


Connections

A Newsletter for the Members of Community Care



On the Job
with Michael

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Managing
Chronic
Illness in
Summer Heat

LEARN WHAT SYMPTOMS OF CERTAIN CONDITIONS GET AGGRAVATED BY HEAT AND SUN EXPOSURE AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP.

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Clinton Kicherer

Keeps Beating the Odds

Clinton's message to others who might be struggling with their own health issues: "Never give up; keep on trying and go for it. If you give up, that's when you fail. I never gave up."



Clinton Kicherer grew up in Wisconsin's north woods, in a town called Peeksville. His whole family worked in the woods and Clinton joined them at the age of nine. He and his brother would peel the Popple trees their father hauled out of the forest with horses.

Clinton, 75, has always worked hard. Working from an early age to help his family meant that there wasn't much time for schooling and Clinton never learned to read or write. This presents challenges when it comes to understanding money, grocery shopping, reading road signs, reading mail, and using the phone to call someone.

A few years ago, Clinton felt a lump in his neck, near his ear. He knew something was wrong. He told the doctor, but the doctor didn't believe him at first because he couldn't find the lump.

But the lump didn't go away, so Clinton asked for a second opinion. This time, another doctor found it.

Only, there wasn't just one lump. Doctors eventually removed 20 lymph nodes from Clinton's neck; all but two of them were cancerous. It turned out Clinton had Stage 4 colon cancer. Cancer specialists reviewed Clinton's case because of the unusual way it spread. It took weeks for the spe-

cialists to determine it had spread from his colon.

At the time, doctors gave Clinton a 20- to 25-percent chance to live. Those are not great odds. Clinton's care team from Community Care had an idea to help him understand his chances of fighting cancer, according to Shannon Miller, Clinton's nurse care manager.

Clinton understood that four quarters equals a dollar. So, presenting him with four quarters and explaining that one quarter was his chance of beating cancer and three quarters showed that cancer would win, was all the motivation he needed.

Clinton was determined to beat the odds. Five years later, Clinton's still here and happy to be alive and doing what he loves most, wood-working. But this wasn't Clinton's first brush with death.



When he was 16, Clinton had his first serious accident. He'd bought a new motorcycle and had only put on 300 miles. Riding one day, he pulled out onto the road and was hit head on by a car going 50 mph. After months of treatment

and rehabilitation, Clinton recovered and was able to walk again. Later, when Clinton was in his 40s, he had another serious accident; he took a corner too sharp on a scooter and crashed. You could say that luck has always been on Clinton's side.

"God wants to do something with me yet, he saved me both times when I had my accidents. When I had pneumonia, they didn't think I was going to pull through, but I did," Clinton said.

These days, Clinton gets around, but he's a little slower. He does his wood-working and he's a proud grandpa. When he's not working on a project, Clinton's usually watching "Gunsmoke," alongside his trusty sidekick, Max, his blind, 14-year-old Pug.

He still suffers from side effects of his chemotherapy, which at times can interfere with woodworking. However, it has not stopped him from creating an entire village, including small vehicles made of wood.

Clinton's message to others who might be struggling with their own health issues: "Never give up; keep on trying and go for it. If you give up, that's when you fail. I never gave up."



Join a Member Advisory Committee

Have you been to a Member Advisory Committee meeting?

Member Advisory Committees (MAC) give members a chance to share information that helps us to improve the services Community Care provides. We invite you, a family member, or a legal guardian, to attend one of our Member Advisory Committee meetings.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming Member Advisory Committee meetings:

Vliet PACE MAC (for members enrolled in our PACE program)

- Monday, July 17
- Monday, October 16

All meetings are scheduled from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Vliet Day Center, 3220 W.

Vliet, Milwaukee. If you wish to participate, but can't attend in person, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

Waukesha PACE MAC (for members enrolled in our PACE program)

- Tuesday, July 18
- Tuesday, October 17

All meetings are scheduled from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Waukesha Day Center, 1801 Dolphin Drive, Waukesha. If you wish to participate, but can't attend in person, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

Family Care/ Partnership MAC

(for members enrolled in our Family Care or Partnership programs)

- Wednesday, July 5
- Wednesday, October 4

All Family Care and Partnership MAC meetings are scheduled from 1 to 2:30 p.m. by telephone or Webex Meeting. These meetings are not held in person. To participate, please contact Halanna Lathon at 262-207-9416 for more information.

As a "thank you," each member or legal decision maker (LDM) who participates in one of our Member Advisory Committee meetings will get a \$20 Culver's gift card.

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Managing Chronic Illness in Summer Heat

Summer is the season we all look forward to here in Wisconsin. It doesn't last long, but while it's here we like to make the most of it.

Spending time outdoors is fun, but the warm weather can be risky for people with chronic health problems.

The sun and heat can worsen side effects for certain chronic conditions and can also cause problems like heat exhaustion, heat rash, or heat stroke.

In the summer, it is important to learn the signs and symptoms of a heat-related illness.

Chronic Illnesses and Heat-Heat and sun exposure can aggravate symptoms of certain conditions, including:

- Autoimmune diseases, like Lupus and rheumatoid arthritis
- Migraines
- Multiple sclerosis
- Rosacea

In some cases, chronic diseases may increase your risk for a heat-related illness because your body isn't able to cool itself down easily. You may be more at risk for heat-related illness if you have conditions like:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Poor circulation

Tips for Staying Safe During Hot Weather

If you or a loved one suffer from a chronic medical condition, follow these tips to avoid symptom flare-ups and heat-related illnesses:

Ask About Your Medicines

Certain medicines can worsen the effects of heat, especially medicines used to treat depression, insomnia, or poor circulation. Talk to your doctor about the medicines you're taking and whether they may increase your risk for heat-related illnesses.

Avoid Mid-Day Activities

Try to stay inside or in a cool place during the hottest part of the day, typically between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Limit activity to cooler parts of the day.

Stay Hydrated

Drink plenty of fluids, even if you're not thirsty. Avoid

drinking sugary drinks or alcohol.

Stay in an Air-Conditioned Space

If you don't have air conditioning, try spending a few hours at the library or mall to cool down your body temperature.

Use ceiling fans or portable fans to circulate air. When you shower, keep the water cool.



Stay Informed

Check your local news for high heat warnings and to learn about cooling shelters near you.

Use Sunscreen

If you spend time in the sun, apply sunscreen regularly. Sunburns can make it difficult for our bodies to cool down, which can increase our risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke.



Adapted from www.ameridisability.com

On the Job *with Michael*

Member: Michael Nichols
Age: 31
Employer:
Casey's General Store

It's cold inside the cooler at Casey's General Store in Burlington. It is 35 degrees to be exact. Just ask Michael Nichols. He knows. If you need proof, you only need to look at the extra layers he wears over his store uniform.

The cooler is where Michael spends most of his 3-hour shift restocking all the beverages at the gas station/convenience store where he's worked for the past 3 years.

"I like stocking. I stock the refrigerator and straighten the cooler," Michael said.

If you get a chance to see Michael in action, it's clear that it's a job he loves and by all accounts he's become a well-loved fixture at the store and in the community.

Michael's good with names and people just seem to remember Michael, whether it's the delivery guy who bumps into him out shopping or the nurse who calls out to him when he visits the doctor for a routine

check-up.

While you might not see him working away behind the cooler doors, if Michael comes out into the store, to sweep or mop, you can't miss him. He's 6-foot-2 and wears a smile that radiates throughout the store. If you're having a bad day, Michael is the kind of guy who will cheer you up.

"He is just so full of positivity," his manager, Rachel said. "I wish I had that kind of positivity."

This wasn't always the case. It took a while for Michael to find the right job.

Michael, who lives with his parents, Sharon and Stephen in Walworth County, enrolled in Community Care's Family Care program in 2012.

It was important for Sharon to help her son find a job and start working in the community.

"I wanted him to have the chance to work. People need to have the opportunity to be produc-

tive," Sharon said.

Michael, 31, first found work through Careers Industries. Eventually, with the help of his Care Manager Melissa Easley, Michael got connected with VIP Services in Elkhorn. Through VIP Services, Michael was paired up with Kim Brady, an employment specialist, and in 2020, he landed his job at Casey's.

Michael's is truly a success story. This year marks his 3-year anniversary with Casey's. He's been with the store since it opened.

Thanks to partnerships with providers like VIP Services in Elkhorn, members like Michael can find meaningful work in the community, where they are supported and given the tools that help them to be successful.

"This job has helped him mature mentally and emotionally. He does so much enjoy being out there and working," Sharon said. "It's been a good experience not only for Michael, but for me and for the community."

"This job has helped him mature mentally and emotionally."





5 Tips to Stay Motivated to Exercise

Being physically active is one of the most important things you can do each day to maintain and improve your health and keep doing things you enjoy as you age. Make exercise a priority with the following tips:

1 Find ways to fit exercise into your day. You are more likely to get moving if exercise is a convenient part of your day. Try exercising first thing in the morning. Combine physical activity with a task that's already part of your day, such as walking the dog or doing household chores.

2 Do activities you enjoy to make it more fun. Be creative and try something new!

3 Make it social. Find a virtual "exercise buddy" to help keep you going and provide emotional support. Take a walk during lunch with cow-

orkers. Try a dance class — aquatic therapy or hiking — it's up to you.

4 If there's a break in your routine, get back on track. Start slowly and gradually build back up to your previous level of activity. Ask your family and friends for support.

4 Keep track of your progress. Make an exercise plan and don't forget to reward yourself when you reach your goals. Keep track of your monthly progress to see improvement.

Source: National Institute on Aging

Sign Here _____ Creating your care plan is just the beginning

When you enrolled as a member of Community Care, you took the first step toward getting the long-term care that meets your needs.

By enrolling in one of the programs we offer – Family Care, Partnership, or the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) – you have started the process of identifying the goals you have for yourself and determining what services will help you achieve those goals.

All of this becomes part of your Care Plan. **A Care Plan is something care teams develop for every member of Community Care.** You and/or your legal decision maker are an important part of this process.

Not only do you help create your Care Plan, but you also must sign off on the

plan. By signing your plan, you show that you helped create it and that you agree with the plan.

Your care plan includes:

- Your physical health needs and your ability to perform certain tasks and activities (such as eating and dressing).
- Your strengths and preferences.
- Your personal goals.
- Your long-term care goals.
- The services you will receive.
- Who will provide each service.
- The things you will do yourself or with help from family, friends, or other resources in your community.

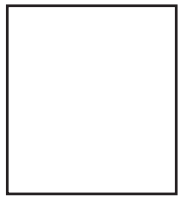
Members and/or their legal decision makers are responsible for signing their Care Plan in a timely manner, which is outlined in the Member Handbook members received when they enrolled. Your care team will remind you and get you the document for you to sign.

If you need a new Member Handbook, please ask a member of your care team, otherwise they are available on Community Care's website www.communitycareinc.org.

As a Community Care member or legal decision maker, you will meet with your care team at least every six months to review your Care Plan and determine if it is working for you.



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