

responder news

Spring/Summer 2016



Dear Responders,

We hope this newsletter greets you well and you, like many of us, cannot wait to enjoy all the fun summer activities that Long Island has to offer!

At the Long Island CCE, we are winding down a busy year. Early in the year, we began our transition to EMR (electronic medical records) and are now closing in on the home stretch. We hope this new electronic system will improve your patient experience. Keep your eyes open for new features, like the patient portal, where you can have access to your medical data and communicate directly with us!

We also celebrated with you the renewal of the Zadroga Bill and the first installment of responder testimonies into the Library of Congress. All in all, it has been a fruitful and exciting year!

In this newsletter, you will find some interesting articles on sun exposure and IT advancements in healthcare, updates on the Program and new staff, and most importantly details on our upcoming responder family picnic.

Wishing you well as always and hope to see you soon,

The Stony Brook WTC Wellness staff

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DID YOU KNOW...

We offer a variety of programs to assist our members with improving overall health and wellness. The **Health Enhancement Program** is one of our newer programs. Group sessions focus on improving different health behaviors including sleep, nutrition, exercise, and managing your healthcare needs. It is interactive, informative and empowering. The goal is to improve your health habits, resiliency to future illness, and overall health.

If this program interests you, please talk with your WTC provider to find out if you are eligible!



THE REMEMBERING 9/11 CURRICULUM: CONNECTING TO HISTORY THROUGH STORIES

In January, our nine lesson high school unit on 9/11 was recognized by the Tribute Center. This is a free resource for high school teachers and meets the NYS and Common Core standards.

If you know of a teacher or school district who may be interested in utilizing this curriculum, please direct them to:

Julie Broihier
631-822-4828

ABOUT THE UNIT:

First-person narratives are essential to understanding truth in history. Teaching 9/11 through first person narratives in schools shapes the way it is remembered, and helps develop the citizens who will shape the policies and values of our city, and the country, in the future. Furthermore, teaching the next generation how to understand the sociopolitical, psychological and cultural repercussions is such a special way to honor the people who were there.

Personal interviews with 9/11 responders are central to this unit and give insight into the minds of those who experienced 9/11 directly. Many raise questions about the nature of heroism, resilience, retribution, guilt, hope, camaraderie, civic duty, and politics. With respect to the fact that some questions have no answers, these lessons are designed to get students to ask questions and analyze sources as empathetic historians.

Students are asked to analyze key speeches, explore the Patriot Act, debate the Zadroga Bill for first responder healthcare and think about the best approach to responding to terrorism internationally. Additionally, students must evaluate ideas about what terrorism is, how these events have affected their lives, and how to reach out to the witnesses in their own lives to learn about 9/11.

REMEMBERING 9/11 STORIES FEATURED AT 9/11 MUSEUM ANNUAL RECOGNITION CEREMONY

The annual Rescue and Recovery Worker Recognition Ceremony, a public program hosted by the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, was held on May 26, 2016. This year, the Museum featured Dr. Benjamin Luft and the *Remembering 9/11* project. Steered by Jenny Pachucki, Content Strategist at the museum, the program showcased three interviews from our *Remembering 9/11* archive followed by a discussion between Dr. Luft and Jenny.

The audience consisted mainly of fellow responders and volunteers, and their families, all who understand intimately the 9/11 experience. They nodded in agreement as they watched the testimonial of Bill, ESU, who spoke about the hazardous conditions and smoldering destruction. Bill, who attended the event, later spoke to the audience, revealing it was his first time back to the site since 9/11. For him, it was an incredibly emotional day, although he said it was important that he came.

Another video testimony featured a former FDNY Captain, John, who spoke about the pervasive dust and his subsequent illnesses—his story again hitting home with so many in the crowd.

And finally, the audience heard the story of Jennifer, an FDNY widow, who spoke of her husband's character and sacrifice and her response as a mother. Her story brought sympathy from all and reminded us of the impact that 9/11 had on families, spouses, and children of the responders. When Jennifer later joined the discussion, she stated that she continues to honor her husband by supporting other responders through her charity organization.

The discussion highlighted the motivation behind the *Remembering 9/11* project and the invaluable significance of these interviews. While the selflessness and heroism that Bill and John's stories highlighted so well are imperative to our understanding of 9/11, Dr. Luft emphasized another important fact that is evident in the stories of the *Remembering 9/11* project—the unique ability for responders to tell their stories and advocate for one another. Their involvement, not only in 9/11, but in advocating for healthcare for all 9/11 responders is both admirable and has revolutionized patient advocacy more broadly.



Photo: Monika Graff/9/11 Memorial

If you, a family member, or a friend are interested in sharing your experience and becoming a part of this project, you may contact [Ashlee McGlone](mailto:Ashlee.McGlone@n911.org) at (631) 416-8770.

Meet our newest nurse: Patty Ferrara

Patty joins us from Stony Brook Family Medicine. Previously, she worked in Plastic Surgery and Dermatology, and at Brookhaven Hospital. She has been practicing as an LPN, since 2005. We are thrilled to have Patty as part of our clinical team!



I joined the Long Island CCE team, because I wanted to give back to these brave men and women and really feel like they have been given the best attention and care they deserve. I have a great sense of respect and admiration for the responders and hope to deliver great medical care with a twist of humor. I am moved by the fact that while its been almost 15 years since this tragedy, for our patients it is like it happened yesterday and we all have to be mindful of that reality.— Patty

Volunteers needed!

If you're planning on attending this year's Family Fun Day and would like to lend a hand, we need volunteers willing to set-up and take down on the day of the event.

Please call Sonia Fore at 631.855.1205 for more information.
Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL WTC RESPONDER FAMILY FUN DAY & PICNIC

Saturday, August 13th

Deer Park Fire Department

Food: Texas Roadhouse

Music: The Buggy Jones Band

Interactive activities for kids of all ages!

INVITE TO FOLLOW



Catching Rays...The Healthy Way

Information to help you stay safe this summer

The American Cancer Society (ACS) dedicated 2 months of the summer to sun and skin cancer awareness. That is because skin cancer is both the most common form of cancer and the most treatable in its early stages.

In fact, skin cancer can be detected by examining your skin. If you identify any unusual growths or moles, you should ask your doctor to look at them. If caught early, cancerous cells can be removed without causing serious damage to the body, or before they spread to other areas.

The following facts are just some of the important information available through the ACS website (www.cancer.org). We hope you find it a helpful reminder of the damaging effects of the beautiful sunshine we enjoy so much these summer months.

The strength of the UV rays reaching the ground depends on a number of factors, such as:

Time of day: UV rays are strongest between 10 am and 4 pm.

Season of the year: UV rays are stronger during spring and summer months.

Distance from the equator: UV exposure goes down as you get further from the equator.

Altitude: More UV rays reach the ground at higher elevations.

Cloud cover: The effect of clouds can vary. Sometimes cloud cover blocks some UV from the sun and lowers UV exposure, while some types of clouds can reflect UV and can increase UV exposure. What is important to know is that UV rays can get through, even on a cloudy day.

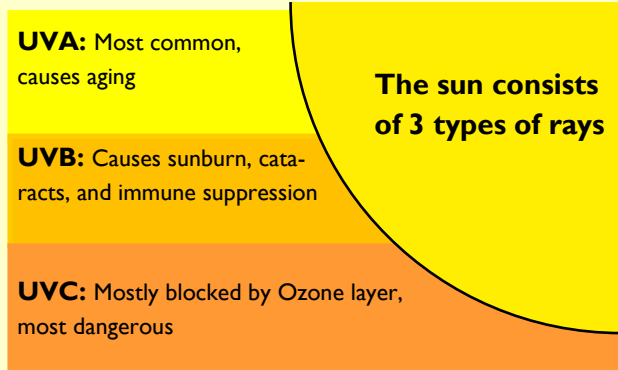
Reflection off surfaces: UV rays can bounce off surfaces like water, sand, snow, pavement, or grass, leading to an increase in UV exposure.

Test your knowledge on Sun Safety !

<http://www.cancer.org/healthy/toolsandcalculators/quizzes/sun-safety/index>

What is ultraviolet (UV) radiation?

Exposure to **ultraviolet (UV) radiation** is a major risk factor for most skin cancers. Even though UV rays make up only a very small portion of the sun's rays, they are the main cause of the sun's damaging effects on the skin. UV rays damage the DNA of skin cells. Skin cancers start when this damage affects the DNA of genes that control skin cell growth.



Both UVA and UVB rays can damage skin and cause skin cancer. UVB rays are a more potent cause of at least some skin cancers, but based on what's known today, there are no safe UV rays.

The amount of UV exposure a person gets depends on the strength of the rays, the length of time the skin is exposed, and whether the skin is protected with clothing or sunscreen. People who live in areas with year-round, bright sunlight have a higher risk of skin cancer. Spending a lot of time outdoors for work or recreation without protective clothing and sunscreen increases your risk. The pattern of exposure may also be important. For example, frequent sunburns in childhood may increase the risk for some types of skin cancer many years or even decades later. Skin cancers are one result of getting too much sun, but there are other effects as well. Sunburn and tanning are the short-term results of too much exposure to UV rays, and are signs of skin damage. Long-term exposure can cause early skin aging, wrinkles, loss of skin elasticity, dark patches, and pre-cancerous skin changes. The sun's UV rays increase a person's risk of cataracts and certain other eye problems, too. They can also suppress the skin's immune system. For more information, see <http://www.cancer.org>

		CLIMATE DESTINATIONS		
		MODERATE UK, N, Europe	HOT Mediterranean, USA	VERY HOT Tropics, Caribbean, Dubai
SKIN TYPE	Children and Sensitive Skin	SPF 30	SPF 40-50+	SPF 50+
	Fair Skin	SPF 15-30	SPF 30-40	SPF 30-50+
	Medium Skin	SPF 10-15	SPF 20-30	SPF 30-40
	Dark Skin	SPF 6-10	SPF 10-15	SPF 20-30



New Technology Is Changing How We Do Medicine

Updates from our Informatics Team's Visit to the Health Information Technology Conference

Did you know that healthcare is one of the leading drivers of innovation in today's high-tech industry? Wherever you look, data and technology are being integrated into healthcare to improve patient experience and health outcomes, which is the focus of the emerging field of health informatics.

In your own life, you might have noticed friends or relatives using Fitbit wristbands, Apple Watches, or smartphone apps to track their fitness. Or, you might have been asked to complete forms online prior to a doctor's appointment. You might have also noticed that, with some clinics, you can access your medical information online, through patient portals.

What are these changes ?

What are we doing here at the Stony Brook WTC Wellness Program to ensure that you reap their benefits?

This past March, our newly formed Informatics Team attended the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) conference in Las Vegas. This huge conference brought together over

40,000 health information technology (IT) professionals, clinicians, executives, and vendors to showcase health IT innovations and solutions and exchange insights from their ongoing efforts to transform and enhance healthcare. **Our goal was to keep up-to-date with the newest trends in this growing field and bring back knowledge that we can implement to increase and improve your experience and care.**

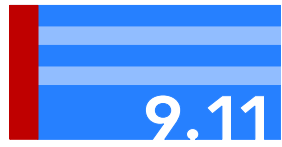
Three areas emerged as the main themes at the conference: patient engagement, telemedicine, and system connectivity. **Patient engagement** is an effort to make you an active party in managing your own health. This can be achieved, for example, by setting up patient portals – secure websites that allow patients 24/7 online access to their medical information (such as appointment dates, discharge summaries, lab results, and medications). We are looking to implement the patient portal aspect of Stony Brook EMR in the near future and hope you will benefit from this new technology.

Telemedicine is the delivery of medical treatment or education remotely, such that the patient and the provider don't need to be at the same place at the same time. For example, wouldn't it be convenient to use an app on your smartphone to track your WTC-related symptoms and get medical attention instead of having to come to the clinic on a workday? This would allow your provider to better monitor your health and provide care preemptively – potentially preventing any deterioration in your health. Some of you have already had some experience with such apps, participating in our Stress Management and Daily Health studies. Following your high engagement in these studies, we are starting to look into developing an app that would incorporate these features into our monitoring and treatment.

By **system connectivity** (or interoperability), we refer to the process of getting different electronic health record systems to “talk” and exchange information with each other, so the patients' health information follows them from one clinic or hospital to another. This ensures that your provider (and you, through a patient portal) have access to all information relevant to your care and can use it to make better informed decisions. For example, your provider can see what medications you are taking (whether prescribed by us or elsewhere) and ensure that she doesn't prescribe anything that could harm you if taken at the same time. At the Stony Brook WTC Wellness Program, we recently took an initial but big step towards better integrated care by joining the Stony Brook Medicine electronic medical records system, which is already facilitating communication between our locations and between us and the greater Stony Brook Medicine community.

The Informatics Team is determined to incorporate the knowledge we gained at the conference into ongoing and future projects. We are working closely with all other teams at the Program to bring in the innovations that can take your healthcare to the next level while keeping your privacy concerns in mind.

Monitoring and Treatment



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Visit us at:
WTCwellnessprogram.org

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