

President's Message by Carl Seitz

Each day I come to work proud of the programs that Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare provides our member employers. LVBCH has led the way in developing affordable, cost-effective employee benefits, providing educational programs, and being a leading advocate for regional employer interests since 1980.

Of all the goals we have, perhaps none is more important than helping to improve healthcare quality and patient safety. This fall we have proved that our actions are greater than our words alone. We have sponsored two programs that bring together employers, providers, insurers, consultants, and educators around the topic of quality and safety (page 6):

- **Hospital Quality and Patient Safety: Provider and Employer Perspectives** on September 17.
- **To Err Is Human** patient safety documentary screening, in partnership with Lehigh University Healthcare Systems Engineering Program, on October 9.



We welcome the opportunity to work with our partners in achieving improved healthcare quality, patient safety and cost-effective management.

Internally, LVBCH is expanding our capabilities to provide healthcare programming to member employers. We recently hired Amanda Greene as Director of Operations (page 3). She comes to us from BENEFIT – Populytics at Lehigh Valley Health Network. She has experience in nursing, health education, data management and quality initiatives. Please join me in welcoming Amanda to our team.

Meanwhile, we continue to be dependent on the excellent guidance we get from members of our Board of Directors and various committees. Recently we honored retiring Board member **Myrna Rivera** of B. Braun Medical Inc., who has served as chair of our Health Care Purchasing Committee (page 4). We also held a special luncheon this summer to honor our generous and talented volunteers.

In providing education to our employers, we continue to be strengthened through our relationships with our partners, including Leapfrog (page 7), National Alliance (page 8), and Choosing Wisely (page 9). We benefit from our affiliations with excellent providers of member programs, such as Capital BlueCross and Geneia (page 5).

Finally, our most important relationship is with our member employers. *Everything we do* is to keep your organizations' bottom lines, and more importantly your employees and their dependents, as healthy as possible. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this shared goal.

New Members

Welcome New LVBCH Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members of the Coalition and encourage them to become active in Coalition activities:

- ❖ Luzerne County Community College
- ❖ SurgeonCheck, LLC
- ❖ Inperium Management Services

Upcoming Events

LVBCH and Lehigh University to Screen *To Err Is Human* Documentary

LVBCH will partner with Lehigh University Healthcare Systems Engineering Program for the October 9 Screening of *To Err Is Human*, an in-depth documentary about medical mistakes and preventable harms. The film, which will be screened at Lehigh University's Iacocca Hall, also highlights those working quietly behind the scenes to create a new age of patient safety.

The event will be followed by a reaction panel discussion. The panel will be comprised of **Leah Binder**, President and CEO of the Leapfrog Group, a national leader and advocate in hospital transparency (page 7), **Jennifer Anne Chambers**, MD, Capital BlueCross; **Marc Granson**, MD, SurgeonCheck; **Matthew McCambridge**, MD, Chief Quality Officer, Lehigh Valley Health Network; **Donna Sabol**, Chief Quality Officer, St. Luke's University Health Network; and **Terrill Theman**, MD, Adjunct Faculty of Lehigh University. **Scott Fair** of USI Insurance Services will moderate the panel. A brief reception will immediately follow the panel discussion.

Ana-Iulia Alexandrescu, Director of the Healthcare Systems Engineering Program and a Professor of Practice in the Industrial and Systems Engineering Department, said, "Medical mistakes and preventable harms is believed to cause as many as 440,000 preventable deaths each year and is considered by many to be the third leading cause of death in America. By screening this documentary, we hope to raise awareness about the importance of systems thinking and working together to eliminate medical errors." Registration is required.

[Register Now!](#)

Mark Your Calendar

- March 7 – Wellness Event with BeneFIT
- March 30 – Healthcare Symposium with Lehigh University Healthcare Systems Engineering Program
- April 3 – Dental Event with United Concordia
- May 2 – Annual Conference

LVBCH Welcomes Amanda Greene as New Director of Operations

Please join us in welcoming Amanda Greene, RN, BSN, MCHES. Recently, *News Notes* sat down with Amanda and asked her a few questions.



Amanda Greene

Q: Tell us about your background. Where did you work before?

Amanda: Most recently, I worked as the Wellness & Quality Specialist for BeneFIT – Populytics at LVHN, and before that as a Strategic Wellness Consultant working with organizations to develop customized, comprehensive wellness programs.

Q: What attracted you to this position?

Amanda: I've been lucky enough to be involved with the Coalition on its employee wellness program and as a member of the Education and Wellness Committee for many years. I was involved in developing the 2016 Wellness Award and the Leadership in Wellness Award in 2018. Through these experiences, I have been impressed by the Coalition's commitment to improving health in our community. Furthermore, the LVBCH team and members are wonderful – I'm looking forward to continuing to work with everyone!

Q: What is the most important asset that you bring to LVBCH?

Amanda: As a nurse and health educator, I have both a clinical and health education background, have been involved with quality and data initiatives, and have extensive experience in program design and development. I've also learned a lot about health insurance and the health care system, as well as how things like health literacy and social determinants impact health. My hope is that this background allows me to serve as an asset – to projects and to the Coalition and membership overall.

Q: What are your plans?

Amanda: Currently, I'm in the learning phase. I'm looking to absorb as much as I can and assess how to best be of value to the coalition. I'm interested in learning where there are opportunities to make updates that make sense – whether it's technology or processes – and how ultimately these updates add value and benefit the membership.

Q: Tell us about you personally.

Amanda: I grew up on a lake in Northern New Jersey. Over the past 10 years I moved to Pennsylvania and then into Bethlehem. I love living downtown with all the festivals, history, and amazing small businesses. In my free time I try to read as much as possible and enjoy going to movies and concerts. I try to stay active, either with barre classes – which are a mix of ballet, yoga, and Pilates – or with outdoor activities like hiking and kayaking as much as possible. I also really enjoy cooking. It's wonderful being able to get so many ingredients from local farmer's markets and pop-up stands.

Q: What's your advice for Coalition members?

Amanda: Become active in the coalition. Attend the educational programs – they have great topics with expert speakers. Learn more about all the outstanding purchasing programs available to members. Get involved any way you can and take advantage of all the Coalition has to offer. And please, make sure and say, "Hi" at an upcoming event – I'm looking forward to meeting you!

Coalition Updates & Announcements

LVBCH Recognizes Volunteers

The Coalition staff treated LVBCH volunteers to a luncheon on May 29 at Edge Restaurant in Bethlehem.

“The Coalition would not exist without the contributions of our outstanding volunteers,” said LVBCH President Carl Seitz. “We invite all employer members to learn more about our many committees including our Education & Wellness Committee, Health Care Purchasing Committee, and Membership and Communications Committee.”

“The depth of talent, knowledge and experience among the individuals who serve on our committees is exceptional,” said Amanda Greene, Director of Operations. “Prior to joining LVBCH, I served on the Education & Wellness Committee and benefitted greatly from the experience both personally and professionally.”

For more information, contact Donna Corsi, Director of Member Programs and Services, at dmcorsi@lvbch.com or call 610-317-0130.



Pictured L-R Standing: **Alison DeCleene** of B. Braun Medical Inc., **Valerie Lewis**, BSI Corporate Benefit, **Donna Corsi** (LVBCH Director of Member Programs and Services), **Nicholas Rizzotto**, Equinox Agency, **Kevin Davis**, Univest. Sitting: **Wendy Manarino** (LVBCH Business Manager), **Adrienne Nagy**, Crayola, LLC, **Benjamin Guerin**, St. Luke's University Health Network, **Barbara Bensinger**, B. Braun Medical Inc.

LVBCH Thanks Retiring Board Member Myrna Rivera for Her Service

LVBCH staff and Board members hosted a farewell dinner on June 27 at the Glasbern Inn in Fogelsville to honor retiring Board member **Myrna Rivera** of B. Braun Medical Inc.

“Myrna has brought extensive knowledge to both the Board of Directors and the Health Care Purchasing Committee,” said LVBCH President Carl Seitz. “She will be greatly missed. We wish her much happiness as she starts this new phase of her life.”



Pictured L-R Standing: **Donna Corsi** (LVBCH Director of Member Programs and Services), LVBCH Board members **Eileen Zielinski** of PPL Corporation, **Denise Moyer** of B. Braun Medical Inc., **Lori Young** of Crayola, LLC, **Bob Johnston** (LVBCH Chair) of East Penn Manufacturing, Co., **Jack Gross** (LVBCH Secretary) of Gross McGinley, LLP, **Jeannine O'Callaghan** of C.F. Martin & Co., Inc., **Wendy Manarino** (LVBCH Business Manager), **Carl Seitz** (LVBCH President). Sitting **Rachel Burger** (retired, formerly of LVBCH), **Paul Chackalovcak**, retired, formerly of Essroc Cement Corp., **Myrna Rivera**, **Joe Huxta** retired, formerly of Mack Trucks, Inc./Volvo, and **Christina Hostler** of kgb USA, Inc.

Coalition Events

LVBCH & Capital BlueCross Quarterly Employer Meetings

Capital BlueCross met with LVBCH employer groups on June 26 and August 28. In June, **Robert Muscalus**, DO, Medical Director – Capital BlueCross Client Analytics, provided a year-over-year utilization review of the nearly 90,000 members enrolled with Capital BlueCross through LVBCH. **Denise Harr**, MD, Capital BlueCross Senior Medical Director, discussed the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS) performance for those same Coalition members.

Based on the data, BlueCross recommends employer groups focus their wellness strategies on diet, exercise, and weight control with incentives driven by outcomes. Also, considerable savings could also be achieved by incentivizing members to use independent laboratories and ambulatory surgical centers in lieu of hospitals. Additionally, members and employer groups could achieve higher quality and lower costs by directing members to value-based primary care physicians, who are compensated for providing better outcomes rather than the number of patients they see. Benefit designs can be developed to drive members to these providers.

Capital BlueCross is now offering two new services for LVBCH employer groups:

- **Best Doctors**, a service that allows members to receive expert second opinions and treatment decision support. This option will be available in January.
- **Catapult**, which brings preventive care services to the worksite! Available now.

Talk to your Capital BlueCross Account Executive if you would like to offer either of these services.

Finally, Capital BlueCross wrapped up its campaign for **Loop**, a text messaging service that provides members with tips and features of their health plan. Easton Coach Company and Lehigh University had the highest percentage of members register. A member from each group was selected randomly to receive an iPad Mini.



Geneia Shares Theon® Updates at Quarterly Meeting

Geneia's Consulting Services Team met with LVBCH employer groups with access to the Theon® platform on September 11 at LVBCH headquarters. Theon® is Geneia's data analytics solution platform.

The team shared updates, including:

- The Theon® platform road map for the remainder of 2018 and through 2019
- An introduction to Geneia's new Chief Medical Officer, **Aurel Iuga**, MD, who discussed areas of focus for his team and Geneia's data scientists
- Common areas of interest for potential action
 - Refresh of the diabetes analysis
 - Low-cost, high-utilization and low-value services
 - Biosimilar medications

Geneia's Consulting Services team continues to have onsite, one-on-one educational sessions with employer groups. These personalized sessions have been well received by participating employers. LVBCH and Geneia are working together to use employer feedback to create the next phases of the consulting initiative.



Mental Illness and Substance Abuse Drive High Cost Medical Claims

Failing to identify employees and dependents with a behavioral health or a substance abuse problem and providing help may be costing your company more than you know, said **Joe Bosche**, Senior Vice President of Business Development, Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH). Bosche spoke at a July 17th LVBCH Broker Event: ***Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Stress – Impacts, Costs and Solutions*** at LVBCH Headquarters.

Referring to a sample company of 500 employees making an average \$150 per day, IBH calculated the productivity impact of employees with mental health issues (MH) and substance abuse (SA) totaled 1,729 lost days and \$324,113 in lost wages. Also, employees with MH/SA have significantly higher medical claims. Fortunately, with adequate mental health and/or substance abuse treatment, employees can recover. In fact, IBH has a high recovery rate for members with mental health and substance abuse conditions, including opioids. To see the slides from Bosche's presentation, click on the button below.

[Joe Bosche's Presentation](#)

Healthcare Quality Experts Explain Quality Ratings

The Chief Quality Officers of the region's largest health networks gave LVBCH employers a primer on quality ratings. **Matthew McCambridge**, MD, of Lehigh Valley Health Network and **Donna Sabol**, of St. Luke's University Health Network, spoke at the LVBCH September 19 Roundtable – ***Hospital Quality and Patient Safety: Provider and Employer Perspectives*** at DeSales University.

In a joint presentation, McCambridge and Sabol described differences among various hospital quality grading systems, such as Leapfrog, CMS Star Rating, US News and World Report, and IBM Watson. They also discussed the associated costs, citing a *Health Affairs* article that reported physician practices alone in the United States spend more than \$15.4 billion annually to report quality measures.

Another speaker, **Madeleine Biondoillo**, MD, of Premier Inc., a healthcare improvement company, explained that hospitals contract with third parties like Premier to benchmark claims data and participate in quality improvement initiatives. "We provide them with the quality data to make the right thing to do, the easy thing to do," she said. To view the slides, click on the button below.



L-R: **Matthew McCambridge**, MD, **Donna Sabol**, **Madeleine Biondoillo**, MD, and **Carl Seitz**

[Quality Presentation](#)

The event included a panel discussion moderated by LVBCH Board Chair **Bob Johnston** of East Penn Manufacturing Co. (standing). Panelists from L-R were: **Jeannine O'Callaghan**, C.F. Martin & Co., Inc.; **Denise Moyer**, B. Braun Medical Inc.; **Anthony DaRe**, BSI Corporate Benefits; **Jennifer Chambers**, MD, Capital BlueCross; and **John Bulger**, DO, Geisinger Health Plan.



Leapfrog Update

Leapfrog CEO to Visit the Lehigh Valley

Leah Binder, President & CEO of the Leapfrog Group will participate in the panel discussion following the October 9 Screening of *To Err is Human*, a documentary about medical errors (page 3.) Earlier in the day, Leah will join Coalition President Carl Seitz and several LVBCH Board members to tour Lehigh Valley Hospital–Muhlenberg in Bethlehem and St. Luke’s University Hospital – Bethlehem in Fountain Hill.



Leah Binder

Matthew McCambridge, MD, Chief Quality Officer, will lead the Lehigh Valley Hospital tour and **Donna Sabol**, Chief Quality Officer, will lead the St. Luke’s tour. During the tours, Binder will have the opportunity to learn more about the hospitals’ quality programs and meet with senior leaders of each health network.

In the afternoon, Binder will travel to Lehigh University for the screening, which is co-sponsored by Lehigh University’s Healthcare Systems Engineering Program. A reception will follow the event.



Hospital Acquired Infections Result in 90,000 Deaths Yearly

Each day in the United States, one out of 25 hospital patients contracts a healthcare-associated infection (HAI). This results in 90,000 deaths a year and billions of wasted dollars. Meanwhile, according to a new report published by [The Leapfrog Group](#) and analyzed by [Castlight Health](#), the percent of hospitals achieving zero infections has declined dramatically since 2015, indicating many patients are still at risk.

The survey examined five infections: Central Line Associated Blood Stream Infections (CLABSI), Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections (CAUTI), Surgical Site Infection after Colon Surgery (SSI: Colon), Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Clostridium difficile (C. diff).

“Given this disturbing trend in performance showing hospitals making less progress on the spread of healthcare-associated infections, it’s concerning that the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is proposing to decrease public reporting and transparency around infection rates and other measures of problems in hospitals. We urge all consumers to join with us in advocating for CMS to reconsider these changes,” said **Leah Binder**, President and CEO of Leapfrog. Binder continued, “Leapfrog and its purchaser members remain committed to getting this data voluntarily from those hospitals willing to be transparent with their data should CMS choose to move forward with their proposal.”

LVBCH President Carl Seitz added, “The Coalition encourages the hospitals serving our employer members to continue to self-report infections rates by facility and to remain committed to taking the necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection within their hospitals.”

[More Information](#)

[Read the Complete Report](#)

National Alliance's to Hold Annual Meeting: November 12-14



The Annual Conference of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions aligns thought leaders, policymakers, and key healthcare experts from across the country to share their insights and expertise. Interactive sessions center around emerging trends, innovations, and purchaser opportunities in the ever-changing healthcare marketplace. Each year, this event brings employers of all sizes and industries together to learn from one another, network with other healthcare stakeholders and learn about effective approaches to managing the health and wellbeing of their workforce from the leading innovators in healthcare and business. This 3-day event provides learning opportunities through interactive sessions, educational discussions, employer roundtables, demonstrations, and exhibits that all encourage networking sharing and learning.



This year's topics include innovative approaches and strategies to wellbeing, population health, employee empowerment, special sessions on healthcare policy, and updates on the AHCA along with other emerging healthcare topics.

[Agenda & Registration](#)

National Alliance Provides Action Briefs: Click on Picture



Mental Health



Value of Biosimilars



Rheumatoid Arthritis

St. Luke's Discourages Long-Term Use of PPIs

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) were first introduced in the United States in 1989 and quickly became the treatment of choice for gastric acid-related disease. Use of PPIs has improved treatment outcomes and minimized the need for surgery in peptic ulcer disease. Several PPIs, such as, Prilosec®, and Zantac®, are available in prescription and over-the-counter forms making them readily accessible.

Although PPIs are well-tolerated, long-term use is associated with potentially serious adverse effects which include pneumonia, fractures, diarrhea, and vitamin B12 deficiency. Long-term use of PPIs doubled in the U.S. from 1999 to 2012 and studies have shown that the number of adverse events doubled during the same period. In 2012, the American Gastroenterology Association (AGA) issued a *Choosing Wisely*® recommendation to reduce long-term acid suppression in patients with gastroesophageal reflux.

St. Luke's Care Network has adopted a practical approach to prescribing the lowest PPI dose for the shortest duration of therapy that is appropriate. Using its clinical data warehouse, St. Luke's has identified patients using PPIs on a long-term basis and has alerted their prescribers to consider initiating a discussion about reducing use. Resources for prescribers and patient education are available to help guide these discussions.



LVPHO/Valley Preferred Continues to Support Choosing Wisely

Lehigh Valley Physician Hospital Organization (LVPHO)/Valley Preferred endorses Choosing Wisely and encourages physicians and clinicians to talk about the initiative with their patients.

To accomplish this, the Choosing Wisely website offers lists of [Things Providers and Patients Should Question](#) representing recommendations from leading medical specialty societies. Free materials, including video resources, are available to help health care providers engage patients in the conversation.

In addition, LVPHO/Valley Preferred holds webinars for LVHN employees; recent topics include *Behavioral Economics* in July and *Taking Action on Overuse* in August.



Choosing Wisely Adds New Recommendations

- [American Academy of Nursing adds five new recommendations](#) concerning often routine treatment approaches that may not always be necessary or even in the best interest of patients
- [American Academy of Family Physicians suggests 20 things](#) physicians and patients should question
- [American Epilepsy Society recommends five things](#) physicians and patients should question

Guest Articles

A Consultant May Help Your Wellness Program Achieve Success

It's not easy for employers to begin or sustain employee wellness programs on their own. You may have started one, but you're not sure how to increase engagement. There are likely cultural or environmental changes needed, but do you know what ones will garner the most impact? And, how do you best measure success? Programs are most effective when you can analyze data and implement a plan based on actionable information.

Whether you're just getting started or would like to rejuvenate your existing program, a Strategic Wellness Consultant from local provider BeneFIT Corporate WellnessSM can work with you to develop a customized plan for your company.



Consultation covers areas such as assessing company culture, identifying employee needs, goal-setting, problem-solving, and program evaluation. The consultants ensure employers get a “package” of consultation necessities, while meeting the needs of individual employee populations and workplace cultures.

Sarah Engler, MCHES, Manager, Health Education and Wellness, points out that for employers who have a specific priority in mind, there are “a la carte” consultation options, also guided by a Strategic Wellness Consultant. “No matter what your goal, the distinct advantages of consultation are available to every employer, regardless of size, industry, or health insurance plan,” she said.

For more information, please contact Eileen Fallis, Senior Client Solutions Specialist, at Eileen.Fallis@lvhn.org or 610-969-0044.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BeneFIT Corporate WellnessSM Event

March 7, 2019

Details to Follow

Halloween Candy and Your Oral Health: Don't Get Spooked!

Halloween can be a scary time of year – not just because of ghosts and goblins, but because of candy and cavities! You can use this time of year to teach kids about good oral health habits while still enjoying the treats of the holiday.

Below are some tips to for a haunted, but healthy mouth:

- Monitor how much candy your child eats by limiting their daily consumption to a couple of pieces.
- Encourage your child to drink water after they eat treats to help rinse away sugar. Remind your child of the importance of brushing and flossing every day, but especially after eating a lot of candy.
- Once your child is ready, you can offer them healthier options like sugar-free gum which can help prevent cavities by keeping teeth clean.
- Avoid sticky candy like taffy and caramel that expose the teeth to sugar for longer periods of time.
- If your home will be visited by trick-or-treaters, consider handing out little trinkets like a box of crayons or bouncy balls instead of candy.
- Limit juice, soda or other drinks with sugar, particularly if your child is indulging in candy.

UNITED CONCORDIA®
DENTAL
Protecting More Than Just Your Smile™

It's important to instill good oral health habits early. Regular visits to your child's dentist assure that their mouth and teeth are properly cleaned and examined throughout the year. Teaching children about their oral health is key in building healthy habits for life!

Visit the [Dental Health Center at UnitedConcordia.com](http://UnitedConcordia.com) for more tips on oral wellness and a healthier life.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended to provide clinical advice specific to your individual situation. Always consult a licensed dentist/physician for diagnosis and treatment of any specific dental/medical issues.



NVA Offers \$800 on Lasik Eye Surgery at LasikPlus



Eye glasses and contacts help us see better. But, if you're tired of cleaning your contacts, misplacing your glasses or just want a lens-free look, it's time to consider Lasik surgery. NVA is currently offering its members \$800 off *LasikPlus*.

LASIK (laser in situ keratomileusis) is a surgical procedure that uses an excimer laser to reshape the cornea for the correction of nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. At *LasikPlus*, we utilize 100 percent bladeless, all-laser Lasik surgery.

NVA members have access to the National LASIK Network, offering the following:

- Access to providers – The National LASIK Network is one of the largest networks in the U.S. with over 600 locations nationwide.
- Quality – All providers are credentialed every three years and must meet National LASIK Network quality standards to participate.
- Member Value – All in-network providers are contracted to extend the following 15 percent off standard prices or 5 percent off promotional prices.
- Extra Member Value from *LasikPlus*
 - Free Lasik exam (value over \$100)
 - All procedures are 100 percent bladeless
 - Free enhancements for life on most treatments
 - Guaranteed financing

For providers in your area or to activate your discount:

Call 877-295-8599 or

Visit www.e-nvalasik.com

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Our affiliation with these national organizations is a value-added benefit for our members.

