

### Karen's Corner



November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, an opportune time to shine a spotlight on one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in West Virginia and the leading cause of cancer death in the United States. While the statistics are alarming, we can take steps to decrease the likelihood of a lung cancer diagnosis in ourselves and our loved ones.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, lifestyle choices play a critical role in lung cancer prevention as 90 percent of cases are linked to cigarette smoking. Even those who do not use tobacco can develop lung cancer due to secondhand smoke exposure, and about 7,300 people who never smoked die from lung cancer each year.

The second leading risk factor for lung cancer is radon, a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can get trapped in houses and buildings. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, radon exposure is the number one cause of lung cancer among non-smokers. Testing is the only way to detect the invisible, odorless substance.

DHHR continually works to reduce the prevalence of lung cancer and related diseases in West Virginia, and provides support through programs such as the West Virginia Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) and the Radiological Health Program (800-922-1255). Please join us in our mission. **Quit smoking. Avoid secondhand smoke. Get your home tested for radon.** Together, we can celebrate healthier families and communities.

### Friends Auxiliary of William R. Sharpe, Jr. Hospital and Weston Salons Provide Free Haircuts to Patients

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Week, The Friends Auxiliary of William R. Sharpe, Jr. Hospital partnered with two local salons on October 3, 2016, to host Snips of Love. The event offered a day of free haircut services to more than 80 patients at Sharpe Hospital.

“It was truly heartwarming to see patients receiving the gift of a professional haircut experience,” stated Krista Adkins, Volunteer Services Coordinator at Sharpe. “This event was the first of its kind at our facility and was a great way for the Auxiliary to enrich the lives of our patients.”

Shear Bliss Family Salon of Weston, WV provided six stylists who donated a total of 24 hours and serviced 64 clients. Betsy Murphy, owner of Shear Bliss, stated, “We are happy to provide a service that helps the patients feel better.”

Best of Styles Salon, also of Weston, WV contributed an hour of salon services from three stylists who serviced an additional 20 clients.

The donated services of both salons totaled more than \$1,200.

“The Friends Auxiliary is blessed to have the support of our community. Both salons did an amazing job and all of our patients enjoyed the opportunity to receive a haircut from local professionals,” stated Adkins. “We hope to coordinate future events like Snips of Love for our patients to enjoy.”

For more information on upcoming Friends Auxiliary events, contact Krista Adkins, 304-269-1210 Ext. 371.



Shear Bliss Family Salon stylists Brandy Tawney, Amanda Wimer, Betsy Murphy (Shear Bliss Owner), Cyndi Hyde, Jennifer Boggs and Courtney Henline with Krista Adkins, Sharpe Hospital Volunteer Services Coordinator.



Best of Styles Salon stylists Nancy Cogar, Katie Counts and Julie Chapman with Krista Adkins, Sharpe Hospital Volunteer Services Coordinator.

## Governor Tomblin Announces State Implementation of CDC Guidelines on Safe Use of Opioids



Governor Earl Ray Tomblin recently announced that the state has developed a plan that adheres to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for prescribing opioid medications for chronic pain.

DHHR and PEIA, in conjunction with private insurers, pain specialists, pharmacists, and other West Virginia medical providers, have developed new prior authorization requirements and an opioid treatment plan template as part of the state's ongoing efforts to curb opioid abuse, overdoses and deaths.

"With more than 600 opiate-related overdose deaths in West Virginia last year, we must continue making every positive change we can to break the cycle of addiction," Gov. Tomblin said. "I am pleased that our two health agencies are working together to promote safe and effective chronic pain management. These new guidelines will give physicians and patients the facts they need to make more informed decisions about treatment."

The CDC recommends that opioids should not be considered a first-choice treatment, and that patients should be educated about and agree to all treatment decisions regarding chronic pain. It is also recommended that providers should consider potential opioid abuse, including diversion of opioid medication, when pursuing treatment, as well as take measures to prevent abuse.

"This effort is a collaboration built on the CDC's recommendations, as well as input from West Virginia medical professionals," DHHR Cabinet Secretary Karen L. Bowling said. "The state intends to implement these guidelines to reduce the opportunity for opioid overuse and abuse while preserving access to necessary drugs for those patients who truly need them."

DHHR's Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities, Bureau for Medical Services, and Bureau for Public Health will begin offering education to providers this month. Prior authorization forms will be formally adopted on January 1, 2017 for Medicaid and PEIA prescribers. Populations that will be exempted from the prior authorization process include cancer, palliative, and hospice patients.

## How to Stay Healthy During Flu Season

Cooler weather, falling leaves, shorter days and the influenza virus are all signs of the changing seasons. To help enjoy fall and winter and avoid the flu, follow these tips from DHHR's Division of Immunization Services and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC):

- Get the shot. CDC's vaccines advisory committee voted that flu shots should be used instead of nasal spray flu vax during 2016-17 flu seasons.
- Get the shot NOW. It takes about two weeks after receiving the flu vaccine for your body to develop antibodies against the flu virus.
- Wash your hands. Wet, lather and then scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice. Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.
- When you wash, use soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of microbes on hands in some situations, but do not eliminate all types of germs.
- Help keep your children and grandchildren healthy. Infants younger than 6 months can't get the flu vaccine, but you can. Get the flu shot to protect infants and yourself.
- Help protect other vulnerable populations. Pregnant women, the elderly and those with chronic health conditions like diabetes and asthma are at higher risk for the flu. If you are vaccinated, you help stop the spread of the flu to others.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- Watch and share this public service announcement to encourage your family and friends to stay healthy during flu season: <https://youtu.be/At9fRf5IHdI>.

