



A Citizen Voice for the  
Aging Experience

# ENGAGING NH NEWS

## GUEST OPINION:

### A Day Well Spent

By Dan Hobbs

Sometimes life provides you with the perfect experience at the perfect time. For me, that happened at the beginning of this summer with a trip to the Meals on Wheels operation run by St. Joe's Community Services at the Carpenter Center in Manchester, NH.

I have been in senior services for much of my professional career but I have been in administration and management for the past 10 years. It has been a long time since I was on the front line of providing services to our state's senior population. After recently accepting a new job as the Elder Advocacy Coordinator with the New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging (NH AHA), I felt I needed to familiarize myself with all of the services available to seniors in the state.

Luckily, after a community meeting I was greeted by Meghan Brady, President of St. Joes Community Services who invited me to come out to their Meals on Wheels site. I took her up on her offer, thinking that this would be a good opportunity meet a few people and spread the word about NH AHA. It would prove to be much more

***Meals on Wheels are so much more than a meal***

than that.

On a hot summer morning in June I was greeted at the Carpenter Center by several smiling faces and a welcoming atmosphere. It was Bingo day at the Carpenter Center so there was a good energy in the building. All the staff and volunteers were busy cooking, preparing, and packaging meals for the day's deliveries throughout greater Manchester. Several staff members (all of whom seemed genuinely happy to be there) showed me around their pristine facility and walked me through the

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streamlined-process of getting all these meals prepped and ready to go.

I was matched up with a driver, Sue, in the late morning and after loading up her car with the day's deliveries we headed out. After the 1st stop at a rooming-house just around the corner from the Carpenter Center, I knew this was going to be a great afternoon.

Sue was wonderful. She seemed like a friend visiting her neighbors throughout the city. Every client she came in contact with was greeted with a big smile and a warm meal. She checked-in with each person, asking them about their day and how they were feeling: "Yesterday you were so tired. Are you feeling any better today?" "Were you able to get outside today and enjoy the sunny weather?" For some clients, Sue and I would be the only visitors they would see that day (or that whole week).

As we traveled Sue's route through the West Side of Manchester, I was struck by the diversity we encountered. We stopped by senior housing apartments, private homes, and rooming houses. Clients were both young and old. Some

were dealing with a chronic illness while others were rehabbing from a surgery or a temporary condition. Regardless of their individual circumstances, every client was so pleased to see Sue. In less than 2 hours she travelled the city bringing a smile to the faces of all of her clients. She even brought joy to the pets she encountered (she brings dog and cat treats where ever she goes).

Meals on Wheels are so much more than a meal. It is much-needed social interaction for isolated individuals, piece of mind for family members who can't check-in on their love ones as much as they would like, and a link to other services that our frailest citizens may need. Meals on Wheels also helped a seasoned senior services professional re-energize himself as he begins a new job and remind him why he works in this field.

Thank you St. Joes and

Meals on Wheels,

*Dan Hobbs is the Elder Advocacy Coordinator for the New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging*

**NH Updates**

**"CLEAR + VIVID" FEATURES NH NATIVE**

Alan Alda: Communication and the way in which we use it effectively—or not—has long been a subject of interest to Mr. Alda, which is why he is launching "Clear+Vivid," a new podcast that it is an outgrowth of his book.

The 20-to-40-minute bi-monthly podcasts will feature Mr. Alda in conversation with some of the most effective and influential communicators of our time—experts in a range of professions. Guests for the inaugural season of "Clear+Vivid" include violinist Itzhak Perlman, and comedian, producer, writer and NH native Sarah Sil-

**WHO ARE WE?**

*EngAGING NH is an all-volunteer not-for-profit organization registered with the State of NH. We work to support and promote activities, policies, planning and values that respect and include ALL older adults.*

**WHO IS MY LEGISLATOR?**

Use this quick link to find and contact your local State Rep and Senator:

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/wml.aspx>

Visit your town or city's website to find contact information for your local elected officials.

**Tell them your ideas, thoughts & concerns!**

verman, whose Hulu series, "I Love You, America," features the famously liberal Ms. Silverman venturing deep into Trump territory in an attempt to find common ground with residents there.

Subscribe to "Clear+Vivid" with Alan Alda for free on Apple Podcasts or visit alanalda.com

**VNA ASKS FOR VETS TO VOLUNTEER**

The Concord Regional Visiting Nurse Association is seeking military veteran volunteers to offer companionship and support to veterans receiving hospice care.

The next eight-week training program is slated for Thursday, Sept. 6, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Concord Regional VNA Hospice House in Concord.

The meetings between the veterans take place in their

homes and at the hospice house.

For more information call (603) 224-4093 or (800) 924-8620, ext. 2826, or to send an email to [lisa.challender@crvna.org](mailto:lisa.challender@crvna.org)

by Friday, Aug. 10.

**SENIOR LEADERSHIP ALUMNI NETWORK (SLAN)**

The Senior Leadership Alumni Network is an initiative funded by the Tufts Health Plan Foundation for the two years. with the first year having just been completed. Led by staff at the UNH Center for Aging and Community (CACL), it has just completed its first year. With this effort CACL will reach out to the over 100 graduates of the Senior Leadership Series representing many communities in NH.

Alumni of the Senior Leadership Series, who are the participants in the SLAN, are building advocacy at the local and state levels and helping to lead community goals to increase age friendly initiatives across the state. With the

grant funding support from the Tufts Health Foundation, SLAN members will build their advocacy skills and form a strong knowledge base on aging issues in NH.

SLAN's efforts will be directed by these local leaders who will partner with key stakeholders to advance age friendly community efforts. The grant plans to improve communication with and among SLAN participants and share resources and information as a foundation for increased civic engagement. SLAN participants will be connected to the work of the Alliance for Healthy Aging, a long term age friendly effort supported by the NH Endowment for Health.

The Senior Leadership Series is a collaboration of AARP New Hampshire, CACL, and the Dartmouth Center for Health and Aging. The Series is designed for older adults, caregivers, family members and friends who want to advocate for older adults in NH.

**NEW SILVER LININGS REPORTER**

The Union Leader's Aging in NH feature, Silver Linings, funded by the Endowment for Health has a new reporter. Roberta

Baker. She has covered a wide variety of issues facing NH's older adults since her arrival. Topics have recently included next careers, safety, hoarding, community involvement and hospice. Access to these articles is free at <http://www.unionleader.com/section/news2001>.

### **TUFT GRANT UPDATE**

Southern NH Planning Commission has received a two-year grant of \$79,600 to the Sustainable Foundation to support their work on creating age-friendly communities. The Commission will expand their age-friendly efforts so more communities are great places to grow up and grow old. This is one of 16 new community investments totaling nearly \$1.8 million that reflect the Tufts Health Plan Foundation's commitment to make cities and towns in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island great places for everyone to live.

Similar to this past year, Phase III will allow SNHPC to identify innovative approaches for many of their communities and businesses through a fantastic pilot program. Drawing on lessons learned during last year's pilot programs, SNHPC will work with local,

regional, and state representatives-including Chambers of Commerce, government leaders, municipal and regional planning organizations, and residents of all ages-- to embed age-friendly principles in their work. They will evaluate how well projects address community needs, including affordable housing options, accessible community buildings, social engagement opportunities, and affordable transportation programs.

Cameron Prolman, Associate Planner with SNHPC enthusiastically shared,

"We are very excited to continue working with our communities and businesses in our region. Age-friendly principles are not unfamiliar to most planners in New Hampshire - but having the opportunity to address them head-on, through research and working directly with municipalities, transit and health care agencies, and business owners to develop practical solutions is a

**LOOKING FOR A BACK ISSUE OF ENH NEWS?**  
Check our website:  
[www.engagingnh.org](http://www.engagingnh.org)

unique opportunity."

### **TUFTS MOMENTUM FUND**

Tufts Health Plan Foundation recently announced a new mini-grant program. The Momentum Fund offers grants of up to \$10,000 to support early-stage age- and dementia-friendly work in Mass., N.H. and R.I.

Visit the Tufts Health Plan Foundation website for details.  
<http://tuftshealthplanfoundation.org/focus-areas.php?page=focus-areas/momentum-fund>

### **From Our Readers**

Thanks [EngAGING NH}.....very informative. I have forwarded on to my colleagues.

*Ellen Avery*

It's always a treat to get EngAGING. I always give it to a couple here and it always ends up in the library for all the other residents.

*Barbara*

A friend of mine just emailed me a copy of the EngAGING NH NEWS. I found it very relevant I would like to be added to your mailing list. I also have "something on my mind":

I am 71 years old and have retired from work several times, however I am back

at it after working continuously since I was 16 years old. Based on how this administration keeps resurrecting cuts to Medicaid and Medicare, I am not convinced my retirement savings will be enough to make up for any reductions in present coverage.

I have no savings for nursing home stays beyond what Medicare covers. So cuts in Medicaid are worrisome should I need that when I get older or sick enough to not be able to care for myself. I continue to work both because I can and because I am nervous about relying on this administration to not take away programs that I have contributed to for 55 years.

I can't get my head around a congress that has so little compassion for the older population of this country (who, for the most part, have contributed into these programs their whole lives) that they think only in terms of re-election, making money, and giving no thought to the welfare of the people affected by their proposed budget cuts.

I think the quality of a community and by extension a civilization can be judged by how it cares for its population...all of its population, and believe fu-

ture generations will judge us to have become very meager.

Regards, Carry Spier

### FREE FILM SCREENING

Join local non-profits and community members for a free screening of Gen Silent, a documentary that follows six LGBT seniors who must decide if they will hide their sexuality to survive the current long-term care system.

Join us for discussion to follow, seating is limited! Wednesday, August 15, 2018 5:00 PM. This event is free although registration is required as seating is limited. Please register through [www.events.unh.edu/Regis](http://www.events.unh.edu/Regis)

tration-  
Form.pm?event\_id=28655.

## Focus on Community

### NEW VOTER REQUIREMENT

Gov. Chris Sununu signed into law highly controversial legislation requiring anyone voting in New Hampshire to take action to become a resident of the state. House Bill 1264 will take effect July 1, 2019, which means the upcoming 2018 elections will be held under the existing statutes that allow people domiciled in the state to vote in the state even if they are not residents of the state.

But beginning in the 2019 municipal elections – and later, in the 2020 elections – people who vote in New Hampshire must be residents of the state and if, for instance, they do not have a New Hampshire driver's license, they will be required to obtain one within 60 days of voting. They must also register their vehicles in the Granite State.

### MAINE LEADING U.S. ON AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

“With four more towns making the age-friendly commitment recently, Maine now leads the nation

in the number of towns that have enrolled in the Network of Age-Friendly Communities. Nationally, 80 municipalities and 12 counties have joined. Age-friendly community planning is just as relevant for large cities as it is for small towns. Communities vary in size from New York City to Newry, Maine, population 329.

Four municipalities have recently been accepted into the AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities, joining 10 already participating in Maine. Each community's Council, select board, or mayor has committed to completing an age-friendly plan in the next two years and working to implement age-friendly practices over the next five years.

**Readfield**, population 2800, in Kennebec County has already appointed an age-friendly committee and has begun planning. Selectman Bruce Bourgoine thought the effort might help the central Maine town because "It touches on a lot of things." He recruited volunteer Romaine Turyn to lead the effort. She has a background in aging, with pre-retirement positions at the Muskie School and the Maine Commission on Aging.

**Saco**, a city of 19,000, in northern York County, is holding a big age-friendly kick off on Wednesday, June 15. Saco's renewed interest in age-friendly planning is being nurtured by volunteer Jean Saunders and has the strong support of Mayor Ron Michaud.

**Augusta**, the state capital with a population of 19,000, held its first age-friendly committee meeting earlier this week. It is chaired by Bob MacDougal, a retiree who convinced the city council and Mayor David Rollins to get involved. Councilor Anna Blodgett is the council representative on the committee. AARP is planning a major community survey to help with the Augusta effort.

**Berwick**, a town of 7,300 in the southernmost part of York County, is using its existing Envision Berwick committee to get the age-friendly effort going. Chairman James Bellissimo, who graduated from USM last month, wrote the application and is organizing the effort with committee members.

AARP is supporting an intensive age-friendly community effort with both its own resources and with an extraordinary three year

commitment from the John T. Gorman Foundation. The AARP Maine office is available to help communities get started on making their towns more age-friendly and more livable. Other Maine age-friendly network communities: Paris, Ellsworth, Portland, Kennebunk, Bowdoinham, Bethel, Newry, Greenwood, Woodstock, and Eastport.

<https://states.aarp.org/maine-leading-u-s-age-friendly-communities/ource>

## News You Can Use

### 9 SIGNS YOU SHOULD FIRE YOUR DOCTOR

Not all physicians are right for all patients. When to look for a new one.

Your doctors help with so much more than just your health. They impact your pain management, your health care experience, your quality of life and even how long you are able to live it. Because they are such a powerful force in your life, it is crucial that you hold them to a high standard.

And physicians like Dr. Neel Anand, professor of orthopedic surgery and director of spine trauma at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, couldn't agree more.

“When you keep expectations high, you find better providers and you also more often hold yourself accountable to following their prescribed treatments because you inherently trust in them,” he says. That’s a win-win for you and the doctor.

Here are nine warning signs that it might be time to find a new doctor:

**1. You don’t feel heard.**

Your doctor should listen — really listen — to all of your concerns. If you want to discuss your heart disease risks and your family’s cancer history and all your doctor wants to talk about is your hearing, there is a major disconnect that may not be bridgeable.

Anand says: “If you’ve waited a long time to see this person and they provide you five minutes of time, most of which is spent staring at the chart... it’s best to go with the doctor who puts down the chart and actively listens to what’s going on with you. You’ll both be better for it.” Dr. Edward Hallowell, a New York City psychiatrist, adds that if a doctor cuts you off or frequently prevents you from sharing the whole story, it’s time to find a new one.

**We Want You to Know . . .**

EngAGING NH promotes citizen leadership and the active involvement of New Hampshire’s older adults in the development of communities and public policies that support all individuals as we age. We are a COMPLETELY VOLUNTEER organization with no paid staff, and a limited budget.

We actively partner & work with other NH advocates.

**Formal Partnerships**

- NH State Independent Living Council
- State Committee on Aging-Vaughan Awards
- Disabilities Rights Center—NH
- NH Cares
- UNH Center for Aging and Community Living
- Oral Health Care Expansion, Children’s Alliance of NH
- Self Advocacy Leadership Team (SALT)
- Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council
- Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

**Active Collaborations & Groups:**

- Elder Rights Coalition

**Other Groups we work with:**

- AARP
- NH Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
- NH State Committee on Aging
- NAMI
- NH Alliance for Retired Americans
- DD Council
- UNH Institute on Disabilities
- NASW-NH
- Area Committees on Aging
- NH Association of Senior Centers
- Endowment for Health, Alliance on Healthy Aging
- NH Legal Assistance
- Department of Health & Human Services
- ServiceLink

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## 2. You have a serious personality conflict.

How do you trust a doctor who you can't bring yourself to like? Dr. Peter Le-Port, bariatric surgeon and medical director of MemorialCare Surgical Weight Loss Center at Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, Calif., says personality is pretty important.

"I'm not talking about the [doctor's] qualifications or outcomes. Those are very important factors, but what I'm talking about has to do with how you feel about the [doctor] you are considering," he says. Concerns about the physician's dedication to you as a patient, your ability to trust him or her, he says, may be on the warm and fuzzy side, but it's equally important as the doctor's skills and outcomes.

Would you want someone you can't stand operating on you or making major medical decisions for you, despite the fact this person may be talented? For some, this is a deal-breaker.

## 3. Your doctor is too stretched to serve you.

He or she may be the best doctor in the world, but if you can't get in for an ap-

pointment within a reasonable time or the physician has way too many patients to make you a priority, you may need to seek someone who is more conscious of your needs.

Of course, much of this depends on how populated your area is and how many doctors there are. A recent report can tell you what the practitioner-to-patient ratio is in your state. For instance, Hawaii has a nurse shortage and Idaho

### *FYI...*

This newsletter is intended as a forum for you to share personal experiences, information and points of view.

In our media driven world of skillful marketing and political spin, we believe that diversity is critical to discernment and therefore the EngAGING NH Board of Directors welcomes all points of view, expressed with civility!

While the opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Board members, our intent is to include material that assists you in forming your own opinions.

To send articles or to add your name to our newsletter mailing list, contact:

[engagingnh@gmail.com](mailto:engagingnh@gmail.com)

has a physician shortage. If you live in a state with shortages, you might look for a new medical practice in your area with a shorter list of patients who won't be overbooked yet.

## 4. Your doctor's approach is not healing you.

Sometimes you need a second opinion if treatment doesn't seem to be working. But research shows that you should venture outside your doctor's practice to get an unbiased opinion. You may want to do so for no other reason than to give you the confidence that you're going in the right direction.

## 5. Your doctor doesn't educate you.

These days, some medical answers are one Google search query away. But there are disadvantages to getting your information this way, including the potential for poor-quality or biased sources. Hopefully your doctor is a reliable source for all the information you need, so you don't feel compelled to seek more information elsewhere. You should be educated completely about your medications, conditions and treatment options.

**6. You can't be honest with your doctor.**

Your doctor needs all the information you can possibly provide to make decisions about your care. Le-Port notes, "When you know you can talk to your doctor, you're more likely to keep your appointments, follow his or her advice and implement suggestions for making adjustments that are right for you."

Hallowell agrees and underscores the importance of trusting your doctor. He says you should be able to tell your physician things you wouldn't even tell your best friend. If you are unable to, he says it "may be cause for ending the relationship."

**7. Your doctor is too aggressive.**

Be careful how quickly your doctor moves to extreme treatment options. Anand says that, in medicine, you should seek a doctor who is both conservative and a little aggressive. For instance, if you go to see a doctor about your back pain and he or she immediately wants to schedule

**How to Contact Your State Committee on Aging Representatives**

County	Name	Email
Belknap		
Carroll		
Cheshire	Susan Emerson	semerson435@aol.com
Coos	Mark M. E. Frank	maxfra@aol.com
Grafton		
Hillsborough	Kathy Baldrige	kathy@lifetimeliquidations.com
	Ken Berlin, Chair	kaberlin@comcast.net
Merrimack		
Rockingham	Nancy Formella	naformella@gmail.com
Strafford		
Sullivan	Mary Catherine Rawls	Mary.catherine.rawls@hitchcock.org
NH Senate	Ruth Ward	ruth.ward@leg.state.nh.us
NH House	James McKay	james.mackay@mygait.com
Website:	<a href="http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/beas/aging/">http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/beas/aging/</a>	

surgery, that should be a huge red flag.

"What you really want is someone who will assess your condition over some period of time, trying the least invasive and disruptive approaches to managing your back pain first. But you also want him or her to stay on top of it, too. That's where the aggressive part comes in," he said. That being said, Anand maintains that your doctor needs to make adjustments quickly if things are not working.

**8. Your doctor refuses to coordinate with your other specialists.**

Care coordination is crucial, especially with your primary care physician (PCP). But all your doctors should be communicating at some level. Most often, a PCP acts as the "hub" of information, especially in complicated cases. A study done of patients in 11 different countries found that roughly 5 percent of patients reported their care coordination as "poor." If your doctor won't com-

municate with your other doctors about your care, it might be time to find a new one, especially if this physician is your PCP.

**9. You feel bullied.**

If your doctor is pressuring you to undergo a treatment or take a medication you're not comfortable with, or isn't open to second opinions, this is not a good sign. There are usually at least a couple of treatment options your doctor should be discussing with you. According to the Patient Advocate Foundation, "Statistics show that over one-third of adults in the United States will never seek a second opinion and almost one-tenth of newly diagnosed patients rarely or never understand their diagnosis."

Hallowell says a doctor who doesn't answer all your questions, doesn't return phone calls, speaks condescendingly or keeps you in the dark is not well-suited to you.

*Hilary Thompson, nextavenue.org, 6/19/18*

**THAI SOCCER TEAM**

The story of the Thai boys soccer team trapped in a cave for two weeks has captivated millions of people around the world. Lost since June 23rd, the group

Do you know an Elder leader making NH better for all of us as we age?

**Nominated him or her for a Vaughan Award!**

Nomination forms are online at

<http://www.engagingnh.org/nominate-someone-for-the-2017-vaughan-awards.html>

spent ten days without any contact with the outside world. It was finally discovered on July 2nd and rescued on July 10th.

It turned out that Ekapol Chanthawong, **the** 25-year-old coach of the 12-player Wild Boars soccer team, is a former Buddhist monk. He spent a decade living as a monk and is a practitioner of meditation. It is that skill that has been credited with keeping the boys calm during this ordeal. In fact, when the British divers discovered them after ten days, the group was meditating.

Aisha Wiboonrungrueng, the mother of the 11-year-old Chanin, who was trapped in the cave, thinks the coach's background definitely helped in this situation. Watching the video of the moment the boys were found, she thought it was very note-

worthy how calm they were.

*"Look at how calm they were sitting there waiting," she said. "No one was crying or anything. It was astonishing."*

**Leah Weiss**, a Stanford expert taught by the Dalai Lama, told CNBC that meditating played a key role in keeping the group alive. It's a kind of mental training that improves focus and compassion, according to the expert.

*"For Buddhists, meditation is a go-to when distressed or in danger," Weiss said. "Cognitive resources that would otherwise be hijacked by the threat can be accessed once again, meaning that problem-solving capacities increase."*

In particular, she pointed out that "given that insufficient air and food was a major issue for the trapped boys, meditation is actually a very practical response to both of these concerns."

Meditation creates a calming effect by slowing down the heart rate, breathing and metabolism, said Weiss. It also lowers the levels of cortisol and oxygen utilization. A meditating person would also emit less carbon dioxide.

### Can You Help?

You may make a donation to ENH through our fiscal agent, Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. which is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation.

Make your check out to Disabilities Rights Center-NH, Inc. and note "EngAGING NH" on the memo line. DRC's mailing address is 64 North Main Street, Suite 2, 3rd Floor, Concord, NH 03301-4913.

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

More details about how the boys got trapped in the cave in the first place are to be uncovered, but it looks to be a very dramatic real-world demonstration of the power of meditation. The incident confirms a steadily growing body of research that shows how meditation and mindfulness practices lead to lower stress levels, improved positivity, and creativity as well as clearer focus and protection from depression. (<https://bigthink.com/paul-ratner/meditation-kept-the-thai-boys-trapped-in-a-cave-astonishingly-calm>)

### HEARING AIDS USERS HAVE FEWER HOSPITAL STAYS

Older adults with hearing loss are less likely to be hospitalized or to visit the emergency room when they wear hearing aids, compared to those who don't, a U.S. study suggests.

Researchers examined Medicare payment data collected in 2013 and 2014 for 1,336 adults 65 and older with hearing loss. Overall, 734 people, or 55 percent, didn't wear hearing aids.

During the study period, 24 percent of people with hearing aids and 26 percent of those without the devices visited an emergency room at least once, the study found. With hearing aids, 20 percent of people were hospitalized, compared to 22 percent without the devices.

With hearing aids, however, health care costs were not necessarily lower: more people with the devices had at least one checkup at a clinic or doctor's office, and people with hearing aids also averaged 1.4 more doctor visits than those without the devices.

"We hypothesize that use of hearing aids helps indi-

viduals with severe hearing loss to communicate better with their physicians and to have a more active lifestyle compared with those who do not use hearing aids," said lead study author Elham Mahmoudi of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

While hearing aids were associated with higher total health care spending and out-of-pocket costs for patients, the devices were also linked to \$71 less in annual Medicare spending, the study found.

*Lisa Rapaport, Reuters, 5/21/18*

### Health & Wellness

#### MAINTAINING HEALTHY VISION MAY HELP KEEP BRAIN IN SHAPE, TOO

Waning eyesight may hasten the pace of cognitive decline in older people, suggests a U.S. study.

The results suggest that vision fixes, like a new eyeglass prescription or surgery to remove cataracts, can go a long way toward helping older people stay mentally sharp, said lead author D. Diane Zheng of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

“Taking care of your vision is important in order to maintain good cognitive function,” she said in a telephone interview.

Poor eyesight and weakening mental function are common in older people and related to one another, but the question of whether vision influences cognition, or vice versa, has not been clear, the study team writes in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

To investigate, Zheng’s team followed 2,520 adults for eight years, testing their vision and cognitive status every other year.

Over the course of the study, average visual decline was roughly equivalent to losing the ability to read one line of an eye chart. People who had worse vision at the beginning of the study had worse scores on the cognitive exam as well. A person’s vision at their previous check-up was related to their mental function at the following check-up. While mental function at one check-up was also related to vision at the following exam, the effect of vision on subsequent mental function was significantly stronger.

While the mechanism behind the vision-cognition

relationship isn’t well understood, Zheng said, worsening vision can discourage people from brain-stimulating activities like doing crosswords and engaging with other people.

She recommended that older adults get regular eye checkups, and have any vision symptoms checked out and treated promptly.

“This study provides additional evidence that would

structural level,” she said in a phone interview.

The good news, Whitson added, is that poor vision is one of the few risk factors for cognitive decline that is potentially modifiable. Even incurable causes of age-related vision loss such as glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration “are highly treatable, so we can reduce the amount of vision loss that people suffer from if they’re detected early.”

*Anne Harding, Reuters, 7/4/18*

## **ORANGES IMPROVE EYE HEALTH**

Regular orange eaters are 60 percent less likely to develop a macular disease, one of the most common eye problems that can lead to blindness as we get older, a new research study has discovered. The study tracked the eating habits of more than 2,000 people aged 50 and over for 15 years. The participants were eating other healthy foods and drinks, and especially those that contain anti-inflammatory flavonoids, such as tea, apples and red wine, but it was only those who regularly ate oranges that reduced their chances of macular degeneration. Source:



suggest that people who can keep their vision healthy as they age might also be protecting their cognitive health,” said Dr. Heather E. Whitson of Duke University School of Medicine and Durham VA Medical Center, who wasn’t involved in the research.

“If you’re aging without good vision, not only are you giving your brain less stimulation, you might be altering your brain at a

What Doctors Won't Tell You

**5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR OPTOMETRIST**

When we visit our eye doctor there are a couple things we expect from them. We expect them to check for current eye problems, and we also expect them to discuss conditions that may affect our eyes in the future. But did you know your eye doctor can also look at your family's eye health history to see what may impact your eyes later in life? To prepare for your next eye exam, we've listed five questions to ask your optometrist:

**1. What changes can I expect in my vision as I get older?**

There's no one better than an optometrist to prepare you for how your vision will change as you get older. Not only can they assess your eye health and potential risks based on family history, they can ensure you are aware of all preventative measures you could be taking as well.

**2. Will diet, exercise or other lifestyle changes help my vision?**

Optometrists can give you the best tips for keeping your eyes healthy and strong in both the long and

short term. This includes sharing the latest trends in eye health and providing guidance on lifestyle choices that benefit your eye health, such as maintaining a proper diet and exercise routine.

**3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of wearing contact lenses vs. glasses?**

If you're thinking about making the switch, an optometrist can walk you through the pros and cons of both contacts and glasses. They can also make recommendations for brands and high-quality eyewear, but most importantly they can help you find the exact right option for you given your specific needs.

**4. Has anything about my eyes changed since my last visit that I should know about?**

Your optometrist will likely tell you what changes (if any) you may have to your prescription, but it is also wise to have your optometrist explain everything that might have changed since your last exam so you can be

**HELP!**

Do you need help with your Social Security or VA benefits? Do you have questions about the IRS or Medicare? If so, your NH Congressional Delegation can help!

Your two U.S. Senators and two Congresswomen all have staff equipped to help New Hampshire residents with issues, concerns or questions related to the federal government. The contact information for the NH Congressional Delegation is below. Please don't hesitate to reach out!

Senator Jeanne Shaheen  
2 Wall Street, Suite 220  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603-647-7500  
[www.shaheen.senate.gov](http://www.shaheen.senate.gov)

Senator Maggie Hassan  
1589 Elm Street, Third Floor  
Manchester, NH 03101  
603-622-2204  
[www.hassan.senate.gov](http://www.hassan.senate.gov)

Rep. Carol Shea-Porter  
1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District  
660 Central Ave., Unit 101  
Dover, NH 03820  
603-285-4300  
[www.shea-porter.house.gov](http://www.shea-porter.house.gov)

Rep. Annie Kuster  
2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District  
18 North Main Street,  
Fourth Floor  
Concord, NH 03301  
603-226-1002  
[www.kuster.house.gov](http://www.kuster.house.gov)

**RAISE YOUR VOICE!**  
Please let us know what's on your mind and what's important to you.  
engagingnh@gmail.com

aware of your eye health. Consider taking it a step further and ask what could've caused these changes so you can take preventive actions in the future.

**5. What can an eye exam tell you about your overall health?**

Certain illnesses and diseases not specific to the eyes (like diabetes and high blood pressure) may be identified by eye health experts. Optometrists can help you identify these signals and get ahead of any potential issues. Knowing what to look out for and what to do if you see a potential problem can go a long way in keeping your eyes in great shape.

Overall, it's important to keep an active and open dialogue with a doctor you trust.

Source:[https://www.nextavenue.org/5-questions-to-ask-your-optometrist/?hide\\_newsletter=true&utm\\_source=Next+Avenue+Email+Newsletter&utm\\_](https://www.nextavenue.org/5-questions-to-ask-your-optometrist/?hide_newsletter=true&utm_source=Next+Avenue+Email+Newsletter&utm_)

campaign=97d02154e1-06.19.2018\_Tuesday\_N

**PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENTS HALVE RATE OF BONE LOSS**

Osteoporosis and fractures, are two big health worries as we age, especially for women after the menopause. Probiotic supplements can make a difference. They populate the gut with 'good' bacteria, and it's yet another example of the way the gut regulates our health. The discovery is a "paradigm shift" in the way we protect our bones, say the researchers. Most women over the age of 80 suffer from osteoporosis, or brittleness of the bones, which means that the slightest fall can cause a fracture.

Drugs on the market can treat osteoporosis to some extent, but they are often prescribed only after bone loss is detected. But women who take a probiotic for at least a year have half the bone loss of similar women who don't take the supplement, researchers from Gothenburg University in Sweden have discovered.

They tested a powdered probiotic on 90 women with an average age of 76, half of whom were given the active version and the

rest had a dummy or placebo powder. After a year, CT scans that measured bone health in the lower legs of all the women discovered that those taking the probiotic had half the bone loss of those given the placebo. None of the women taking the probiotic suffered any side effects or reactions.

It's the first time that the effects of probiotics on human bone health have been tested, the researchers say. Up to now, studies have been restricted to laboratory mice.

The probiotics used in the test contained *Lactobacillus reuteri* 6475, a bacterium that has many health benefits

*Journal of Internal Medicine, 2018; doi: 10.1111/joim.12805*

**Tech Tips**

**SECURE ACCESS TO YOUR ACCOUNTS**

Since passwords can be stolen, adding two-step authentication to accounts provides a second layer of protection. Many online services, including apps and websites, offer free options that could help you protect your information and ensure it's actually you trying to access your ac-

count – not just someone with your password.

Learn to “Lock Down Your Login” at [www.lockdownyourlogin.com](http://www.lockdownyourlogin.com).

And, for more information about two-step authentication, go to [www.turnon2fa.com](http://www.turnon2fa.com).

### CAN YOU SPOT AN ONLINE SCAM?

Practicing cyber safety can go a long way toward protecting your identity and sensitive personal information. “Cybersecurity is about risk reduction,” said Michael Kaiser, executive director of the National Cyber Security Alliance. “It’s difficult to achieve perfect security. But you can work to make yourself a more difficult target.” Consider these tips from the National Cyber Security Alliance, The Stop Think and Connect campaign’s online safety tips for older adults, Public Safety Canada and the Home Instead Senior Care® network. And take the “**Quiz: Can You Spot an Online Scam?**”

### WHAT TO DO WITH OLD DEVICES

Technology is advancing faster than it breaks, which means we’re upgrading our devices—and getting rid of our old gadgets—more of-

ten than ever. In 2016 alone, the United States trashed about 44 pounds of electronic waste per person.

And today’s devices, from iPhones to simple alarm clocks, often contain toxic chemicals like lead, cadmium, and mercury. If you just throw them away, those poisons will end up in the environment.

A simple Google (or Google Maps) search of terms like “electronics recycling” or “e-waste” should turn up a ton of options in your area. From there, you can differentiate the big recycling centers from the consumer-focused collection centers. Some of the latter are local shops with a variety of monikers, while others share a name—for example, multiple cities around the country host e-waste centers called Free Geek, named after a particularly successful shop in Portland, OR.

If you find a location that sells used tech back to the community, you know you’re headed in the right direction.

Before you turn them in, you’ll want to take care with hard drives and other tech that might contain personal information. You can securely erase them

yourself by encrypting and resetting or formatting the device, but many recycling centers will also do this task for you.

“We have machines here that can erase hard drives to Department of Defense standards, so there’s no way to retrieve data from the disk,” says Danny Muller, Assistant Supervisor of the University of San Diego’s Electronics Recycling Center. That way, they can resell the clean drives in the store.

Alternatively, he says a recycling center can demolish hard drives onsite and give you a certificate of destruction. They’ll even let you watch as staff members mangle your drive, so you can feel secure that nothing will happen to your data.

[www.popsci.com/recycle-tech-e-waste-centersrce](http://www.popsci.com/recycle-tech-e-waste-centersrce)

## Dollars & Sense

### SHOULD I PAY OFF MY MORTGAGE BEFORE I RETIRE

*When You Should Consider Paying Off the Mortgage*

#### You have the cash

If you have enough, or close to enough, cash sitting in a money market or equally liquid account, it

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engagingnh@gmail.com  
Forward it on!

could save significant interest if you go ahead and pay off your mortgage, in part or in full. It'll free up cash you can reinvest in the funds each month.

**There's no tax savings**

If you're like a lot of Americans, the new tax law means you'll be taking the standard deduction in 2018 instead of itemizing. That means your mortgage interest deduction is essentially worthless. In that case, it may be well worth reducing your liquid assets in order to pay off your mortgage.

**You want to free up the income**

If your monthly cash flow needs a boost, paying off your mortgage is a great option. It doesn't mean you won't have access to the assets you use to pay off the loan. Instead, those assets will rest in your home. You can access them through a home equi-

ty loan or line of credit, or even a reverse mortgage later in retirement.

*When You Should Not Consider Paying Off the Mortgage:*

**You're cash-strapped**

If paying off your mortgage would leave you without an emergency fund, it may not be wise to do so, even if it would free up your monthly cash flow. Instead, you may want to consider making larger monthly payments toward your mortgage in order to pay it off more quickly rather than doing so all at once.

**You'd pay penalties**

If your mortgage includes a prepayment penalty for paying off the debt early, it may not be a good idea. Check with your bank to see what is possible and just how much an early payoff will cost. Likewise, if the funds you'd use to pay off your mortgage are tied up in an individual retirement account or 401(k), consider whether you'd pay a penalty for early withdrawal and if it makes sense financially to do so.

**You're not already maxing out your retirement contributions**

If you're still working and aren't contributing the

maximum amount possible to your 401(k) and IRAs, it's often better to make those a priority before your mortgage. Talk to your accountant or other financial professional to see what's best for your situation.

**You have other, higher-interest debt**

If you're carrying credit card debt or have other loans that cost more in interest than your mortgage, it's a good idea to pay this debt off first. Remember, mortgage debt can help your credit score. Carrying credit card debt, however, won't, since it directly affects your credit utilization. The higher your carried balances, the lower your credit score.

*Policygenius.com.*

**Laugh & Live Longer**

**MISTAKEN INSTRUCTIONS**

"Yesterday I got my permit to carry a concealed weapon. So, today I went over to the local Bass Pro Shop to buy a 9mm handgun for home/ personal protection.

When I was ready to pay for the pistol and ammo, the cashier said, "Strip down, facing me."

Making a mental note to complain to the NRA I did just as she had instructed.

When the hysterical shrieking and alarms finally subsided, I found out she was referring to how I should place my credit card in the card reader!

### DIAGNOSTIC COMPUTER AT COSTCO

One day, at the luncheon meeting, Nate says to Al, "My elbow hurts like hell. I guess I'd better see a doctor."

"Listen, you don't have to spend that kind of money," Al replies, "There's a diagnostic computer down at Costco. Just give it a urine sample and the computer will tell you what's wrong and what to do about it. It takes ten seconds and costs ten dollars - A lot cheaper than a doctor."

So Nate deposits a urine sample in a small jar and takes it to Costco. He deposits ten dollars and the computer lights up and asks for the urine sample. He pours the sample into the slot and waits. Ten seconds later, the computer ejects a printout: You have tennis elbow. Soak your arm in warm water and avoid heavy activity. It will improve in two weeks.

Thank you for shopping @ Costco!

That evening, while thinking how amazing this new technology was, Nate began wondering if the computer could be fooled. He mixed some tap water, a stool sample from his dog, urine samples from his wife and daughter, and a sperm sample from himself for good measure. Nate hurries back to Costco, eager to check the results. He deposits ten dollars, pours in his concoction, and awaits the results.

The computer prints the following:

1. Your tap water is too hard. Get a water softener. (Aisle 9).
2. Your dog has ringworm. Bathe him with anti-fungal shampoo. (Aisle 7)
3. Your daughter has a cocaine habit. Get her into rehab.
4. Your wife is pregnant. Twins. They aren't yours. Get a lawyer.
5. If you don't stop playing

#### HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

If you like this newsletter, please share it with your family, neighbors, friends and colleagues.

with yourself, your elbow will never get better!

Thank you for shopping @ Costco!

### DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW

The Lone Ranger and Tonto were camping in the wilderness. After they got their tent set up, both men fell sound asleep. Some hours later, Tonto wakes the Lone ...Ranger and says, "Kemo Sabe, look towards sky, what you see?"

The Lone Ranger replies, "I see millions of stars." "What that tell you?" asked Tonto.

The Lone Ranger ponders for a minute then says, "Astronomically-speaking, it tells me there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets.

Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo.

Time-wise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three in the morning.

Theologically, the Lord is all-powerful and we are small and insignificant.

Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow.

What does it tell you, Tonto?"



**Dorothy Solomon**

"You dumber than buffalo... It mean someone our stole tent."

**Purposeful Living**

Dorothy Solomon, a life-long educator from Long Island, NY, arrived in the Mt. Washington Valley in July 1995, having retired from a career teaching English in a local junior high. With the support of her husband and her inexhaustible determination to be of service, she immediately embarked on a second career of remarkable volunteerism.

As a cancer survivor, she joined the American Cancer Society, becoming its chair and raising awareness and needed funds as well as counseling others. When the Society moved to Maine, she sought other service opportunities, not realizing the fuller impact

she would have on the community.

Dorothy's leadership skills were soon recognized by then governor Jeanne Shaheen and she was asked to represent Carroll County on the State Council on Aging, a non-partisan advisory group advocating for seniors and assisting in formulating legislations to meet their needs Dorothy served with diligence and distinction for the maximum time permitted: two, three year terms.

Moving on from the experience she became a County Commissioner! With many hurdles to overcome and fighting hard, she was instrumental in the construction of the state-of-art Mountain View Nursing Home. While she is no longer a commissioner, she maintains her ties through membership in the "Friends of Mountain View" a committee to raise money for the benefit of residents.

Dorothy is also cofounder and chair of a veteran's outreach program, "Starting Home" (a 501-c3) which is currently focused on securing federal and private funds to build a temporary shelter for homeless vets. Dorothy's committee has already established an ancillary ser-

vice called "Starting Home Veterans Connection" staffed with volunteer counselors who assist veterans with whatever their needs might be.

Dorothy also serves on the UNH Extension Board, is a substitute driver for Meals on Wheels, and writes a weekly column for her town in the local newspaper.

With her inexhaustible determination, this extraordinary woman has made a positive, enduring difference in the lives of so many, especially those in need of her courageous voice. She is truly a "woman for all Seasons".

**Board Notes**

**A SIRIUS ISSUE**

This summer has certainly tested us with a string of hot humid days. And despite the ads for back to school shopping, the Dog Days of August are yet to come! While the AC and fans are still running it's interesting to note where "dog days" saying came from or what it actually means.

According to Becky Little of National Geographics, the phrase actually had nothing to do with dogs, or even with the lazy days of sum

**Contact Information For NH Members of the U.S. Congress**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-Mail Contact Form</u>
<u>U.S. Rep. Carol Shea Porter</u>	<u>1530 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515</u>	<u>202-225-5456</u>	<a href="https://shea-porter.house.gov/contact/email">https://shea-porter.house.gov/contact/email</a>
<u>U.S. Rep Ann Kuster</u>	<u>137 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515</u>	<u>202-225-5206</u>	<a href="https://kuster.house.gov/contact/email-me">https://kuster.house.gov/contact/email-me</a>
<u>U.S. Senator Maggie Hassan</u>	<u>B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510</u>	<u>202-224-3324</u>	<a href="https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator">https://www.hassan.senate.gov/content/contact-senator</a>
<u>U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen</u>	<u>506 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510</u>	<u>202-224-2841</u>	<a href="http://www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne">www.shaheen.senate.gov/contact/contact-jeanne</a>

mer. Instead the dog days refer to the dog star, Sirius, and its position in the heavens. To the Greeks and Romans, the “dog days” occurred around the day when Sirius appeared to rise just before the sun, in late July. They referred to these days as the hottest time of the year, a period that could bring fever, or even catastrophe, while The Iliad, goes so far as to describe the star as being associated with war and disaster!

Given the news of late, covering forest fires, heated political debates and talks about nuclear weapons, we might think they were on to something. But it turns out the lineup of Sirius in July and August is connected to geographic location and where the earth is in space relative to

Sirius. Given our latitude, we can identify.

Heat exhaustion is not a Sirius issue; it's serious. The most common signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include: Confusion, Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration), Dizziness, Fainting, Fatigue, Headache, Muscle or abdominal cramps, Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. While symptoms can range from mild to severe, heat stroke can be life threatening.

It's important to stay and to keep hydrated. And that's not always easy, but there are rehydration products. Pedialyte® is probably the most well recognized brand and it comes in fruit flavored pops that can be kept in the freezer.

So as we move into August, do take care of yourselves and one another. Before we know it, winter will be upon us; maybe we should refer to that time as cat days. You know, when they hang out by any heat source