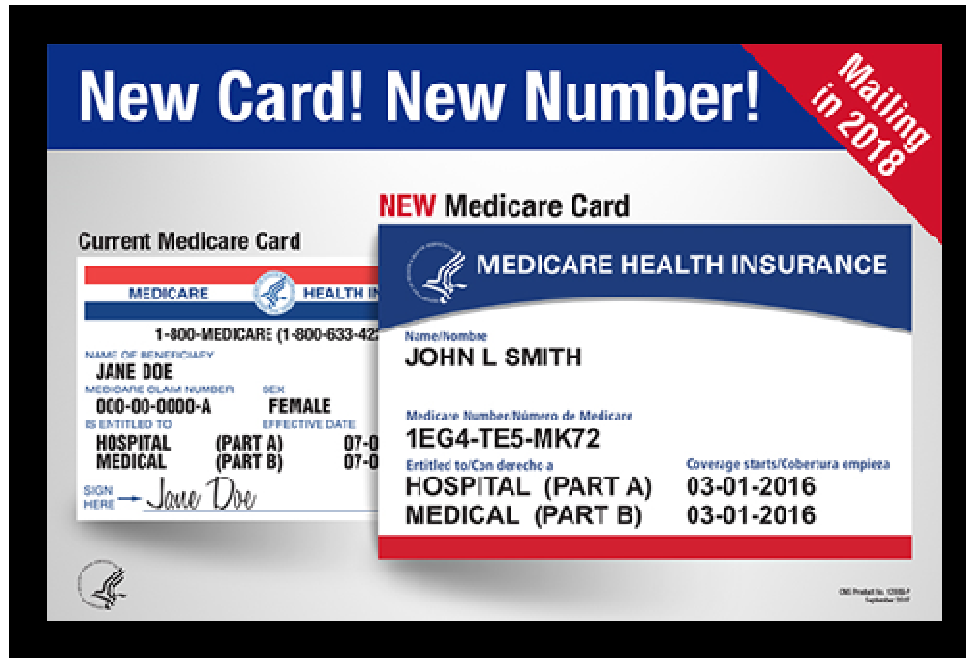




## Health Care Alert

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION PROVIDING HEALTH CARE TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORT TEAMS



### CMS Medicare Card Update

**Are You on Medicare? New Medicare Cards are Coming!** From April 2018 through April 2019, Medicare is mailing new cards to every person with Medicare. The new cards will no longer have your Social Security number on it, but will have a NEW Medicare number that is unique to you. You do not have to do anything to get the new card--it will be mailed to your home, so please be sure your address is current with the Social Security Administration (SSA). **No one from Medicare will call or contact you for information.**

Once you get your new card, you should destroy your old card—shred it, or black-out your name and number with a black permanent marker before disposing of it.

Because the mailing will take time, your card may arrive at a different time than your friend's or neighbor's.

If you have any questions, or need help, call 1-800-MEDICARE or go to [go.medicare.gov/new\\_card](http://go.medicare.gov/new_card) for more information.

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## Behavioral Health Supports for People with Mental Illness and Intellectual Disabilities



People with intellectual disabilities are valuable contributing members of our communities who have much to offer and a desire to participate. However, there are times when a person finds themselves struggling with mental illness and who better to assist them in their road to recovery and mental wellness than a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS).

While not meant to take the place of traditional medical care, a CPS can act as a support system on their road to recovery. Trained CPSs self-identify as coping with mental health challenges and/or drug and alcohol abuse. They have made successful strides in recovery and are understanding of the challenges these experiences present. Your CPS will no doubt be passionate and capable to assist you in your decision to pursue a healthy life. CPSs have gone through specific training to assist in advocacy, crisis support, developing community roles, improving relationships, social networking, and general self-help/improvement. Certified Peer Specialists listen, and most importantly SUPPORT you, peer-to-peer to continue.

Please visit the PCHC website at <https://www.pchc.org/resources/publications/behavioral-health> and select the “**Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) Brochure**” link for more information on how to access CPS services.

PCHC also provides a number of resources, [education and trainings](#) that can be useful for those who support people with intellectual disabilities who are in recovery. Our [Behavioral Health Promotion Activity Plans](#) (BHPAPs) help to identify and understand some of the most common mental health disorders, the behavioral symptoms as well as the prescribed psychotropic medications used to treat the illness.

\*\* Click the following links for additional PCHC behavioral health resources that may be helpful:

- Behavioral Health Supports Brochure: <https://www.pchc.org/resources/publications/behavioral-health> ([click on brochure link](#))
- Training Request Form: <https://www.pchc.org/education/request-a-training>
- Team Agreement Form: <https://www.pchc.org/resources/forms>



The mission of **Mental Health Partnerships** is “to promote groundbreaking ideas and create opportunities for resilience and recovery by applying the knowledge learned from the people we support, employ, and engage in transformative partnerships”. Services provided range from benefits specialist, targeted case management, peer resources, training and more. Mental Health Partnerships provides these services to those residing in Philadelphia County, Delaware County, Montgomery County, Bucks County, Chester County, and in the state of Delaware and New Jersey.

The Partnerships’ vision is for those “challenged by mental health conditions are empowered to direct their recovery journeys, and family members are prepared to play supportive roles, all as members of informed and inclusive communities”. To access these services and resources, contact Destinie Campanella, *Adult Advocate - Community Outreach*, at 267-507-3777 or [dcampanella@mhphope.org](mailto:dcampanella@mhphope.org).

For more information on Mental Health Partnerships, go to: [www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org](http://www.mentalhealthpartnerships.org)

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a wide group of developmental disorders estimated to affect about 1 in 68 people. Although the range of possible symptoms and level of severity varies from person to person, the core characteristics of ASD are impaired social skills and communication, and repetitive patterns of behavior.

One person with ASD may exhibit barely noticeable symptoms and live independently, but at the other end of the spectrum, an affected individual could have severe disabilities and behavioral challenges and require round-the-clock support. Signs of autism usually become noticeable in early childhood when communication and socialization skills begin to develop.

Speech and language impairments are common traits of ASD. Most individuals with autism have difficulty with making appropriate eye contact and interpreting non-verbal cues and gestures. The inability to understand the meaning of facial expressions and body language make it difficult to interpret feelings and emotions. Common struggles for individuals on the autism spectrum are forming and maintaining relationships because many have problems with reciprocal social or emotional interactions. Some people also have co-occurring intellectual disabilities.

Repetition of unusual movements or behaviors, ritualized behaviors, and a narrow range of intensely focused interests are other core symptoms of ASD. Many individuals with autism are unable to tolerate sensory stimuli such as bright lights, loud sounds or

certain textures or fabrics. Although all people with ASD have challenges, many also have unusual strengths, talents and abilities.

For example, some individuals have above-average intelligence, excellent memories, or excel in subjects of intense interest such as math, science, music, or art.

## April is Autism Awareness Month

What did Charles Darwin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Albert Einstein all have in common? They are among many famous people in history who are suspected to have been on the autism spectrum. Gastrointestinal, seizure, mood, anxiety, and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders (ADHD) are conditions that often accompany autism.

Genetic syndromes that are frequently associated with autism include Fragile X syndrome, Agelman syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, Cornelia de Lange syndrome, Rett syndrome, and Williams syndrome.

There is no single known cause of ASD. It is believed that combinations of genetic and environmental factors are involved. Autism tends to run in families and the genes associated with ASD are also involved in the development of the brain. To date, no scientific evidence showing a relationship between vaccines and autism has been identified.

Know the signs of autism! Although there is no known cure, experts in the field agree that the earlier a person is diagnosed, the better chances they have of getting appropriate treatment. The other benefits are improved long term outcomes and eligibility for supports, services, and protection under various laws.

### Resources:

- You can find age-specific milestones at: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- Autism spectrum disorder in adults: diagnosis, management, and health services development: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4940003/>
- ASERT PA-Autism Services, Education, Resources and Training: [www.paautism.org/ASERT/ASERT-Overview](http://www.paautism.org/ASERT/ASERT-Overview)
- Philly Autism Project: [www.paautism.org/phillyautismproject](http://www.paautism.org/phillyautismproject)
- Pennsylvania Advocacy and Resources for Autism and Intellectual Disability: <https://www.par.net>
- Autism: <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/autism>

## Education & Training

PCHC strives to provide quality training for individuals, agency providers, family members and county staff who support individuals with ID and MH challenges. We have been providing training in the SE Region and beyond since our inception over 25 years ago. We offer Physical Health, Behavioral Health and Public Health training topics as well as online training.

PCHC continues to create new and innovative training topics, however we are always seeking suggestions for training ideas that will increase the SE Regions ability to provide the best physical and behavioral health care for the individuals that we support. [Click here](#) to provide valuable input and suggestion.

### Upcoming PCHC Sponsored Training:

DDX: Mental Health Therapy & Dual Diagnosis	4/19/18	10am-12pm	Montgomery Co. Intermediate Unit
DDX: Communication with the PCP and Medical Specialists	4/19/18	1pm-3pm	Montgomery Co. Intermediate Unit
Is it a Physical or Behavioral Health Issue?	5/10/18	10am-12pm	Montgomery Co. Intermediate Unit
Autism: Strategies for Providers	5/10/18	1pm-3pm	Montgomery Co. Intermediate Unit
DDX: Psychotropic Medications	5/23/18	10am-12pm	Willow Grove Giant Market
DDX: Overview of Syndromes	5/23/18	1pm-3pm	Willow Grove Giant Market

Please visit our website regularly to register for upcoming training and to review our many online trainings that are currently offered.

If you would like more information about PCHC training, please visit the Education tab on our website ([www.pchc.org](http://www.pchc.org)) or feel free to contact Bonnie DiRidolfo at 215-546-0300 ext. 3681.

## Announcements

### Regional Nurse Network Meetings

**\*\*Next Regional Nurse Meeting — TBD**

An opportunity for developmental disabilities nursing education and discussion. Please contact Patty Graves at [pgraves@pmhcc.org](mailto:pgraves@pmhcc.org) if you would like to join our email list or have changed your contact information.

### **ATTENTION ALL NURSES!**

**Date:** Tuesday, June 12, 2018

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**Location:** Hilton Philadelphia City Avenue *(parking will be provided)*  
4200 City Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19131

**Speaker:** Elizabeth (Liz) Perkins, PhD, RNLD, FAAIDD

The Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) & PCHC are honoring our Developmental Disabilities Nurses with a special event.

**Must RSVP by May 12, 2018**

### Special Needs Unit (SNU) Meetings

Please contact Briana Downs at [bdowns@pmhcc.org](mailto:bdowns@pmhcc.org) for more information about the SNU Meetings or to be added to the SNU Meeting list.

The 2018 SNU Meetings will be held at the Falls Center located at 3300 Henry Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19129 from 10:00 am —2:00 pm.

**April 18, 2018**

Durable Medical Equipment Panel and Lupus Awareness

**July 18, 2018**

Topic: TBD

**October 17, 2018**

Topic: TBD

**Please keep a look out for upcoming topics in our Health Care Alerts and on the website**



Learn more at [www.pchc.org](http://www.pchc.org)



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