



# The Hamaspik Gazette

News of Hamaspik  
Agencies and  
General Health

JULY '20 • ISSUE NO. 181



## GAZETTE SURVEY

The GAZETTE asks YOU:

**DO YOU SUFFER FROM SEASONAL HAY FEVER?**

**A. VERY MUCH ; B. OCCASIONALLY; C. NO**

Respond to: [survey@nyshainc.org](mailto:survey@nyshainc.org) • 845-655-0667



## HEALTH STAT

### AMERICA'S FASTEST-GROWING HEALTHCARE JOBS

Title	Growth rate
Physician Assistant (PA)	39%
Medical Assistant (MA)	34%
Physical Therapist (PT)	27%

Source: Monster.com



## HEALTH TIP

### REOPEN YOUR FITNESS: POST-PANDEMIC WORKOUT TIPS

Here's how experts advise getting back into shape after prolonged home isolation: 1. Set a goal; 2. Plan to get there; 3. Start slow; 4. Eat healthy and avoid junk; and 5. Drink lots of water

Source: Rutgers University, CDC

## INSIDE

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## HAMASPIK NEWS

**BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE'RE ALL THE SAME**  
BROTHERS IN EVERY WAY BUT BIOLOGICALLY, THESE "QUADRUPLETS" ARE IDENTICALLY DRESSED AT THE HEIGHT OF GOOD TASTE BY THE EQUALLY DOTING AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF AT THE SUMMIT BRIDERHEIM INDIVIDUALIZED RESIDENTIAL ALTERNATIVE (IRA), ONE OF HAMASPIK OF ORANGE COUNTY'S NEWEST HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (I/DD)



FIRST EMERGING IN THE 1970S AS THE OPWDD'S RESPONSE TO THE WILLOWBROOK SCANDAL, THE IRA MODEL HAS PROVEN AS EFFECTIVE AS IT REMAINS POPULAR—AND STILL IN OFTEN-DESPERATE DEMAND

## HAMASPIK HOMECARE NEWS

### Hamaspik HomeCare Launches Two Brand-New Offices

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## HAMASPIK NEWS

### Lag B'Omer Despite Lockdown: Hamaspik Sends Gifts to Families Across Three Counties

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## SENIOR NEWS

### More Grandparenting, Less Loneliness and Social Isolation: Study

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US Postage  
Permit No. 10950  
Monroe, NY 10950

NYSHA Inc.  
Published and Copyrighted July, '20  
1 Hamaspik Way  
Monroe, NY 10950



# 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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### 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 PA's 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

# Integrated Health, Hamaspik's New Adult Care Management Program, is Critical for Families of Adults Struggling with Mental Illness

All too often, they are the forgotten people.

They are the targeted beneficiaries of Integrated Health, Hamaspik's newest mental-health initiative in Kings and Rockland Counties.

Most typically, they are adults in the community, anywhere from their late 20s through early 40s, who never quite "made it"—bypassing such communal milestones and personal lifecycle events as marriage, college graduation, or establishment and maintenance of career path.

They tend to fall into the proverbial cracks—trudging along at menial jobs (if they have jobs at all) and spending inordinate amounts of time at community institutions like local synagogues and low-end restaurants, where they know they can at least get food, water and the social nutrition of belonging and recognition that they desperately need.

Most grim of all, they also tend to become an increasing burden on immediate families, with aging parents unable to constantly lavish attention on them, and siblings incapable of regular intervention, busy as they are with their own flourishing families

and careers.

But since Hamaspik launched Integrated Health, an initiative that provides care management for adults with emotional disturbances, many families have been saved from completely breaking down.

Working with an adult child—or worse, a beloved spouse—who is suffering from severe mental illness is an extremely challenging maze to navigate. Unlike general healthcare, mental-health guidelines are anything but clear-cut, with treatments often first needing to be tried before realizing that a change in regimen is needed. Further complicating matters are medication side effects; it's not uncommon that, once well down

the road of stability with a specific regimen, side effects crop up that force another change of regimen—and the uncertainty, frustration, and bouncing from doctor to doctor that follow.

Besides treatment difficulties, the mental-health patient can present challenging and even life-altering behaviors—which in turn can, and all-too-often do, take a financial, social and emotional toll on everyone involved.

That is what having a Care Manager for such scenarios is so vital; instead of grappling with more moving parts than they can handle, the family can hand over a number of critical responsibilities.

To illustrate, the following is a letter that Hamaspik received from a client's family member:

*Good afternoon!*

*Wanted to just drop a note of thanks that was relayed to me by family members of an Individual that I am involved with on a personal level, and which has been part of your wonderful Integrated Health program (adult) since its implementation.*

*They have expressed great satisfaction and hakoras hatov, in regards to the support, expert advice, coaching, daily (when necessary) medicine dispensing and interaction that your very professional team has provided!*

*According to them, it is as if a heavy dose of care and responsibility has been removed from them, and which as a result affects their entire family!*

*May Hashem continue to give you much continued hatzlucha in this program and all future endeavors!* ★

To contact Integrated Health in Kings County, please call 718-387-8400 x 152 or e-mail [intake@hamaspikings.org](mailto:intake@hamaspikings.org). For Upsate New York, please call 845-503-0200 or e-mail [intake@hamaspikrockland.org](mailto:intake@hamaspikrockland.org).



## ●► HEALTH NEWS

## Getting the Flu as a Kid Gives You Better Flu Defenses as Adult, Says Study

**Tucson, Arizona** — If you had the flu in the past, you'll do better against the flu in the future—even though the flu virus mutates every season, requiring a new flu shot.

That's essentially the finding of a study by the University of Arizona in Tucson, in conjunction with the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

It found that if you had the H3N2 subtype of flu as a child, you'll have better resistance against it as an adult. Ditto for the H1N1 subtype.

Researchers at both schools reviewed thousands of records from the Arizona Department of Health Services. They found that over the last several decades, seasonal outbreaks of the flu were caused by those two subtypes of the Influenza A virus. (There are actually four strains of

influenza, with virtually all human cases caused by strains A and B, with C causing mild to no symptoms and D primarily striking cattle.)

By comparing rates of childhood infection against adult infection in the same individuals, the researchers found that those who got the H3N2 flu as children were less likely to be hospitalized if they were exposed to H3N2 again later in life.

The researchers found the same long-term pattern in life for people who got the H1N1 subtype as kids—

upon getting H1N1 as adults, they had lower rates of hospitalization.

"People tend to gain the strongest immune memory of influenza viruses encountered in childhood," reads the study. "Childhood exposures can imprint a lifelong immunological bias toward particular influenza subtypes."

In other words, when the immune system is young and fresh, as in that of a child, its ability to be programmed to protect against specific viruses and subtypes is stronger than that of an adult.



★ CHILDHOOD FLU IS GOOD FOR YOU: STUDY

### Hamaspik Gazette

Published and Copyrighted July '20 by:  
NYSHA, Inc., 58 Rt. 59, Suite 1, Monsey, NY 10952  
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# Happening in Health Today

## EARLY SIGNS OF CANCER CAN APPEAR WELL BEFORE DIAGNOSIS: STUDY

**London, England** — Analysis of some 2,500 tumor samples across 38 different types of cancer has now found that early signs of cancer can appear years or even decades before diagnosis.

The research, conducted at the Francis Crick Institute in London, England, was part of the Pan-Cancer Analysis of Whole Genomes project, the most comprehensive study of cancer genetics to date.

The study revealed that about half of the earliest mutations occurred in just nine genes, meaning there is a relatively small pool of common genes that serve as triggers for cells to diverge from healthy development to a path towards cancer. It might be possible, in future, to pick up such mutations using so-called *liquid biopsies*—genetic tests that detect mutations in free-floating DNA carried in the blood that can indicate the presence of tumors elsewhere in the body.

## WEARABLE DEVICE MEASURES BLOOD PRESSURE WITHOUT CUFF

**Melbourne, Australia** — Wouldn't it be convenient if you didn't have to get a cuff squeezing your arm to measure your blood pressure—especially if you need to constantly monitor your blood pressure throughout the day?

That's just the idea behind experimental new biomedical technology being developed and tested by Australia's Monash University—which would eventually allow people to take their own blood pressure anywhere and anytime.

The two-part wearable device consists of a chest transmitter that sends signals to an earlobe clip. By measuring time elapsed from heart pump to blood reaching the earlobe, the system can calculate approximate blood pressure in real-time.

For right now, though, the experimental technology can



GENETICS' NEWEST CHAPTER: SCIENTISTS AT UC FOUND THAT RNA "EDITS" DNA

## SCIENTISTS DISCOVER PREVIOUSLY-UNKNOWN FUNCTION OF HUMAN GENES

**Chicago, Illinois** — The basics of human genetics has just been significantly expanded, thanks to a discovery made by chemist Prof. Chuan He of the University of Chicago (UC) and his team.

Until now, human genetics basically worked like this: DNA contains the "recipe" for each cell. RNA "mails" the recipe to each cell. Upon receiving RNA, cells follow their DNA "recipes" to do their jobs. RNA functions as

nothing more than "mailmen."

But now, Prof. He's team has found that RNA also "edits the recipe in transit"—showing that RNA can influence *how* the DNA "recipe" is "written down" by cells.

"It appears to be a fundamental pathway we didn't know about," said Prof. He. "Anytime that happens, it holds promise to open up completely new directions of research and inquiry." ★

measure a patient's blood pressure anytime while lying down, sitting, or pedaling an exercise bike—but not while walking, running or otherwise moving about. It boasts accuracy as high as 93 percent—and without using the tightening arm balloon that's been used for nearly a century.

## SECRET OF HUMAN REGENERATION FOUND IN WORMS, MORE RESEARCH NEEDED

**Evanston, Illinois** — A worm with the unusual ability to grow back any damaged body part is now the source of a genetic discovery that

may eventually further the science of regeneration.

*Regeneration* refers to the body's ability to create new cells to replace injured or missing ones. In human beings, regeneration is mostly associated with the normal healing of skin cuts. But the planarian flatworm can regenerate new muscle, nerves, skin, eyes and even a new brain.

But once flatworms start regrowing missing parts, why don't they stop growing? Northwestern University scientists now have the answer: the MOB4 gene.

Researchers found that "turning off" MOB4 made flatworms grow twice their normal size. The gene

controls a protein called Wnt; with Wnt out of control, cells excessively replicate.

However, the Wnt protein in humans is associated with cancer-cell growth; the challenge would now be to "turn off" MOB4 in humans without also "turning on" the cancer-linked Wnt.

## OVER 15 PERCENT OF AMERICAN ADULTS GET NO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DURING LEISURE TIME

**Atlanta, Georgia** — Not getting exercise and physical activity at work is one thing.

But if you feel you're not getting any at home, either, you're not alone: A recent joint survey by the federal U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments finds that over 15 percent of the American adult population is physically inactive.

People classified as "inactive" said they had not participated in any leisure-time physical activity in the past month, including running, walking or even backyard gardening.

According to the survey, Mississippi is the most inactive state, with 33 percent of adult labeled inactive. Perhaps appropriately, the mountainous state of Colorado scores the highest activity level, with only 17.3 percent of its adults "inactive."

Research continues to show that physical lethargy puts one at higher risk for poor health.

## ELON MUSK SAYS NEURALINK COMING "AS SOON AS THIS YEAR"

**San Francisco, California** — Much-beloved eccentric billionaire Elon Musk, the man behind the popular Tesla electric car and several diverse and unrelated technology companies, is at it again.

As reported last year, one of Mr. Musk's several companies, Neuralink, has been working on literally attaching a computer to the human brain via implant.

This February, Musk revealed in a public statement that his Neuralink system—which has allegedly been tested on a live monkey—"may have this in a human as soon as this year."

The notion, while perhaps frightening, also holds tremendous health promise—particularly, for example, for completely-paralyzed people with ALS who now may ultimately be able to control devices, and their lives, using their minds. ★

# THE PROOF IS IN OUR PEOPLE



## Respite Services

Fun should be accessible to everyone. Our amazing counselors will give your child an experience to remember with our OPWDD Day Camp program.

Boro Park: 718.387.8400  
 Williamsburg: 718.387.8400  
 Rockland County: 845.503.0200  
 Orange County: 845.774.0300



**HAMASPIK**  
 CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES  
 המספיק  
 מרכז עזרה לצרכי העיבור



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS

# Livening Up Lag B'Omer Lockdown, Hamaspik Distributes Gift Bags

*Individuals and Families Receive Sacks Filled with Toys, Games, Fun*



**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE:** WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF GAMES, TOYS AND THE PERPETUALLY-FAVORITE ART SUPPLIES, HAMASPIK'S GIFT BAGS BROUGHT THE LAG B'OMER SPIRIT HOME



**GOT IT IN THE BAG:** NO SHORTAGE OF FOOD FOR GOOD CLEAN FAMILY FUN HERE—NOT TO MENTION A LITTLE BIT OF HEALTHY SNACKING FOR EVERY MEMBER OF EACH FAMILY

Hundreds of individuals with intellectual disabilities, and their beloved and loving family members, received another token of attentive caring and concern from Hamaspik of Kings, Orange and Rockland Counties this past Lag B'Omer holiday.

The exciting and outdoor-oriented minor Jewish festival is commonly associated with such under-the-skies recreational activities as archery, bonfires, live music and even parades.

There'd be none of that under the still-looming spell of COVID-19 in New York State at the time, though. But that didn't stop Hamaspik from bringing the Lag B'Omer spirit right to individuals' doors!

The distribution project was once again led by Hamaspik's very own Mrs. Brenda Katina, agency pillar, legendary friend to families of children with special needs and longtime Special Events Coordinator.

Each gift bag, in grand and surgically-precise Hamaspik tradition, was chock-full with games and toys perfectly suited to every age and stage in your typical family, from tiny tots to teens.

Sidewalk chalk, board games (or is that "bored" games, to counteract symptoms in little people who are bored?), and even a perfectly-themed toy archery set (with safe suction-cup-tipped arrows), were par for the course in each bag.

The packages also contained jumbo-sized coloring books, paint sets, Play-Doh, magnetic easels with dry-erase boards, and do-it-yourself flower art kits.

Also included for maximum indoor fun was a custom-printed "manual" of sorts for the Clics building-block toys that are highly popular in Hamaspik's host communities. ("Every



**NEED WE SAY MORE?** NOTE ON EACH GIFT BAG SAYS EVERYTHING

house has one set!", a Hamaspik staffer tells the *Gazette*.) Inside the sizable booklet were pages upon pages of instructions on how to form various recognizable objects out of the colorful plastic Clics pieces.

What's more, each package came with a contest leaflet prominently affixed to its outside—luring excited children with the promise of a prize upon sending in a winning photo of their Clics handiwork.

Planning and logistics for the massive distribution project began well before Lag B'Omer, which fell this year on Tuesday, May 12. Orders for the numerous items were placed and delivered by

a range of local vendors to Hamaspik's regional centers, where staff spent hours sanitarily packing hundreds of bags.

Over the days running up to Lag B'Omer, capable Hamaspik staffers compiled highly-detailed and up-to-date delivery lists. Those painstakingly-assembled lists contained the current addresses of every Hamaspik-beneficiary recipient—all listed on carefully-planned routes that would ensure maximum driving efficiency for the team of drivers who'd shortly be fanning out across several communities to quite literally deliver the goods. In short, the route all but ensured no doubling back to revisit already-visited streets.

Collecting and loading up dozens of bags at a time, the delivery guys sped out from Hamaspik's parking lots to fan out across neighborhoods served. The drivers were practically up all night the night before Lag B'Omer—making several runs to complete the job before the exciting holiday started.

So what was the reaction and feedback? Did Hamaspik get positive comments and phone calls?

"Of course!" happily declares one staffer, asked that question by the *Gazette*. "They were all very happy—it will keep them busy for two weeks for sure!"

And weeks of happy, healthy busy-ness is just what parents of all stripes—especially those of children with special needs—ordered while their kids remain safely out of school and under lockdown, even as the pandemic slowly waned.

What part of the project did she most like? "Making people happy," says the staff member—reflecting not just the personal investment in the outcome, but that of every employee agency-wide that is the agency trademark of Hamaspik. ★

Friday Afternoons / Ages 8-9

# ● Social Friday.



Join us to improve your child's self-confidence and social skills in a group setting.



A project run  
by Hamaspik

Contact Reiny Steif / 845.503.0239 [Rsteif@hamaspikrockland.org](mailto:Rsteif@hamaspikrockland.org)

FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD ELIGIBLE FOR ABA SERVICES.

Grow  
today.



● ► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK



# Happenings around Hamaspik

## Nurturing Growth



**FLOWER POWER:** INSPIRATIONAL (AND LOVINGLY HAND-PENNE) VERBIAGE GROWS ON KARLSBURG'S WALLS (L); A MEN'S "DAY HABBER" BOASTS FLORID HANDIWORK



## Showing Their True Colors



**VIBRANT EXPRESSIONS:** SPENDING A LEISURELY DAY TOGETHER, THREE RESIDENTS AT HAMASPIK OF ORANGE COUNTY'S CATHERINE BRIDERHEIM IRA POSITIVELY PASS TIME

## Amidst Lockdown, Housekeeping Keeps Cooking at the Karlsburg Inzerheim

*Hamaspik of Orange County Residence's Staff Get Residents More Involved*

Some things never change.

The Karlsburg Inzerheim, a long-running Hamaspik of Orange County residence, was known for much of its history as the Dinev Inzerheim. Then came a necessary change of address, along with the upgraded facility—and street-based name change—that came with the territory.

But devoted Program Manager Mrs. Brach, and the group home's standards of loving and motherly care, have remained constant—including, and especially during, changes of plan.

Locked down for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic as they have been since its inception, the residents of Karlsburg (so named for the Village of Kiryas Joel street on which it's located) couldn't enjoy any normal outdoor activities—and so staff got out the pots and pans.

Under staff supervision, individuals spent considerable time in the kitchen

each day serving as in-house cooks—helping Karlsburg's devoted team of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) whip up delicious daily meals. Cooking is also a personal goal for some, adds Mrs. Brach—making the lockdown-time kitchen time all the more gainful.

With the helping hands of DSPs on hand, residents have also been trying their hands at sorting, folding and stowing laundry, too.

Staffers have been getting their temperature taken and recorded at the start of each shift, adding an extra layer of resident protection in addition to barring all visitors for the time being.

The familiarity of still-dutiful regular staff, coupled with brief and carefully socially-distanced short forays around the outdoor premises of the home, have allowed Karlsburg to survive and thrive under otherwise-trying conditions.

Plus, breakfast, lunch and dinner suddenly taste even better, too. ★

## At Orange County Men's Day Hab, the Call of Connection

*Twice-Daily Teleconference Keeps Individuals Actively Involved*

Things are "booming!" says Moshe Hersh Berkowitz, DSP, tireless Hamaspik of Orange County Day Hab staffer (and the agency's most recent Employee of the Year recipient).

You see, Mr. Berkowitz has been hosting two daily live teleconferences for the two dozen-plus gentlemen who'd otherwise be on site at Hamaspik's Day Hab facility.

Instead, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. each weekday, and then again from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., they're all on the phone.

Using basic teleconferencing technology out of Hamaspik of Orange County's main office building, Mr. Berkowitz places a series of calls, getting each individual on the phone one by one.

But once they're all live is only where it all starts. Prompted by the devoted DSP, the gentlemen go through their daily morning prayers, followed by a study session of various traditional texts.

Most importantly, though, he notes, he makes it a point to solicit a few personal thoughts and words from each

participant—making each part of the proceedings, linking their participation to their individual goals where applicable and, most importantly, feeling like they're part of the proceedings.

Ever keeping things from going stale, the DSP also helms the teleconference via hands-free cellphone from time to time—surprising random individuals by showing up at their front doors to deliver a warm "Hello!" (or at least wave from the car), visits that the individuals excitedly look forward to.

"It's amazing!" he enthuses; "parents have no words of gratitude and appreciation!"

That he's enthusiastic about his job is no surprise. It's Hamaspik. But what's different here is the coronavirus lockdown that's barred Mr. Berkowitz's beloved Day Hab "boys" from attending the program in person—a fact that's hardly stopped Hamaspik, in the form of Mr. Berkowitz, from keeping said program hale and hearty.

At least for three solid hours a day. ★



► HAMASPIK NEWS | HAPPENINGS AROUND HAMASPIK

## Adapting to COVID-19's New Normal—and Thriving Despite It

### Women's Division of Hamaspik Rockland's Day Hab Exemplifies Creative Flexibility Agency-Wide

Doing things differently during the now-slowly-reversing lockdown simply means doing a lot less things.

But not at Hamaspik.

The Women's Division of Hamaspik of Rockland County's Day Hab program, for example, turned the proverbial lemons into lemonade.

From the March 18 lockdown up to the April 9-16 Passover holiday, Day Hab Manager Mrs. Shonfeld presided over morning teleconferences that assembled all the "Day Habbers" in one "place" while remaining safe at home.

Each call began with Day Hab's familiar morning routine from ordinary times: Regular morning prayers and songs common to their faith community of origin, followed by "Circle Time" and its special songs about the world around us.

The call then segued into "Social Scenes," another game in which every participant has to come up their own

response to a proposed situation—followed by an interactive and thoughtful conversation among all participants.

Staff members then presented on personal health and hygiene, social distancing, and emotional health—with one devoted DSP and social-work student even doing internship work on the job in leading those sessions.

Calls were each hosted by each day's designated "hostess"—any of the program's several Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), or the Manager herself.

Day Hab's Direct Support Professional (DSP) staff would later personally call each individual in the afternoon.

Each day's program ended in the mid-afternoon. But the very next morning, Hamaspik staff would be right back at it, delivering the same great Day Hab as always—just with a slightly different format. ★

## Hamaspik of Orange County's Mendel Klein, DSP Takes the Music to the Streets

### Loudspeaker-Loaded Car Brings Infectious Joy to Locked-Down "Day Habbers"

Ask Hamaspik of Orange County Direct Support Professional (DSP) Mendel Klein how to treat cabin fever, and he'll tell you that you can do it remotely. All you need is a car blasting irresistibly upbeat music on the street right in front of your house, and you're good to go.

At least until the next day when the routine repeats itself, that is.

Mr. Klein, a devoted direct-support employee (like all his peers) at the agency's Men's Day Hab program, isn't one to let a trifling disturbance like a mass national pandemic keep him from keeping his charges happy.

So with the gentlemen of the Day Hab behind the closed doors of their individual residences since the lockdown's start, Mendel Klein—loudspeaker-equipped SUV and all—has been making the rounds of the Village of Kiryas Joel since this past March 11, the day after the exuberantly extroverted and buoyant

Jewish holiday of Purim.

That drive about town has occupied an impressively-devoted daily average of two hours for the irrepressible Mr. Klein, who makes stops at the address of each individual as he pumps out equally irrepressible music while also pumping up the volume of optimism and good cheer.

Whether residing at a Hamaspik men's residence or private family home, the individuals served by Hamaspik have by now come to expect Mr. Klein's predictable and vitally-enriching perambulations. The ever-smiling staffer will also not-infrequently call ahead, letting staff or family members know: the music is coming!

Not only do the "boys" come to their front windows or even doors to dance, reports Mr. Klein, but pretty much every day, a good neighborhood kid or two attempts to not let his car leave! ★

## Do-It-Yourself Day Hab



**GETTING CRAFTY:** A COLORFUL POTPOURRI OF AT-HOME ACTIVITIES, EACH IN THEIR OWN ELEGANT PACKAGING, GAVE DAY HAB MEMBERS HEALTHY ACTIVITIES AT HOME

## Driving Good Cheer



**TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL:** ONE OF THE REGULARS "DAY HABBERS," CONFINED TO HIS PORCH BY THE STATEWIDE LOCKDOWN, REACTS HAPPILY TO MR. KLEIN'S DRIVE-BY



**THE SOUND OF HARD WORK:** BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL, A SMILING (BEHIND HIS MASK) MENDEL KLEIN, TAKES HIS MUSIC-MAKING CAR WHEREVER IT'S NEEDED IN K.J.



# The Autism Update

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



**GETTING TO THEIR HEADS:** STUDENTS WITH AUTISM AT A BRITISH SCHOOL ARE “TRAINING” FOR TRAVEL WITH VR HEADSETS LIKE THIS

## BRITISH SCHOOL USES VIRTUAL-REALITY HEADSETS TO ACCUSTOM KIDS WITH AUTISM TO TRAVELING

**Berkshire, England** — Visiting new places via modern-day travel—car, train, airplane, and the masses of crowds involved in each—can be overwhelming enough for typical kids, never mind those with autism.

But now, students at Prior’s Court, a school for children with autism located in Berkshire, southern England, are getting a valuable high-tech tool for acclimation before

they’ve taken a single step anywhere: Virtual-reality (VR) headsets.

From the safety and comfort of familiar classrooms and desks, students with autism at Prior’s Court are using VR headsets, which put ultra-realistic, 360-degree moving images before wearers’ eyes, to virtually visit shopping malls, board planes, or even ski or scuba-dive. ★

## GIRLS WITH AUTISM DIAGNOSED 1.5 YEARS LATER THAN BOYS: STUDY

**East Providence, Rhode Island** — The Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART) study, said to be the first nationwide of its kind, reports that girls with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are diagnosed on average one-and-a-half-years later than boys.

“Among the most prominent findings of immediate clinical importance, we found that females received a first diagnosis of ASD at a later age than males,” reads the study. “Our study also suggests that new strategies for earlier diagnosis of ASD in females may be warranted.”

According to the researchers, one reason girls with autism get diagnosed later on average is because of “more advanced language abilities in females with ASD.” In turn, that means that girls generally start talking earlier, making it harder to diagnose them with autism (because autism is commonly indicated by delayed or

absent speech).

## CORNELL UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES AUTISM TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD INITIATIVE (ATTAIN) PROJECT

**Ithaca, New York** — With a new \$646,000 gift, Cornell University’s Yang-Tan Institute has launched its Autism Transition to Adulthood Initiative (ATTAIN).

The three-year project, which began January of this year, is aimed at identifying how students can achieve success after high school. It will create the first nationally-representative database for policy-driven research exclusively focused on transition-aged youth with autism.

The ATTAIN project will be built around another Cornell-driven project: NYS PROMISE. That federal project, brought to New York State by Gov. Cuomo in early 2014, collected six years of data on youth with disabilities who were getting federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, and also partaking of

transition services from school to employment. The ATTAIN project will essentially see who did best with NYS PROMISE.

## CELLS IN GASTROINTESTINAL (GI) TRACT BEING STUDIED FOR CONNECTION TO BRAIN, AUTISM

**Durham, North Carolina** — Critical connections between the brain and other organs, such as the intestines or the kidneys, were described by the ancients centuries ago.

But while the notion that the gut affects the mind remains on modern medicine’s sidelines, Duke University research is now taking a look at cells in the GI tract called *neuropods*—and their relation to the brain and autism.

Neuropods were recently found to form extensions similar to neurons, and that those extensions connect to nerve fibers in the gut, which in turn relay signals to the vagus nerve and from there to the brain. Those signals were also found to reach the brain in milliseconds.

Against the background of the fact that children with autism frequently cope with GI issues, Duke researchers were recently awarded with a 2019 NIH Director’s New Innovator Award for exploring the potential of treating autism with drugs that act on the gut.

## KIDS GIVEN BLOOD-PRESSURE MEDS SHOW BETTER AUTISM TEST RESULTS

**Cambridge, England** — A study by the University of Cambridge has found that young children with autism who were treated with a diuretic for three months scored better on various tests than those who were not. A *diuretic* is a medication commonly prescribed to reduce high blood pressure by ridding the body of excess salt and water.

The comparison study on just over 80 kids found that those getting a kind of diuretic called *bumetanide* had better scores on the Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS), a behavior scale that measures emotional response and verbal and nonverbal communication.

Bumetanide appeared to improve behavioral symptoms by decreasing levels of the neurotransmitters gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), according to the research.

## OXYTOCIN SPRAY REDUCES REPETITIVE BEHAVIORS, ANTI-SOCIAL FEELINGS IN MEN WITH ASD: STUDY

**Leuven, Belgium** — According to a study published recently in *Molecular Autism*, a daily nasal spray of oxytocin might reduce repetitive behaviors and feelings of social avoidance among adult men with autism.

The comparison trial had 20 adult men get real oxytocin and another 20 get a placebo “dummy spray” every morning for four weeks. Participants filled out surveys at the study’s start, at its end four weeks later, and one month and one year after its end.

With social responsiveness, the study did not find any significant difference between the groups. But with repetitive behaviors and social-avoidance feelings, the oxytocin group reported improvements up to one year after the trial ended, as well as higher feelings of “vigor,” or feeling energetic, active and lively, while the placebo group did not.

Oxytocin is a hormone produced by the brain that fosters healthy bonding between people. ★



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●► **HMASPIK NEWS**

# A Giving Hand, a Caring Heart, and a Soul of the People

## Hamaspik Remembers Moishy Sternberg, 1982-2020

If living for others is the life truly lived, then Moishy Sternberg truly lived life like few others.

Moshe “Moishy” Sternberg was one of the first residents of the Forshay Briderheim IRA, not just a central fixture of Hamaspik’s presence in Monsey but a mainstay of the local community. The group home’s proximity to three major synagogues meant that residents were fixtures at each. Like Moishy.

In his Forshay neighborhood, Moishy Sternberg was a mainstay in the mainstream Congregation Netzach Yisroel. Come winter darkness or summer light, Moishy could be faithfully found at its first daily *minyan* prayer service, joining the other men in connecting to the Creator. He never missed a morning, recalls Forshay veteran Direct Support Professional (DSP) Menashe Mor, no matter how late he’d retired the previous night.

Moshe Feder, a four-year DSP at Forshay, most remembers Moishy’s minyan-time declarations of “*Y’hai shmai Rabbah mevorach!*” “Praised be the Name of the Great One!” is a central text recited responsively with the chazzan (prayer leader), and the man’s spiritual sincerity could be clearly heard each time.

At that shul, Moishy was not only a regular each weekday but could be reliably found on the premises every Shabbos (Jewish Sabbath) weekend. Many a Friday night, attests longtime Forshay IRA Manager Mrs. Sarah Fischer, Moishy would join the tish (communal meal) hosted by Grand Rabbi Chaim L. Rottenberg, the synagogue’s founding spiritual leader—with whom he also enjoyed a special relationship. Not only could he be found in shul Shabbos days, but was also one of the regulars volunteering Saturday night to collect and return hundreds of siddurim (prayer books) and seforim (holy books) to their shelves. His house up the road was only a few minutes away—but over hours spent lovingly reorganizing his beloved shul, Moishy felt right at home.

But Moishy didn’t just feel at home in the house of the people; more than that, he felt at home *with* people. “He loved going out to socialize,” Mrs. Fischer reminisces. “He loved people.”

Moishy was blessed with a knowing heart and an airtight mind that, coupled with a natural social connectedness,



**SWEETEST MEMORIES:** SHARING HERE ABOUT AN OVERSEAS TRIP, MOISHY (R) FILLED DAY HAB WITH HIS PRESENCE, WHERE A “WELCOME BACK” SIGN WAS SADLY ALL TOO PRESCIENT

made him all the more a people person. He never forgot someone’s phone number once he knew it, and could reliably recall it if you asked for it. He could, and would, discern what you needed, or how you felt, without you saying a word about it—if Mrs. Fischer saw a resident sulking upon returning from an outing, she could, and would, invariably ask Moishy what had upset that resident; time and again, Moshe would be right.

Moishy could be frequently found at Forshay’s kitchen counter, or behind the work tables of Shloimy’s Heimishe Bakery at Rockland Kosher Supermarket, where he loved working with his hands with fresh goods, all while surrounded by his beloved people. He even once spent hours teaching a fellow resident how to play a computer game.

Whether it was the knowing grin of recognition or a new face alike, Moishy loved sharing a smile, his trademark “How are you?”, or the endless array of trinkets he lovingly hand-made over the years to give to friends old and new alike. Drawing equally on affection and recollection, he’d spend hours each Friday calling his beloved and involved mother, as well as siblings, relatives and friends around the country and world, to wish them a “Good Shabbos!”

“He was always in a good mood,” recalls Shlomo Knobloch, Moishy’s Care Coordinator with Tri-County Care. “He was always happy to visit me at the office.”

About three weeks before Passover,

Saturday night.

Moishy Sternberg was mourned by Forshay DSP Mendy Stern. He was later joined in grief by the greater Hamaspik family that had supported Moishy over his years with the agency: Hamaspik of Rockland County Executive Director Joel Freund; Director of Residential Services Moshe Sabel; every IRA Manager; IRA staffers Chaim Luria, Menashe Mor, Pinchos and Shlomo Teitelbaum; and devoted long-time Day Hab Manager Pinchos Knopler and his DSP team of Yitzchok Ciment, Chezky Levy and Mendy Tessler, and even quite a few former employees.

“He helped everyone,” says Mr. Tessler, remembering the legacy of a resident who was “full of life.”

“The boys all miss him,” Mrs. Fischer wistfully notes, mentioning a makeshift memorial put up at the residence. “Walking in and not seeing his smiling face—he always said hello to everyone—is something I miss.”

“Everyone misses him.” ★

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HEALTH NEWS

# New Medications, Device Help Reduce, Prevent Painful Migraine Headaches

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** — Contrary to common misperception, a migraine is not “just a headache” or even just a severe form of the otherwise-ordinary headache. Neither is a migraine something that most migraine patients can simply ignore, “tough out,” “power through” and otherwise get on with their lives.

In fact, the migraine headache is a complex neurological condition that runs deeper than the symptoms, and causes, of the conventional headache.

According to neurologist Dr. Stephen Silberstein, director of the Jefferson Headache Center at Thomas Jefferson University, 47 million people in the U.S. have migraine, of which six million have chronic cases—meaning, over 15 “headache days” a month.

Until recently, there was not a whole lot that people could do for migraines.



HEADING OFF MIGRAINE PAIN: THE NEWEST BIOTECH OFFERS PATIENTS IMPROVED RELIEF

But now, a number of medications are available that can either prevent or alleviate many attacks. Additionally, a wearable nerve-stimulating device (that can even be activated by smartphone)

can help relieve the pain of migraine. There are currently four oral drugs in two different classes with FDA approval for migraine prevention: two anti-seizure drugs and two beta-

blockers. Chronic migraine patients with daily or near-daily symptoms can also get Botox injections. According to Dr. Silberstein, 40 percent of people with migraine should be on preventive medication, but only 13 percent are doing so.

Doctors have long relied on drugs called triptans to treat migraine attacks. But today, there are also biologics that can be given once every one to three months. These drugs work by targeting pain transmitters.

A new nondrug option is the Nerivio Migra neurostimulator device made by the Theranica biotech firm. Worn as an armband with a rechargeable battery, it transmits weak electrical pulses on the skin and can be turned on and off as needed through a cellphone app. The base price of the device is about \$99 for 12 applications.



HEALTHY EATING

POTATOES



EASY | YIELDS: 6-8 SERVINGS

READY IN: 1:00



Ketchup Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 potatoes
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup ketchup

DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 450°
- Line large baking pan with parchment paper
- Peel potatoes, then cut them into slices about 1/4-inch thick each
- Mix potato slices with the mayonnaise and ketchup
- Arrange slices in neat lines on baking pan
- Bake covered for 30 minutes; uncover and bake for another 30 minutes

CHEF'S TIP:

After peeling, keep potatoes in water to prevent potatoes from browning

BENEFITS:

Everyone thinks of potatoes as bad food, but in fact potatoes are full of vitamins. The potato's fiber, potassium, vitamin C, and vitamin B6 content, coupled with its lack of cholesterol, all support heart health. Potatoes also contain significant amounts of fiber.

EASY | YIELDS: 6-8 SERVINGS

READY IN: 0:40



Crumb Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 potatoes
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 cup corn flakes crumbs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Water

DIRECTIONS:

- Peel and cube potatoes
- Place in a pot and bring to boil
- Boil for 20 minutes, drain water. Cool for a few minutes, then mix in oil
- In a baking pan, mix seasoning with crumbs, stir in potatoes and mix well; make sure all potatoes are coated with crumbs
- Bake uncovered at 450° for about 10-15 minutes

MEDIUM | YIELDS: 8 SERVINGS

READY IN: 1:30



Pinwheel Knishes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 10x16 package of flaky dough
- 5 potatoes
- 1 onion
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- Sesame seeds
- 1 package pastrami (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

- Peel and cook potatoes until soft
- Meanwhile, sauté onions in oil and beat two eggs
- Mash potatoes; mix in sautéed onions, salt, pepper and 2 eggs

TO ASSEMBLE:

- Lay out sheets of flaky dough
- OPTIONAL: Lay down pastrami across dough sheet
- Spread mashed-potato mix across dough sheet (atop pastrami if using)
- Roll up dough, jelly-roll style (be careful not to press down or potato mix will come out of sides)
- Slice roll into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- Place slices in neat rows on lined baking pan
- Egg-wash slices; sprinkle with sesame seeds
- Bake in preheated oven at 375° for one hour
- Serve plain or with sauce

© 2020 Recipes by Mrs. Chana G. Laufer

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# Public Health and Policy News

artificial intelligence (AI) for usage on a specific ultrasound system produced by Teratech. Caption is based in San Francisco, Calif.; Teratech is based in Burlington, Mass.

The approval specifically states that medical professionals who are not MDs, RNs, or NPs are now allowed to scan and read patients' hearts using that specific software and hardware.

## HEALTHCARE AND TECH GROWING IN NYC: COMPTROLLER'S REPORT

**New York, New York** — Growing employment across New York City, especially in the outer boroughs, is being driven by healthcare, business services, social services, and technology, according to New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli.

"The strong employment trends have helped boost personal income and sales tax collections," said the state's top financial official, "making it easier for the city to afford new services and to balance the budget."

Of the 87,200 new citywide jobs in the report, healthcare accounts for some 40 percent of them, driven by home care services. But the comptroller noted that home health workers are among the lowest-paid employees in the industry.

In 2019, New York City also added 12,300 social assistance workers, with the bulk of them providing care for the elderly and people with disabilities.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-BASED ULTRASOUND TOOL FOR NON-SPECIALISTS APPROVED BY FDA

**Silver Spring, Maryland** — If you're not a doctor or nurse but work in a high-tech clinic, there's one set of patients that the government has now authorized you to treat nonetheless: cardiac ultrasound patients.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has now approved the Caption Guidance computer software enhanced by



**THE RIGHT TO READ:** THE FDA NOW ALLOWS NON-DOCTORS AND OTHERS TO USE THE COMBINED "CAPTION" SOFTWARE AND "TERATECH" HARDWARE FOR ULTRASOUND TESTS

## NEW PROPOSED FEDERAL BUDGET WOULD CREATE NEW TOBACCO-PRODUCT REGULATORY BODY



**NEW CROP OF REGULATIONS:** A NEW GOV'T TOBACCO AGENCY HAS BEEN PROPOSED

**Washington, D.C.** — Buried deep within documents detailing the fine print of the most recent proposed federal budget is a brand-new federal agency that would be created within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). It would exist exclusively to regulate tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes (e-cigs).

According to the text of the budget documentation, the federal agency would "increase direct accountability and more effectively respond to this critical area of public health concern."

"A new agency with the singular mission on tobacco and its impact on public health would have greater capacity to respond strategically to the growing complexity of new tobacco products," the budget states. "This reorganization would allow the FDA Commissioner to focus on its traditional mission of ensuring the safety of the Nation's food and medical products supply."

## NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS TEAMS UP WITH STARTUP TO TACKLE FOOD, HOUSING INSECURITY

**New York, New York** — Chicago-based tech startup NowPow is forging a relationship with NYC Health + Hospitals, the largest public health care system in the nation, to help address food and housing insecurities among millions of patients.

That partnership also includes OneCity Health, which is the NYC Health + Hospitals Performing Provider System under New York state's Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment program, the state's Medicaid reform initiative. OneCity Health awarded three community-based organizations \$4.3 million to help connect patients to available services that are traditionally fragmented and difficult to navigate,

the organizations said in a statement.

NowPow is built around the concept of prescribing social services the same way doctors prescribe medications.

## FEDERAL DEPT. OF EDUCATION LAUNCHES SCHOOLSAFETY.GOV

**Washington, D.C.** — It began operating well over a year ago. But now, the U.S. Dept. of Education's Federal School Safety Clearinghouse has its own official website, too: SchoolSafety.gov.

Launched to help educators, administrators, parents, and law enforcement prepare for threats, SchoolSafety.gov is a one-stop-shop of resources for kindergarten through Grade 12 to use to prepare for and address safety, security, and support in schools.

Resources provided by the Clearinghouse include threat assessments, physical security, emergency planning, and trainings and exercises designed to help schools and local law enforcement prepare for incidents. Among them is the School Safety Readiness Tool, an assessment that assists users in evaluating their school's safety posture across ten foundational elements of school safety.

## HEALTH INDUSTRY GROUPS SPAR OVER RAPID-FILL CANCER-DRUG PRESCRIPTION LAW

**Washington, D.C.** — Health industry change, whether good or not, has always had as many opponents as supporters, especially in Washington. One of the several issues at hand now is *prior authorization*: the requirement that a third party review and approve a doctor's drug prescription before it's filled.

Prior authorization can take anywhere from days to weeks.

The Community Oncology Alliance (COA), which represents independent oncologists from its Washington, D.C.-offices, is now pushing Congress to set a 72-hour deadline for pharmacies to fill cancer drugs for patients, the latest on a growing list of calls for prior authorization reform.

The legislation would specify that after the 72 hours are up, patients can get their prescriptions filled at any pharmacy they want or at their oncologist's practice.

But the Pharmaceutical Care Management Association (PCMA) and trade group America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), both also based in Washington, D.C., say that prior authorization is vital to keeping treatments affordable. ★



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# In the Know

## ALL ABOUT... BURNS

Sources: U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC); Mayo Clinic; Science News for Students; and Chemical Hazards Emergency Medical Management (CHEMM), a division of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS)



Burns are arguably the most common medical diagnosis—right up there with minor cuts and scrapes, and the common cold. Who hasn't experienced at least one minor burn at least once in their lifetime?

But burns, like fires, can range from “smoldering embers” to “forest fires” and every degree between. (While pretty much everyone has heard of burns' three degrees, there are actually twice that many, technically speaking: degrees 1 through 6, although most burns are limited to the first three.)

Burns also spring from a wide range of causes: Open flames, scalding hot water or other liquids, and even electric shock or skin contact with various dangerous chemicals.

Bottom line, burns—and their treatment—run the gamut from mild discomfort to major emergency (and long-term negative results).

But no one need become an unfortunate statistic. With even a minimum of preventative measures, you can put out the fire of burn danger. Here's what you need to know to be... in the know.

### DEFINITION AND SYMPTOMS

Loosely defined, a burn is any damage or destruction of the skin and its layers.

Because it is commonly caused by fire, this damage or destruction of the skin and its layers is called a “burn.” But there are many other things that can damage or destroy the skin and its layers just like fire, even though they are not fire. These include direct sunlight, hot surfaces, hot water, hot oil, chemicals, electricity, steam, or friction.

(You'll notice that all these causes involve *high* heat. But, curiously enough, damage or destruction of the skin and its layers can sometimes also be caused by *low* heat. Prolonged direct skin contact with ice or other very cold surfaces can also sometimes be called a burn.)

Burn symptoms consist mostly of visible damage to the skin.

Corresponding to the three layers of the skin, there are three *degrees*, or levels, of burns—with specific visible

skin symptoms to each.

**First degree:** This minor burn affects only the outer layer of the skin (epidermis). It may cause redness, swelling and pain. Sunburn is a classic example.

**Second degree:** This type of burn affects both the epidermis and the second layer of skin (dermis). It may cause red, white or splotchy skin, pain, and swelling. A second-degree burn often looks wet or moist. Blisters may develop, and pain can be severe. Deep second-degree burns can cause scarring.

**Third degree:** This burn reaches into the fat layer underneath the dermis. Burned areas may be charred black or white. The skin may look waxy or leathery. Third-degree burns can destroy nerves, causing numbness. A person with this type of burn may also have difficulty breathing or experience smoke inhalation or carbon monoxide poisoning.

Technically speaking, burns that reach and damage even deeper layers (fat, muscle, and bone) are sometimes called fourth-, fifth- or sixth-degree burns.

Burns don't affect the skin uniformly, so a single injury can reach varying depths.

Distinguishing a minor burn from a more serious burn involves determining the extent of tissue damage.

Besides skin damage, burns can also trigger the following symptoms (all of which are typically marked by various serious levels of discomfort and pain):

- 1 The immune system overreacts, putting internal organs in danger
- 2 The body loses fluid, which can cause a dangerous loss of blood pressure (shock)
- 3 The body traps fluid, which can damage tissues and organs and cause them to fail
- 4 The body is at far greater risk of infection due to the immune system's “crisis mode” reaction to the burn. Infections can lead to pneumonia and/or sepsis

### CAUSE

Here we'll review not the many

dangerous items that can cause burns (see “Prevention,” below, for that), but the basic science of burns. Here goes:

Skin is composed of *tissue*. Tissue is composed of *cells*. And cells, down at the smallest level, are composed of *atoms*—the building blocks of all materials. In the case of human beings, therefore, skin—like the rest of the body—is made mainly of atoms of carbon.

When atoms are exposed to high heat—as in fire or other source of heat—several things happen very quickly: One, they vibrate; two, they “dance”; and three, they disconnect from each other. This breakup and release of atoms and energy is scientifically known as *pyrolysis*. (Once the process gets to the level of pyrolysis, several chemical reactions occur simultaneously, each producing its own color—which is why a flame, the most common form of pyrolysis, consists of white, blue, orange and yellow sections.)

Thus, a burn is essentially the breakdown of the skin's building blocks of carbon (and other types of) atoms when subjected to enough heat—regardless of whether that source of heat is a flame, or chemicals, hot surfaces, oil, electricity, steam, or friction.

Therefore, degrees of burns depend on which layer(s) of skin tissue cells (again, made mostly of carbon atoms) undergo pyrolysis and for how long.

### TREATMENT

#### First-degree burns

First-degree burns usually heal within several days to a week if first-aid measures are applied right away. These first-aid measures can be administered at home. However, one should see a doctor if any of the following develop:

- Large blisters
- Signs of infection, such as oozing from the wound, increased pain, redness and swelling
- A burn or blister that doesn't heal in several weeks
- New, unexplained symptoms
- Significant scarring



## Second-degree burns and up

Any burns of the second degree or above are medical emergencies that require rushing to the hospital—specifically, one staffed with the trained specialists, facilities and equipment together known as a *burn unit* or *burn center*. (The best such facilities nationwide are known as Verified Burn Centers, a designation awarded after painstaking review by the American Burn Association, an industry group.)

Call an ambulance immediately for:

- Burns that cover the hands, feet, face, a major joint or a large area of the body
- Deep burns, which means burns affecting all layers of the skin and even other tissues
- Burns caused by chemicals or electricity
- Difficulty breathing or burns to the airway

At the emergency room or burn unit, doctors will commonly use what's called the "Rule of Nines" (or the Wallace Rule). This rule consists of a visual assessment of a patient who has burns of the second degree or worse. The rule determines how much body surface area is damaged by assigning each major body part a percentage that's either the number 9 or a multiple of 9. For example, each leg is considered 18 percent of the body's surface—so an adult with both legs burned would be assessed as being 36 percent burned.

Doctors will then tend to burn patients by addressing the following general categories, and in the following general order:

- Airway
- Breathing
- Circulation
- Wound (burn) care, and
- Medication

The above is a process that takes several hours.

Once the patient is stabilized and out of immediate danger, long-term treatment begins. People with severe burns may need skin grafts to cover large wounds or to minimize scarring resulting from deep wounds. Additionally, they will likely also need extensive emotional support after such a traumatic experience, along with months of follow-up care, including physical therapy and/or occupational therapy.

## Complications

Deep or widespread burns can lead to many complications, including:

**Infection.** Burns can leave skin vulnerable to bacterial infection and increase risk of sepsis. Sepsis is a life-threatening infection that travels through the bloodstream and affects the entire body. It progresses rapidly

and can cause shock and organ failure.

**Low blood volume.** Burns can damage blood vessels and cause fluid loss. This may result in low blood volume (hypovolemia). Severe loss of blood and fluid prevents the heart from pumping enough blood to the body.

**Dangerously low body temperature.** Since skin helps control the body's temperature, when a large portion of the skin is injured, the patient loses body heat. In turn, that increases risk of a dangerously low body temperature (hypothermia)—a condition in which the body loses heat faster than it can produce it.

**Breathing problems.** Breathing hot air or smoke can burn airways and cause breathing (respiratory) difficulties. Smoke inhalation damages

300 children ages 0 to 19 are treated in emergency rooms across the U.S. every *day* for burn-related injuries, and two children die as a result of being burned. So if we eliminate those causes, we'll greatly prevent if not completely eliminate burns.

Outside the home, be alert to burn risks, too—especially when working with open flames, chemicals or superheated materials.

To reduce the risk of common household burns:

- Never leave items cooking on the stove unattended
- Turn pot handles toward the rear of the stove
- Keep hot liquids out of the reach of children and pets
- Keep electrical appliances away from water
- Test food temperatures before

Test bath water with the elbow (not the hand!) before placing a child in it

## PROGNOSIS

Successful long-term burn treatment begins first and foremost with how fast doctors can start treatment: The sooner you get the patient to the hospital, the better the long-term outcome.

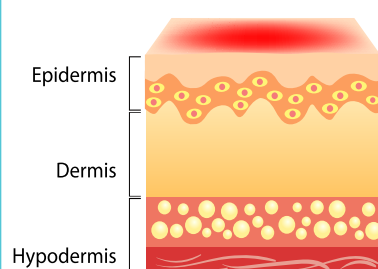
## THE "POTATO TREATMENT"

You may have heard of it.

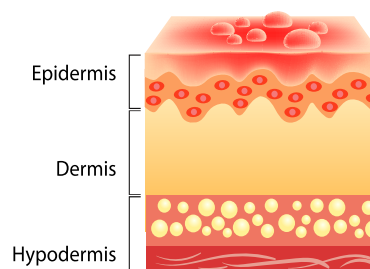
You may know someone who's done it.

You may even be someone who's had it—or, as in the case of this writer, has witnessed several family members first-

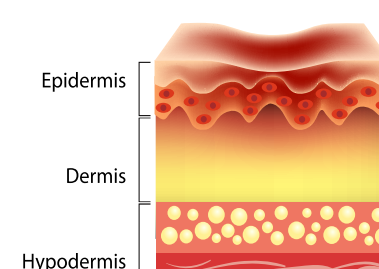
# Skin Burn



First-degree Burn



Second-degree Burn



Third-degree Burn

the lungs and can cause respiratory failure.

**Scarring.** Burns can cause scars and ridged areas caused by an overgrowth of scar tissue (keloids).

**Bone and joint problems.** Deep burns can limit movement of the bones and joints. Scar tissue can form and cause shortening and/or tightening of skin, muscles or tendons (contractures). This condition may permanently pull joints out of position.

## PREVENTION

Smoking and open flame are the leading causes of burn injury for older adults.

**Scalding** (meaning, getting burned by very hot water, soup or other liquid) is the leading cause of burn injury for children.

In fact, according to the CDC, over

serving a child. Don't heat a baby's bottle in the microwave

- If small children are present, block their access to heat sources like stoves, outdoor grills, fireplaces and space heaters
- Before placing a child in a car seat, check for hot straps or buckles
- Unplug irons and similar devices when not in use. Store them out of reach of small children
- Cover unused electrical outlets with safety caps. Keep electrical cords and wires out of the way so that children don't chew on them
- Check smoke detectors and change their batteries regularly
- Keep at least one readily-accessible fire extinguisher on every floor of the house
- Keep chemicals, lighters and matches out of the reach of children
- Set the water heater's thermostat below 120°F to prevent scalding.

hand getting it, and benefiting from it. It's the "potato treatment."

The potato treatment involves patting down successive layers of freshly-grated raw potato directly on a fresh burn, even second- or third-degree burns, to "suck out the burn."

If you're a doctor or trained medical professional, you may be rolling your eyes right now. But this writer has seen it work on his own daughter after a boiling-water burn. She was treated with, yes, raw potato, by a volunteer community member who had been extensively trained in the method by one of its community matriarchs.

Is it quackery?

Well, as one famous British academic once quipped about alternative medicine (you know, acupuncture, aromatherapy, chiropractic and the like), "There's no such thing as 'alternative medicine': either it works, or it doesn't." And the potato treatment works. Don't ask me how. ★

## Status Report

# Happening In Hospitals Today

## NEBRASKA HOSPITAL USING AI, DEPTH CAMERAS TO REDUCE PATIENT FALLS

**Lincoln, Nebraska** — The inpatient rehab unit at Lincoln's Bryan Medical Center now has another permanent resident. But, not to worry—the Ocuvera system is not only not a burden on staff but is also actually a low-maintenance asset, too.

Ocuvera uses a combination of artificial intelligence (AI) and depth cameras, which broadcast 3D images but without identifying faces, to watch patients in their beds and then alert nurses by smartphone if they're about to take a dangerous step—helping the hospital reduce falls by patients most at risk. Staff report a steady decline in incidents since the system was installed.

Preventing falls is vitally important to hospitals because Medicare and Medicaid do not reimburse for fall-related treatment costs. According to experts, patient falls account for ten percent of hospital patient-safety incidents.

## FIRST-EVER JOINT COMMISSION, HEART ASSOCIATION JOINT AWARD EARNED BY TEXAS HOSPITAL

**Fort Worth, Texas** — The Texas

Health Harris Methodist Hospital in Fort Worth became the first medical facility in U.S. history to jointly earn a Heart-Check mark for Primary Heart Attack Center Certification from the American Heart Association (AHA) and the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission.

Both non-profits are very influential in the hospital industry, with ratings from either impacting hospital usage and ultimately, financial viability.

Harris earned the historic designation after on-site inspectors from both entities found it offered the highest level of effective and efficient diagnosis and treatment for ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI), one of the most common and lethal types of heart attacks.

With another heart attack estimated to strike someone in the U.S. every 40 seconds, getting immediate care can be a matter of life or death.

## U.S. MILITARY HOSPITAL BECOMING WORLD'S FIRST 5G-ENABLED HEALTH FACILITY

**Palo Alto, California** — In February, the Palo Alto Health Care System, a Veterans Affairs (VA) hospital, became the first hospital in the U.S., and the world, to boast 5G wireless technology.

The new 5G technology, which refers to the fifth generation of consumer



**FUTURE NOW: THE 1ST 5G HOSPITAL IS HERE**

wireless tech, is roughly ten times faster than the current 4G systems used by most wireless devices today.

“What 5G will deliver is richer, more detailed, three-dimensional images of the patient's anatomy,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie at the system's roll-out. “That means reliable capacity to allow the VA's best physicians to consult during surgery even when they are not in the same room or halfway across the country. We are on the cutting edge and moving forward in ways that just a few years ago were unimaginable.”

## “MORAL INJURY” MOVEMENT GROWING IN HOSPITAL CARE INDUSTRY

**San Francisco, California** — Over the past two years, a growing number of physicians, nurses and other professionals are using the phrase “moral injury” to describe the workplace burnout they feel as a result of objections to finance-driven decisions—primarily in the hospital emergency-room setting.

Specifically, the professionals feel that many required procedures and tests on ER patients, not to mention the modern burden of computer-intensive electronic health records (EHRs), block them from providing traditional one-on-one patient interaction and care.

According to a new *Kaiser Health News* report, the phrase originates from a phrase used in a 2018 editorial

by doctors Wendy Dean, M.D., and Simon Talbot, M.D., a psychiatrist and a surgeon.

In turn, “moral injury” is a military phrase referring to the emotional, physical and spiritual harm that veterans feel after “perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations.”

## NURSE PRACTITIONER WORKFORCE DOUBLES AMID PRIMARY-CARE PUSH

**Bozeman, Montana** — An analysis of U.S. Census data by Montana State University finds that the nurse practitioner (NP) workforce has more than doubled over a seven-year span.

The number of NPs grew from around 91,000 in 2010 to 190,000 in 2017, according to the research—with the majority of those taking up employment in the fast-growing sector of outpatient care.

In particular, NPs are filling a primary-care void in rural areas, offering a more convenient option for families in remote locations as fewer medical-school graduates pursue family physician roles over other higher-paying specialties.

The surge in NPs was also fueled by a significant expansion in the number of educational programs, increasing from 356 in 2010 to 467 in 2017, according to the study. Medical schools now produce almost as many NPs as they do doctors of medicine (MDs).

## U.S. HOSPITALS SPEND \$2.5 BILLION ON ‘ROOT CAUSES’ OVER TWO-YEAR PERIOD: STUDY

**Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania** — It's one thing to go to an emergency room for non-emergency care because you're unemployed, uninsured, homeless and don't have a doctor.

It's another thing for the hospital to help you find employment, health insurance, housing and doctors so that you don't need in the first place to go to the emergency room.

So-called “social determinants,” or the life factors that drive people's health decisions, drew at least \$2.5 billion in spending by 78 programs across 900 hospitals nationwide in 2017 to 2019 alone.

The study by the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health found that \$1.6 billion was spent on housing interventions, followed by employment (\$1.1 billion), education (\$476 million), food security (\$294 million) and transportation (\$32 million).



**EVERYTHING IS BIG IN TEXAS:** WITH A DUAL APPROVAL BY THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION (AHA) AND THE JOINT COMMISSION, HARRIS METHODIST MADE U.S. HOSPITAL HISTORY





# The Senior Care Gazette

News from  
the World of  
Hamaspik  
HomeCare and  
Senior Health

## Amid COVID-19 Crisis, Hamaspik HomeCare Launches Two Brand-New Offices

*Facilities to Service Home-Care Needs in Queens, Greater Hudson Valley Region*

Things everywhere, across virtually every sector of commerce and society, slowed down if not came to a downright halt during the coronavirus sweeping the Empire State.

But not if Hamaspik HomeCare had

### Assisted Living Will be Unaffordable for Most U.S. Middle-Class Seniors by 2029: Study

**Chicago, Illinois** — Research by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), an independent research institution at the University of Chicago, says that in a mere ten years, over half of today's middle-class seniors will be unable to afford housing and personal assistance.

According to current statistics, there are about eight million U.S. citizens with middle-class income today who are also over age 75. By 2029, that figure that is projected to nearly double to 14 million.

Of those, now says NORC, about 54 percent won't have enough money to afford an assisted living facility or the kind of personal care that would keep them in their own homes.

Experts say the reasons are complex, but largely involve not having enough savings for quality long-term senior living. Specifically, the middle-class senior demographic that saves too little for deluxe senior housing yet saves too much to qualify for Medicaid, is slated for trouble. ★

anything to say about it.

Working to bring critically-needed home-care services to the community, Hamaspik HomeCare succeeded in surviving and even thriving during the toughest days of the pandemic back in April (as covered in the previous *Gazette*).

Hamaspik HomeCare not only kept all operations alive to the extent possible, but even painstakingly launched two new satellite office facilities during the prolonged shutdown.

The first, an existing center, merely relocated so as to even better serve its target demographic, explains Simcha Klagsbrun, IT/Maintenance Manager

with Hamaspik HomeCare.

That upper Hudson Valley office, located in the Orange County town of Newburgh, took up new digs in nearby New Windsor—with its ground-floor storefront (as opposed to office building) location now granting more of the Orange County public significantly greater ease of access to its plethora of services. Manned on a full-time basis by Hamaspik HomeCare's very own Sasha Perez, the state-of-the-art facility will importantly allow upstate Hamaspik HomeCare employees to complete their PCA training regimens locally—giving the region more access to qualified staff, too.

At the same time, a new Hamaspik

HomeCare office has opened in Queens' bustling Jamaica district. That borough satellite office was launched due to simple logistics, explains Hamaspik HomeCare COO Mordechai Wolhendler—it was just too hard to service that many Queens residents from the agency's existing hub in Brooklyn.

And with an ever-ballooning patient base in the Borough over the past several years, it was only a matter of time before a local beachhead became the reality it is now. ★

Please call 855-426-2774 for Hamaspik HomeCare services; for Queens, dial ext. 700; for New Windsor, dial ext. 736.

## Study links “active” grandparenting to less loneliness and social isolation

**Hamburg, Germany** — If you're considering staying involved, or getting involved (or more involved) in your grandchildren's daily lives, here's a study to give you another reason for it.

A social study conducted by the University of Hamburg-Eppendorf finds that grandparents who provide some level of care for their grandchildren tend to be less lonely than those who don't.

The study also found that such grandparents also tend to have larger social networks.

“Assisting their families to balance work and family by providing supplementary grandchild care may boost grandparents' self-esteem, and may also facilitate ongoing positive relationships with their children and grandchildren,” the study's



**LONG-TERM INVESTMENT:** STUDY SAYS MORE GRANDPARENTING MEANS LESS LONELINESS

authors write. “Moreover, caring for grandchildren may also expand the social circle of grandparents and

allow for further opportunities to establish relationships with other parents or grandparents.” ★



**Hamaspik HomeCare**  
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# NEED AN AIDE?

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