisone and cortisone interferes with the bone-rebuilding process. Osteoporosis is also associated with medications used to combat or prevent seizures, gastric reflux, cancer or transplant rejection

#### Medical conditions

Osteoporosis risk is higher with certain diseases, including celiac, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), kidney or liver disease, cancer, lupus, multiple myeloma, or rheumatoid arthritis

#### Lifestyle choices

Some bad habits can increase risk of osteoporosis, including sedentary lifestyle, excessive alcohol consumption, and/or tobacco use.

#### Complications

Bone fractures, particularly in the spine or hip, are the most serious complication. Hip fractures often are caused by a fall and can result in disability and even an increased risk of death within the first year after the injury.

In some cases, spinal fractures can occur even without falling. Bones making up the spine (vertebrae) can weaken to the point that they may crumple, resulting in back pain, lost height and hunched posture.

### DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis primarily involves testing for bone-density level. Bone density is measured by low levels of X-rays to determine the proportion of mineral in the bones. During this painless test, the patient lies on a padded table as a scanner passes over the body. In most cases, only a few bones are checked—usually in the hip, wrist and spine.

### TREATMENT

Treatment is often based on an estimate of the risk of breaking a bone in the next ten years using information

from the bone density test. If the risk is not high, treatment might not include medication, focusing instead on modifying risk factors for bone loss and falls.

For people at increased fracture risk, the most widely prescribed medications are what are called *bisphosphonates* like Actonel, Atelvia, Boniva, Fosamax and Reclast. Side effects include nausea, abdominal pain and heartburn-like symptoms—but are less likely to occur if the medication is taken properly. Intravenous forms of bisphosphonates don't cause stomach upset but can cause fever, headache and muscle aches for up to three days. It may be easier to schedule a quarterly or yearly injection than to remember to take a weekly or monthly pill, but it can be costlier to do so.

Bisphosphonate therapy for over five years has been linked to a very rare problem in which the middle of the thighbone cracks and might even break completely. Bisphosphonates also have the potential to affect the jawbone. Osteonecrosis of the jaw is a rare condition that can occur typically after a tooth extraction in which a section of jawbone fails to heal where the tooth was pulled. A patient should get a dental examination before starting bisphosphonates.

**Hormone-related therapies**

Estrogen can help maintain bone density—but estrogen therapy can increase the risk of blood clots, some cancers and possibly heart disease.

Alternatively, the drug Evista mimics estrogen's beneficial effects on bone density in older women, but without some of the risks associated with standard estrogen. Evista may reduce the risk of some types of cancer—but may also increase risk of blood clots.

**Other medications**

For those who cannot tolerate the more common treatments, or if those treatments don't work well enough, a doctor might suggest:

- **Prolia.** Compared to bisphosphonates, Prolia produces similar or better bone-density results and reduces the chance of all types of fractures. A Prolia shot is delivered under the skin every six months
- **Forteo.** This powerful drug is similar to parathyroid hormone and stimulates new bone growth. It's given by daily injection under the skin. After two years on Forteo, another osteoporosis drug is taken to maintain the new bone growth

**Alternative medicine**

Soy protein appears to have activity similar to estrogen on bone tissue. Some studies indicate that bone fracture risk is lessened in some women who consume higher amounts of soy protein. But soy

should be used with caution by women who have a family or personal history of certain cancers, and most available soy products have not been shown to reduce the chance of fractures.

Ipriflavone is a lab-made product based on a soy isoflavone. When combined with calcium, ipriflavone seems to prevent bone loss and reduce pain associated with spinal compression fractures.

**PREVENTION**

Good nutrition—especially getting enough calcium and protein—is primary for keeping bones healthy early in life, to best prevent weakened bones later in life.

Next is regular exercise, which helps keep the body's bone-building process healthy.

Later in life, it's vital to get screened for osteoporosis—before any symptoms of osteoporosis. See your doctor!

Finally, fall prevention, especially for seniors, is critical.

**Nutrition**

**Protein:** Protein is one of the building blocks of bone. While a lot of people get plenty of protein in their diets, many don't. Vegetarians can get enough protein from soy, nuts and legumes. Because older adults may eat less protein for various reasons, protein supplements should be considered.

**Calcium:** All people between 18 and 50 need 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day—rising to 1,200 milligrams a day for women over 50 and men over 70. Good sources of calcium include: low-fat dairy products; dark green leafy vegetables;

canned salmon or sardines with bones; soy products like tofu; calcium-fortified cereals; and orange juice. Consider calcium supplements if you find it difficult to get enough calcium from food, but consult a nutritionist—too much calcium has been linked to kidney stones.

**Vitamin D:** Vitamin D improves the body's ability to absorb calcium. You can get adequate amounts of vitamin D from sunlight. A good starting point for adults is 600 to 800 international units (IU) a day, through food or supplements. For people without other sources of vitamin D and especially with limited sun exposure, a supplement may be needed.

**Body weight:** Good body weight is not just good for general health—it's good for bones, too! Being underweight increases bone loss and fracture risk—while being overweight is known to increase arm and wrist fracture risk.

**Exercise**

Exercise can help build strong bones and slow bone loss. Exercise benefits bones no matter when you start, but you'll gain the most if you start young and continue throughout life.

Combine strength training exercises with weight-bearing and balance exercises.

Strength training helps strengthen muscles and bones in the arms and upper spine. Weight-bearing exercises—like walking, jogging, running, stair climbing, skipping rope, skiing and impact-producing sports—affect mainly the bones in the legs, hips and lower spine.

Balance exercises like tai chi can reduce risk of falling, especially with aging.

Swimming, cycling and exercising

on elliptical machines provide a good cardiovascular workout, but for specifically improving bone health, they're not as helpful.

**Screening**

Osteoporosis screening is recommended for all women by age 65. Some guidelines also recommend screening for men by 70, especially if they have health issues likely to cause osteoporosis. If a bone density test is very abnormal, or if the patient has other complex health issues, specialists may be recommended, including endocrinologists (specialists in metabolic disorders) and rheumatologists (specialists in diseases of the joints, muscles or bones).

**Prevent falls**

Wear low-heeled shoes with nonslip soles. Check the house for electrical cords, area rugs and slippery surfaces that might cause trips or falls. Keep rooms brightly lit. Install grab bars just inside and outside the shower door. Make sure it's easy to get in and out of bed.

**PROGNOSIS**

The good news is there are many steps that can be taken to prevent osteoporosis before it ever strikes.

Osteoporosis now a largely treatable condition and, with a combination of lifestyle changes and appropriate medical treatment, many fractures can be avoided.

Bottom line? Don't wait for osteoporosis before doing something about it! ★

**OSTEOPOROSIS**  
WORLDWIDE STATISTICS

**MORE THAN 8.9 MILLION FRACTURES ANNUALLY**

**1 IN 3 WOMEN OVER AGE 50 & 1 IN 5 MEN AGED OVER 50 WILL EXPERIENCE OSTEOPOROTIC FRACTURES**

**CALCIUM SOURCES**

- YOGURT OR KEFIR: 1 CUP 300 MG: 112 MCG (30% DV DV\*)
- RAW MILK: 1 CUP: 207 MCG (30% DV)
- CHEESE: 1 OZ: 224 MCG (OVER 22% DV)
- SARDINES (WITH BONES): 2 OUNCES: 217 MCG (21% DV)
- KALE (COOKED): 1 CUP: 246 MCG (24% DV)

**OSTEOPOROSIS STAGES**

- HEALTHY BONE
- OSTEOPOROSIS
- SEVERE OSTEOPOROSIS

HEALTHY BONE      OSTEOPOROTIC BONE

## Status Report

# Happening In Hospitals Today



### U.S. HOSPITALS TRAINING STAFF TO CATCH “CEO SCAMS”

**Idaho Falls, Idaho** — With “ransomware” and other such cyber-attacks on hospital information systems a still-growing threat, a growing number of U.S. hospitals are training staff to watch out for cyber-criminals’ newest tricks: “CEO scams.”

More hospital employees across the industry have been reporting getting malicious “phishing” e-mails disguised to look like they’re coming from the “C-suite”—from chief officers and their staff—but are really from computer hackers.

The newest iteration of hospital cybercrime depends on workplace psychology to work—with gullible employees responding proactively and professionally to what seems like a human request from a real higher-up, but which only gives impostors access to company records and financial data.

Idaho Falls, Idaho’s Mountain View Hospital is one such hospital that recently re-trained all staff on what to watch out for in an otherwise innocent-looking e-mail. Additionally, in an example of increasingly-typical U.S. hospital standards, Idaho Falls employees get annual e-mail training, with new employees getting security training upon hiring.

According to security experts, any suspicious-looking e-mail purportedly from a C-suite address should be



**KEEPING HOSPITAL IT SYSTEMS HEALTHY:** “CEO SCAM” E-MAILS ARE NEWEST THREAT

immediately deleted—as any legit message can be re-sent later.

“You can have the best security systems there are but there is still a person involved that can be talked into helping these attackers do what they want you to do,” Mountain View Hospital Director of Information and Security Shane Paynter recently told a local media outlet. “If it’s already gotten past the e-mail filters and the antivirus and everything else, the last line of defense is you.”

### IN MULTIBILLION-DOLLAR MEDICARE DISPUTE, SUPREME COURT RULES FOR HOSPITALS

**Washington, D.C.** — If you ran a hospital and—without notifying you—a healthcare plan changed what it would pay you for treating its members in your hospital, you’d probably sue.

That’s exactly what happened in *Azar v. Allina Health Services*, a case now

closed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 2014, Medicare—the federal health plan for seniors—lowered certain payments for specific hospital treatments without first announcing those changes. A group of hospitals filed suit.

The government replied that it legally didn’t need to announce those changes because they technically didn’t qualify as changes. The case went through several lower courts before arriving at the Supreme Court, which sided with hospitals in a 7-1 decision issued in early June.

“In 2014, the government revealed a new policy... that... reduced payments to hospitals serving low-income patients,” Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote. “Because affected members of the public received no advance warning... we agree with the court of appeals that the new policy cannot stand.”

### NEW YORK HOSPITALS FIGURE PROMINENTLY ON 2019 “100 GREAT HOSPITALS” LIST

**New York, New York** — According to leading hospital-industry outlet *Becker’s Hospital Review*, several of America’s 100 best hospitals are right here in the Big Apple.

On *Becker’s* newly-released “100 Great Hospitals” for 2019 are four New York City-based facilities. They are:

- The Hospital for Special Surgery, one of the county’s oldest orthopedic hospitals, and ranked the No. 1 hospital for orthopedics for nine consecutive years by *U.S. News &*

### World Report

- Mount Sinai Hospital, founded in 1852, named the No. 3 hospital in New York and home to New York City’s first geriatric emergency department
- NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, ranked the No. 1 hospital in New York by *U.S. News & World Report* for 2018-19
- NYU Langone Health, which in 2017 launched a virtual urgent care service giving thousands access to 30-plus emergency medicine physicians for minor conditions like flu-like symptoms and pink eye

### NEWYORK-PRESBYTERIAN’S NET INCOME CLIMBS 364.5%

**New York, New York** — New York City’s very own NewYork-Presbyterian hospital recorded net income of \$254.4 million in the first three months of 2019—up 364.5 percent year over year from \$54.8 million.

The hospital largely attributed the growth to higher investment returns.

At the same time, NewYork-Presbyterian saw total operating expenses in the first three months of 2019 climb to \$1.6 billion, up from \$1.4 billion for the same period last year. The increase was driven by salary and benefit costs, as well as an increase in medical and surgical supplies.

Other factors driving that new total were more patients, more surgeries, and the opening of the NYP David H. Koch Center, a 750,000-square-foot ambulatory care facility.

### RESEARCH: LONELINESS DRIVES HIGHEST ER USERS

**Dallas, Texas** — Patient data from Parkland Hospital, which operates one of the busiest U.S. emergency rooms (ERs), shows that loneliness is the top reason people repeatedly visit ERs.

Researchers with the Dallas-based Parkland Health and Hospital System studied ER patient records.

They found that one of the reasons their ER is so busy is because of repeat patients, or “high utilizers.”

In fact, they found that 500 Parkland ER visits came from just three patients over the course of one year.

Expanding their search for high utilizers to other hospitals throughout Dallas County, they also found that 5,139 ER visits were attributable to just 80 patients.

As a result of the research, Parkland Hospital is now deploying “intense case management” teams that include social workers and chaplains to help high-utilizer patients counteract their loneliness in their lives outside of the hospital.

Many of those patients have now significantly cut back on their ER visits, Parkland now says. ★



**SUPREMELY UNFAIR:** THE HIGH COURT OVERTURNED A MEDICARE HOSPITAL PAY CUT



# The Senior Care Gazette

News from  
the World of  
Hamaspik  
HomeCare and  
Senior Health

## For 12-Year-Old with Disability, Hamaspik HomeCare ‘Brings Group Home into Home’

*Monsey Family Benefits from Personal Care Aides (PCAs), Especially on Weekends*

“When we started, it was life-changing for us,” begins one Spring Valley mother, speaking to the *Gazette* about the aides her daughter with intellectual disability has been getting.

It’s been about ten months since Hamaspik HomeCare began sending personal care aides (PCAs) to her home for several hours a day.

For the young lady in question, it’s been a veritable lifeline of human interaction, a therapeutic window into an otherwise closed and colorless world without playmates or friends.

But for her devoted but overextended parents, and caring but overwhelmed siblings, the daily visits by Hamaspik HomeCare PCAs Joanne and later, Medjine, it’s been a game-changer.

In fact, as the mother sees it, it’s nothing less than having a classic Hamaspik group home right in the comfort of her own family’s residence.

Hamaspik HomeCare “brought the group home into my house,” she happily declares.

“I can oversee the care, without doing the physical work,” she elaborates, referring to the several daily hours of in-home one-on-one care that those outstanding Hamaspik HomeCare professionals provide her daughter. “It means that my daughter is getting the very best care possible, and we can remain one happy family.”

Mom sees life in black-and-white “before” and “after” terms, in fact. She digresses into the “before” era.

Their precious daughter was born with the genetic condition known as Trisomy 21, otherwise commonly known as Down syndrome—a common developmental/physical disability.

She is “on the spectrum”—meaning, she has autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

She can verbalize a few words, but generally does not speak. She does not walk well. She does not socialize. She



**PROFESSIONALISM, INSIDE AND OUT: THE STATE-OF-THE-ART HEADQUARTERS OF HAMASPIK HOMECARE IN UPSTATE SPRING VALLEY, NEW YORK, WHERE—AS AT EACH AGENCY OFFICE STATEWIDE—PRACTICABLE AND LIFE-CHANGING RESULTS ARE GIVEN**



does not play with anyone. She is 12 years old.

And up to under a year ago, Mother managed life by having the occasional visitor take her daughter out.

Then her daughter was approved for visiting personal care aides from Hamaspik HomeCare.

For 20 hours a week, those PCAs came into her home. But most importantly, they entered her daughter’s heart.

In fact, the precious little girl would practically jump for joy when Joanne would show up, approaching her to administer a loving hug—something

she’d never do to other visitors.

She would even verbally ask for “Joanne!”

Joanne, for her part, was only too happy to sit on the couch with her and walk through the child’s sensory stimulation exercises and activities. She would also lovingly feed her, bathe her and get her off to bed. Joanne even once took the girl to the store to get her glasses fixed.

Unfortunately, life was such that Joanne had to move on. Fortunately, Hamaspik HomeCare Scheduling Coordinator Rivky Weber didn’t waste time getting a move on.

Mrs. Weber tried to get the family an aide experienced in working with kids. She succeeded.

Mom specifically recalls the Hamaspik HomeCare go-getter saying, “I want it to work out, so I am going to make sure to get someone that has experience working with kids.”

“I felt like she knew exactly what my daughter’s needs were and tried to match somebody accordingly,” she gratefully reports—“not just sending new aides every day to try until it works.”

From the get-go, Medjine has been “really unbelievable,” enthuses the mother, describing the Hamaspik HomeCare PCA as “firm but nice—able to sit with her, hug her and love her.”

With the 20 weekly hours the family is now getting in in-house care for their beloved daughter and sister, members are able to leave the house. They are especially able to spend weekends enjoying Shabbos with family members.

“I’m the only one who understands her needs,” explains Mom.

But now, she can translate that understanding into action through the most caring of hands. ★

For Hamaspik HomeCare services, call 855-HAMASPIK (426-2774).



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