

# Bloomington Outlook

*April 2024*

From the desk of the Administrator...

**W**ishing you all a happy April! March was full of St. Patrick's Day festivities and a glorious and reflective Easter celebration that was felt throughout the campus. With spring finally arriving, along with the tulips and flowers starting to bloom, we will expect to see some movement on a few outdoor projects taking place. We will also be starting our renovation of the Commons assisted living. The season brings an exciting theme to life every year, focused on renewal and how beautiful change can be!

From now until November, whether we want to or not, we will also likely see more political ads as we prepare for the 2024 election. We obviously do not endorse a particular candidate or party, but would encourage you to keep in mind the needs of aging services when considering your vote. A few topics to keep in mind at the state and federal level include funding and other regulatory reforms to help improve quality, increase our workforce, and maintain access to senior care options.

Our reality is that by 2030, 1 of every 4 Minnesota adults will be over the age of 65. In the next five years, the state of Minnesota will have an additional 50,000 more residents who are over the age of 80 than we do today. When you look at this trajectory of increased need along with the shrinking workforce (as nearly 17,000 caregiver positions are vacant in senior living alone), it is a critical situation.

The provider association called LeadingAge Minnesota, that we are a member of, helps with our advocacy efforts impacting older adults. In 2023, we were pleased to see the state legislature pass some additional funding to support care centers and to increase funding for the Elderly Waiver medical assistance program. Unfortunately, much of the funding was 'one-time' payments so substantial reform and permanent funding increases have not yet occurred. The two main issues we would like to bring forward are the following:

## **Addressing the workforce crisis**

Our workforce is filled with compassionate and selfless individuals who provide incredible care for our seniors. These skilled professionals deserve better pay for the demanding work they do. Many caregivers are leaving long-term care for higher-paying, less stressful jobs. Please consider contacting your state legislator and ask them to expand and accelerate workforce pipelines to aging services careers, as well as increase funding for caregiver wages.

## **The state's responsibility to ensure access to quality care**

As care options continue to disappear across Minnesota due to workforce shortages, families are making incredible sacrifices to care for their older loved ones. Asking our seniors or their families to travel an hour or more to find care is unacceptable. The state must ensure families and communities can remain whole. Increased reimbursement and moving senior care to a priority issue is crucial.

- Justin Birkeli, Campus Administrator at 952-948-3012 or [jbirkeli@preshomes.org](mailto:jbirkeli@preshomes.org)

Sources: LeadingAge Minnesota—<https://www.leadingagemn.org/get-involved/policy/>  
The Long-Term Care Imperative—<https://ltcimperative.org/>

# Presbyterian Homes of Bloomington

## Spiritual care corner: Starting conversations about advance care planning

Who would speak for you about your health care options if you are unable to speak for yourself? How do you open a conversation about what matters to you and have a say in your health care? These are the questions for April 16 — National Healthcare Decisions Day, designated by the “Conversation Project” of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement.

In an era of increasingly complex medical care, we can’t afford to ignore life’s end, or to separate our medical decisions from our spiritual values.

Presbyterian Homes & Services is dedicated to helping you open this conversation about your wishes for care with your family, health care providers and with us. Our approach, “Honoring Choices,” offers encouragement and guidance for you to create a health care directive.

A health care directive is a document that informs others of your health care wishes. It allows you to

name a person who will assure that your choices are honored or decide for you if you are unable to decide for yourself. This document has legal authority. Physicians, health care providers and hospital staff are bound by law to follow your directives.

Honoring Choices helps you and your loved ones navigate these conversations focusing on your health goals, spirituality, and what it means to live fully while remaining realistic about end of life. It helps create the foundation of a care plan that’s right for you — a plan that will be available when the need arises.

Campus Pastor, Steve Hoffer, is hosting an “Honoring Choices” open house in the Chapel on Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> from 10:30am – Noon. Pastor Steve will be available to answer questions and will have “Honoring Choices” resources available for you. Contact Pastor Steve at 952-948-3064.

## PHS Foundation: The difference of a 501(c)3

Since its beginning, Presbyterian Homes & Services (PHS) was established as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Today, each PHS community also maintains its own 501(c)3 status, as does the Presbyterian Homes Foundation and Optage®.

Governance by a mission-driven board of directors, instead of profit-driven stakeholders, fuels the purpose of our organization. We believe that reinvestment of revenue back into PHS, rather than into the bottom line, creates a better place for residents to live. That’s one reason being a 501(c)3 non-profit organization makes all the difference.

Another difference is due to the generosity of our residents, family members, employees and friends. Every charitable gift received by the Foundation for PHS, your community and Optage is tax-deductible and impacts the lives of residents and employees in important ways. Even memorial gifts that honor a

loved one, or Shining Star gifts that recognize an exemplary employee, are allowed by the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) as tax deductions.

Gifts received throughout the year as cash, credit cards or stocks are acknowledged by letter after each gift is received. Some people choose to give charitably through their IRA distribution. Because this type of gift is not treated as income, income taxes are not paid on the distribution.

We are honored, as a non-profit organization, to serve residents, family members and employees, and we appreciate every gift that furthers this important mission. If you would like more information about memorial gifts, Shining Star gifts, IRS charitable deductions or to simply learn more about how you can make a difference, please call the Foundation at 651-631-6408. It really does make a difference!

# Presbyterian Homes of Bloomington

## Volunteering

**H**appy Volunteer Appreciation Month! We honor each volunteer as they generously give us the unique gift of their time.

Volunteers are the glue that holds our community together. They extend our capabilities and provide the extra care and hours of service that truly make a difference everyday for staff, residents and their families.

Volunteers who have visible roles or maybe the behind-the-scenes role: we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

We couldn't fulfill our mission without your support and dedication. The choice you make to volunteer provides a blessing to all.

## Volunteer highlight

**W**e have a special and maybe a little harry volunteer highlight this month, the Secondhand Hope!

Secondhand Hope is a program through the Bond Between rescue that focuses on senior outreach through companion pet visits. Their goal is to provide both humans and animals with comfort, socialization and companionship.

Secondhand Hope volunteers are consistently on PHS campus lifting spirits, encouraging, comforting and calming residents and staff. It's amazing they do all these great things. That's why Secondhand Hopes says, "Our heroes don't wear capes, they wear collars."

## Wellness zone: Parkinson's awareness month

**N**early one million people in the U.S. and 10 million people worldwide are living with Parkinson's Disease (PD). About 90,000 Americans are diagnosed with Parkinson's each year. It is the second most common neurodegenerative condition after Alzheimer's. The number of people with PD will increase substantially in the next 20 years due to our aging population.

### Quick facts

About 70% of people with PD experience tremors. PD symptoms often vary throughout the day, worsening with anxiety, fatigue or as medication wears off in between doses. Regular exercise can help manage PD symptoms and improve quality of life. It is common for people with PD to need adjustments to treatment as symptoms progress. Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that causes a gradual

loss of brain cells that produce dopamine, a chemical necessary for movement. As dopamine decreases over time, movement becomes more difficult for people with PD. Dopamine also affects mood and motivation. In addition to dopamine, Parkinson's changes several other brain chemicals.

People with PD can experience a wide range of complex symptoms, so building a team of healthcare professionals is key. This team may include neurology, physical, occupational and speech therapists and other specialists, including mental health professionals, a urologist or gastrointestinal doctor. To learn more about medications and other treatments for Parkinson's, visit [Parkinson.org/Treatment](http://Parkinson.org/Treatment).

-Lisa Teske, fitness director

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Presbyterian Homes & Services is a nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity employer serving older adults through community services, housing, and health care.

## Thank you, volunteers for making a difference every day

**S**t. Francis of Assisi famously said, “Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing you have received – only what you have given.” At Presbyterian Homes & Services (PHS), our vital corps of volunteers understands this better than most.

Although National Volunteer week is celebrated in the third week of April, PHS community recognition events are held from early April through May. Each of our campuses hosts tea, luncheon or other events to give a gracious thanks to those who serve year-round.

Volunteerism is one of the hallmarks of PHS. From the very beginning, local church members, children, service clubs, neighbors, resident family

members and staff have volunteered in every one of our communities. We are blessed to have a wide diversity of volunteers, some who are here once a year, and some who are with us every day, including our own residents.

These volunteers complete a variety of tasks — reading to residents, assisting with activities, tending gardens, delivering mail, running errands and helping with office projects. Our volunteers lighten the work of the staff and brighten the days of our residents.

If you are interested in volunteering, contact [volunteering@preshomes.org](mailto:volunteering@preshomes.org).

Please take time to thank a volunteer today!