



# RESPONDER NEWS

**Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness– Winter 2021**



Dear Responders,

As we begin 2022, we send you and your families wishes for happiness and good health this upcoming year.

It is true that the past 2 years have been trying in many ways, but our goal is to keep providing you with a medical home for your WTC health and wellness concerns. Please know that we always have your health and safety at the forefront with masks, telehealth visits, and other changes. We will always do what we can to make sure that you and your families have our support.

Here's to a new year, a new season, and a time to look forward to positive changes in the days ahead.

Warmly,

The Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness Team



## **Spring 2022 Pharmacy Benefits Manager (PBM) Transition**

### **Express Scripts will Replace OptumRx and Managed Care Advisors (MCA)**

#### **What is Pharmacy Benefit Manager?**

The PBM provides all pharmacy services to ensure members get coverage for prescription drugs that treat WTC-related conditions. PBM services include: Pharmacy benefits call / customer service center, pharmacy formulary management, home delivery and specialty pharmacy services, and prescription drug claims processing. The current PBM for the WTC Health Program is OptumRx and MCA.

#### **Why is our PBM changing?**

This is normal. The Program's PBM contract was up for renewal. This is why other companies could bid to provide PBM services. The Program selected Express Scripts after a robust evaluation of competing proposals of which contractor could best provide the wide range of services to meet WTC-related retail pharmacy, specialty pharmacy, and home delivery needs.

#### **Is this change immediate?**

No. Optum will continue as our PBM through the transition period until spring 2022. The exact date will be communicated to you before the transition period ends. While OptumRx continues as the Program's PBM, please continue to use your pharmacy benefits as you have been.

#### **Is there anything I need to do?**

Not at this time. In the coming months, Express Scripts will send you more information by mail, including a new pharmacy ID card and additional details on next steps.

#### **What is a transition period?**

A transition period is the time between when the new vendor is awarded the contract and when they take over full operations. During this time, prescription fills continue as usual until the new vendor (Express Scripts) is ready to assume all PBM duties. This process is in place to minimize any impact on you and to ensure a smooth change of vendors.

#### **When will Express Scripts take over filling my prescriptions?**

The months-long transition process is expected to finish in Spring 2022. As the transition progresses, **Express Scripts will reach out to you directly through the mail with more information.**

#### **Will this affect my current prescriptions?**

No. Your current prescriptions will continue as normal. Please continue to use your pharmacy benefits and fill your WTC-related prescriptions through OptumRx or local retail pharmacy as you have been until you receive more information from Express Scripts and the WTC Health Program. As the transition progresses and Express Scripts begins managing the prescriptions, Express Scripts will reach out to you directly about any next steps.

#### **What if I have questions?**

For pharmacy benefits or home delivery questions, please continue to call Optum at 1-855-640-0005 or visit the [Optum WTC Home Delivery](https://wtchomedelivery.optum.com) website (wtchomedelivery.optum.com) until further notice. For questions about this change, visit the Program's [PBM Transition Information webpage](https://cdc.gov/wtc/pbmtransition.html) (cdc.gov/wtc/pbmtransition.html) for the latest information.

You can also call the WTC Health Program call center at 1-888-982-4748. For questions related to your WTC-related medications or treatment, contact us at Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness: 631-855-1200.

## The September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF)

has provided the following updates that may be of interest:

**20th Anniversary Special Report:** In addition to its regular program reporting, and in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the VCF created a Special Report, which documents the VCF's history, features a timeline of important milestones, and includes reflections from those who created the foundation upon which the VCF has successfully evolved. [Read the 20th Anniversary VCF Special Report](http://www.vcf.gov/report/special/20th-anniversary-special-report) (www.vcf.gov/report/special/20th-anniversary-special-report)

**New Videos about the VCF:** The VCF and 9/11 Health Watch collaborated recently on a series of short informational videos. [Watch these videos](https://www.vcf.gov/videos-vcf) (https://www.vcf.gov/videos-vcf) to learn about who's eligible for the VCF, how to register and file a claim, and hear a message from VCF Special Master Rupa Bhattacharyya.

**Follow the VCF on Twitter:** Stay up-to-date with the latest official VCF news, updates, policy announcements, and outreach event information by following them on Twitter at [@Sept11VCF](https://twitter.com/Sept11VCF).

**Please Note:** Membership in the WTC Health Program does not register you for the VCF. To learn more and check your VCF eligibility, please visit the VCF website or call their Helpline at 1-855-885-1555.







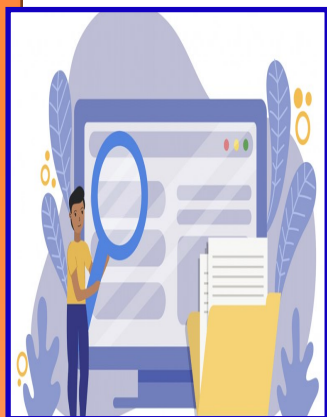
***Let's Talk!***  
**A Conversation About  
 Care Coordination and  
 Case Management  
 with Priscilla Lara**



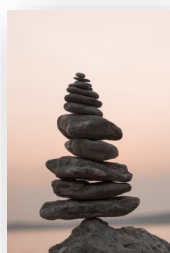
**Chronic physical and mental health conditions continue to impact WTC responders. This leads to an ongoing, growing array of care and services that require the best coordination and management.**

**We sat down and discussed what this means to Priscilla Lara, MHA, our Member Services and Case Management Administrator.**

**Tell us about the Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness Care Coordination and Case Management team?**



We all feel very privileged to support this amazing Program. Bringing my own 10+ years of community health administration experiences to a center that serves our heroes who responded to the 9/11 disaster means more than words can describe. We have a very skillful team of registered nurses—case managers, social workers, and care coordinators. Together, we add a key layer to the member services team with our focus on benefits navigation, guidance and support for mental health services, and connections to our clinical networks. We learn a lot from one another's specialties and know that we can rely on each other to go above and beyond to support program members. This is very important, and something we place great value on.



**How does your team manage cases involving such a variety of growingly complex WTC-related conditions?**

Every member of our team assesses and follows-up with each case with a person-centered state of mind. Different members have different needs and urgencies. But, at the same time, we have solid processes and use reliable tools to help us make sure that each member is properly followed-up with. *No matter what.* Case management involves a huge variety of tasks, so we work hard to keep ourselves organized. Doing so benefits our program members, and in return, gives us great satisfaction.



## They say the most important task of a case manager or care coordinator is to build trust with Program members. How do you do that?

Members trust us because they know they can rely on us. We genuinely care. For instance, the pandemic created a lot of challenges from Day 1. Many lived in isolation and fear. This is why we kept our phone lines open regardless of any need to work remotely. We even created a live hotline for urgent needs, while less urgent needs left on our voicemail were responded to within one work day. Our front line member services, care coordination and case management teams collaborate constantly with our fellow front line staff in the clinic to manage various caseloads, authorization needs, and overcome potential barriers to mental health needs and plans of care. I believe these pandemic-related experiences made the already strong bonds of trust between us and the members we serve even stronger.



## What exactly is coordinated patient care?

The whole purpose of coordinated patient care is to hold services together for members. This is what our care coordinators work diligently to do. Care coordinators are the links between members and providers outside the Program. We offer a variety of services while also connecting Program members to outside providers and offices. We help coordinate and organize to ensure we always have a member's full health picture as we find connections between what our Program offers and additional health care needs we can help someone navigate through.



## Is there anything else you would like to say to anyone interested in knowing more about Care Coordination and Case Management?

Give us a call! We are always happy to keep everyone well-informed about all of our services, and look forward to assisting and educating about how we can help coordinate each member's individual care needs.

Questions about Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness  
Care Coordination and Case Management?

**Please Call 631-855-1200**  
**Select Option 1, then Option 2**



# Nutritional Resources for Stony Brook WTC Health and Wellness Members!



## Nutrition Education Materials

Just looking for some general guidance or information? Check out our website where you can find our library of nutrition handouts, a course on the Mediterranean Diet, and recipes. These are specifically curated for our WTC responder population!

[www.stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc/resources/wellness](http://www.stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc/resources/wellness)

## Nutrition Related Lab Work Review

Do your nutrition-related lab results show high cholesterol or blood glucose? Reach out after your visit to schedule a consult!

Reviews are less than 30 minutes and can be done over the phone or via mail-home packet. *Remember* to always consult with your primary care physician (PCP) as well.

## Monthly Virtual Group

Enjoy live sessions on various nutrition-related topics with our Nutrition Team. Can't attend live? No problem! Sessions are recorded and posted on our website! For more Information, check out the next page.

## Nutrition Consult

Nutrition counseling involves having a friendly conversation with a Registered Dietitian. This is a 1-1 appointment to discuss current food choices, medical needs, preferences, support structure, schedule, workout routine, & more. Corresponding nutrition education materials are provided. Sessions are 30 minutes and can be done at our Commack location or via telehealth (phone or video). Appointments are scheduled between the hours of 8:00 AM-3:30 PM, Monday-Friday.

## SB-WTC Health and Wellness Program's Nutrition Virtual Wellness Forum



Interested in learning how to manage your WTC conditions through lifestyle changes? Join our Registered Dietitians, Katie and Amanda, to discuss various nutrition topics related to WTC-certified conditions, non-WTC certified conditions, and broad nutrition topics. Sessions are 30 minutes in length and currently done virtually on Microsoft Teams. If you cannot attend live, all sessions are recorded to be viewed at a later time on our website! [stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc/resources/wellness](https://stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc/resources/wellness)

**Sign up today on our website or use QR Code Below!**



**← Use QR Code or Use Link Below:**

[https://stonybrookuniversity.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0e8UMEGi8n2US2O](https://stonybrookuniversity.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0e8UMEGi8n2US2O)

## 2022 Yearly Calendar of Events

- January 11th 2:00 PM: **Goal Setting for Successful Lifestyle Changes**
- February 10th 10:00 AM: **Fad Diets vs. Lifestyle Change**
- March 15th at 2:00 PM: **Meal Preparation**
- April 13th at 10:00 AM: **Anti-Inflammatory Diet**
- May 12th at 2:00 PM: **Mindful Eating**
- June 7th at 10:00 AM: **Heart Healthy Diet Tips**
- July 14th at 2:00 PM: **GERD & Weight Loss**
- August 10th at 10:00 AM: **Creating Healthy Habits**
- September 6th at 2:00 PM: **Overcoming Barriers**
- October 13th at 10:00 AM: **Nutrition for Better Sleep**
- November 9th at 2:00 PM: **Blood Sugars & T2DM**
- December 1st at 10:00 AM: **Healthy Holidays**







***Enjoy Our  
SB-WTC Health  
and Wellness  
RD Recommended  
Recipe of  
the Quarter!***



## **Sweet Potato Hash**

- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small sweet potato, diced into bite-size chunks
- 1/4 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium bell pepper any color, diced
- 2 eggs (or 6 egg whites)
- Garlic powder, salt & pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a large pan over medium-high heat
2. Add the potatoes, pepper, and onion to the oil and sprinkle with seasoning. Stir to combine.
3. Cover and cook for 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally until potatoes are almost tender.
4. Add in eggs and cook 2-3 more minutes until eggs are cooked to your liking.



## Telehealth Visits Reminder

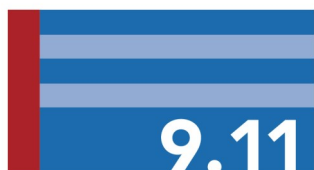


We value the quality of in-person visits but also understand that, while this pandemic continues, telehealth may be your best and safest option. This is why it is important for you to know that **we continue to offer the telehealth monitoring visit option so you can stay up-to-date with your annual monitoring visits.**

**Telehealth helps you stay connected with us by making visits still possible**  
thanks to user-friendly interactive video  
and phone tools.

**To Schedule Your  
Telehealth Visit  
Call Stony Brook WTC  
Health and Wellness  
Member Services:  
631-855-1200**





WTC Health Program  
Long Island Clinical Center of Excellence at Stony Brook Medicine  
500 Commack Road, Suite 160  
Commack, NY 11725

WTC Health Program

Visit us at: **[stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc](http://stonybrookmedicine.edu/wtc)**  
Follow us on Facebook: **[@stonybrookwtc](https://www.facebook.com/stonybrookwtc)**

**Providing Excellent Care in Suffolk and Nassau Counties**



500 Commack Road, Suite 160  
Commack, NY 11725



173 Mineola Boulevard, Suite 302  
Mineola, NY 11501