

Wellness Program Newsletter

Wellness Matters

All benefitted and benefit-eligible municipal employees, retirees, and benefit-eligible family members in East Longmeadow, Hampden, HWRSD, Longmeadow, LPVEC and Wilbraham may participate in any of the programs and classes listed. Other employees, family members and friends are also invited to participate, however will not be eligible for incentives.

Coordinator's Corner

Welcome to 2022!

Things are happening and opportunities abound! If you are participating in our *Wellness Works* program, you can earn points/raffle ticket this month by enrolling in Healthy Fit Families or the Blue Zones weight loss programs, take our *Dry January* challenge, complete your online health assessment (BCBS, HNE, Tufts) or engage in other challenges or classes. And remember to weigh out if you weighed in for our Maintain Campaign!

Coming in February, we have a new webinar series for all employees! Please see the list at www.scantichealth.org under *New Offerings*. Points/raffle tickets will be given for all webinars. You can watch live or watch a recording/take a short quiz that will be found on our website after the live webinar. You still have time to join in, as *Wellness Works* runs through May. What's stopping you?!

Yesterday, 2 people I know were sidelined by Covid-19. This is getting way too close to home. This is NOT a condition you want. Please keep yourself healthy and protected. Vaccinations and boosters are widely available.

<https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>

Happy New Year!

~Lyn

For more information on anything in this newsletter, please contact me at lyn@scantichealth.org. You are invited to "like" us on FB for info on various health topics:

<https://www.facebook.com/scanticvalleywellness/>

Visit us on the web! www.scantichealth.org

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Health-related App Suggestions

Two apps which come highly recommended in the latest edition of Food & Nutrition magazine are *Side Chef* and *Slumber*, both available for Apple and Android.

SideChef is helpful for planning meals and grocery shopping, has over 15,000 recipes and offers guidance for special diets and preferences.

Slumber is a sleep app containing sleep sounds, meditations and bedtime stories. It is appropriate for all ages and the listener can add sounds to the stories to create the effect you prefer. There is a paid version and a free version.

For more extensive reviews on these and other nutrition-related apps, please visit FoodandNutrition.org/Nutrition-Apps



How to Keep Those Resolutions Research-backed strategies can help turn annual promises into true behavior change.

The start of a new year is traditionally a time when we resolve to make changes to our lives and lifestyles. Unfortunately, New Year's resolutions are often short-lived. We've got research-backed strategies to help you keep your resolutions!

Refine Your Resolution: Clearly defined and realistic resolutions that include a specific timeframe are more likely to be maintained than vague aspirations. It's not enough to resolve to be more physically active or to eat better, for example; one needs specifics. "Planned lifestyle changes should be realistic and sustainable, whether it is for weight management, healthy eating, increased physical activity and sleep time, or reducing stress," says Sai Krupa Das, PhD, associate professor at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy.

An effective way to make your resolutions more concrete is to use the SMART approach: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

Choose Wisely: There's no end, especially this time of year, to the myriad of advice, programs, and products that claim to help people make healthy lifestyle changes. "Evidence-based approaches should be used instead of popular or fad-based ones," says Das. Look for reputable sources for information on healthy behaviors and methods for achieving them. Advice from government, healthcare, or educational institutions (like Tufts) is likely to be more accurate than advice from sites that feature a lot of product advertising. Look for multiple strong sources offering the same advice.

It is also essential to aim for sustainable behavior change. For example, a weight loss diet that involves radical dietary changes may lead to good results in the short term, but can be challenging for many to sustain over the long haul. Instead, take sensible, incremental steps toward a healthier overall dietary pattern. Likewise, slowly adding activity beyond your current level is safer (and more effective long-term) than jumping into overly-ambitious changes.

Be Accountable: Holding yourself accountable can be very motivating. One study included nearly 270 people across seven countries from a variety of organizations, who were divided into five groups, each instructed to carry out a different goal-setting process. Group one was told to just think about their goals; group two wrote down their goals; and the final three groups wrote down their goals along with specific actions to carry them out. Group four also sent these plans to a friend, while group five sent the plans to a friend along with weekly progress reports. After four weeks, group five had achieved significantly more than the other groups, with group four close behind. All the groups that wrote down their goals achieved more than the group that merely thought about them, and the combined accountability to both oneself and others had the greatest impact.

Write your goals down in a journal, into a smart phone app, or on a post-it-note stuck to the refrigerator—anywhere you will see them often to keep you focused. Then, share your plan with a partner, friend, or family member, and consider sending them updates.

Being accountable to others can help you stay on track for the longer term too. A study published in the journal *BMC Women's Health* found that among women age 40 to 62 years, social support was an important factor to keeping up adherence to a 12-month at-home exercise program. This could involve inviting friends and family to join in exercise activities like a neighborhood walk or classes at a local park, community center or fitness center. Any scenario where you commit to doing something with a group makes you more likely to show up because others expect and rely on you to be there.

Do What You Enjoy: Choose a resolution that you like. You're more likely to stick to dietary changes if you don't feel deprived. Likewise, choosing a physical activity you actually enjoy will make it more likely you'll continue doing it. Some people prefer a social setting like group exercise classes or a team sport, while others would rather take a solitary walk or dance to their favorite music in the privacy of their living room. One study in the journal *BMC Public Health* found that among previously inactive people with obesity who tried high-intensity functional training, those who enjoyed the exercise at the beginning of the study were more likely to continue doing it after the eight-week study period ended. Also carefully consider an activity's time and location and how these fit with your current schedule. If participation adds stress to your life, reconsider your choice. Sometimes it takes a few tries to find the right activity for you.

Keep It Up: Don't let each new January be part of an annual cycle of unrealistic resolutions. "Every new year should see an incremental change in positive behaviors, rather than a complete reset followed by loss of motivation to sustain," says Das. As you formulate this year's resolutions, be clear, be SMART, and enjoy each step toward fulfilling those resolutions. Behavior change is more than a once-a-year resolution; it is a lifetime's journey.

Make your goals SMART! See page 3 for how to do just that!

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS:

Specific: Instead of resolving to eat healthier or exercise more, say, for example, “I will eat at least three servings of fruits and vegetables a day,” or “I will walk at least 30 minutes five days a week.”

Measurable: Use numbers so that you can measure progress toward your goal. For example: “I will replace at least two refined grain foods with a fruit, vegetable, or whole grain daily;” “I will go to the gym three days a week;” “I will sleep at least seven hours every night.” Until you have successfully achieved your goals, write down and log your meals, exercise, or sleep time on paper or an app to track your progress.

Achievable: Set a goal you can reasonably accomplish. If you rarely walk or can hardly run a mile, resolving to run a marathon may be unrealistic. Aiming to walk or run a 5K route by the end of the year may be more achievable.

Relevant: Make sure each goal aligns with your values, lifestyle, and long-term goals.

Time-bound: Give yourself a specific and realistic timeline, with intermediate timed goals along the way.

Taken from <https://www.nutritionletter.tufts.edu/healthy-eating/how-to-keep-those-resolutions-2/>, retrieved 12/28/21

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**HNE Updates** On December 27, 2020, the No Surprises Act, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, was signed into law. The Act requires health plans to make some changes to the way in which certain services are paid, ensure the accuracy of the information contained within the provider directory, help protect against surprise or balance billing for some services, and provide greater price transparency to the public and to its members. Most of these changes will be relatively invisible to Health New England members, but we do want to inform you about the new requirements for member ID cards. <http://hnetalk.com/employer/>

The changes required to the ID card mean that all members will be receiving a new ID card for Plan Year 2022 in the mail. Cards are being issued upon renewal and will now contain further information relating to Deductibles (Individual and Family, if applicable) and Maximum Out-of-Pocket or MOOP (Individual and Family, as applicable).

Health New England has been working hard over the last four months to ensure that we are compliant with this requirement. Cards are currently being mailed to subscribers/members who have January renewal dates. While we are doing our best to make sure new cards arrive on or before January 1, 2022, the number of cards needing to be distributed requires us to send cards in stages.

HNE is committed to providing superior service to all of our members. Should you have any questions, please call Health New England Member Services at (800) 791-7944 (TTY: 711), Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**BCBS Updates** If you feel drugs or alcohol are taking a toll, get help from our no-cost tool. This confidential program offers an easy- to-use, self-guided substance use program that’s available 24/7. It helps you identify and work through the thoughts and behaviors that fuel your issues, allowing you to change your relationship with drugs or alcohol. The tool is designed by the mental health specialists from Learn to Live, an independent partner company, so it’s a resource you can trust.

LEARN TO LIVE’S SUBSTANCE USE PROGRAM HELPS YOU REGAIN CONTROL Using tips and tools, such as:

**Thought swapping:** shifting your attention to decrease the power of cravings

**Crave riding:** allowing the feelings and desires of craving wash over you until they pass

**Identifying your WHYs:** identifying your motivation for change and sticking with it

**Turn-down lines:** assertively saying no when presented with an invitation to use

Take the 7-minute assessment: Get started by downloading the MyBlue app, or create an account at [bluecross-ma.org](http://bluecross-ma.org), then click Online Mental Health Tool under My Plan and Claims.

You can also find Learn to Live here: visit [learntolive.com/partners](http://learntolive.com/partners) and enter the code: SCANTIC

## Upcoming Class Opportunities

**Zoom Yoga:** Janine starts another **virtual yoga class on Monday, Jan. 3 from 5:30 - 6:30 PM**. Classes will run for 6 consecutive weeks from **Jan. 3 through Feb. 7**. \$55\* for the six-week session. Please contact me to register.


**Mindful Movers Yoga Class:** Nurture your body, your mind, and your spirit. You will practice vinyasa yoga, mindfulness, breathing techniques, and meditation....give yourself the best gift there is, time for you! Join Arlene McLean on Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 at Center School Gym, Longmeadow. Class starts January 12 and runs through February 9. Wear comfortable clothing, bring a yoga mat and a water bottle. \$50\* Drop-ins welcome at \$12 per class!

**Pilates Classes:** A new **PHIIT class** starts **Monday, Jan. 3** at 5:30 PM for 5 consecutive weeks. New sessions of **Mixed Level Mat Pilates Classes** start **Tuesday, Jan. 4** for 5 weeks. There are 2 openings in the **4:30 PM in-studio class** and openings in the **5:30 PM Zoom/in-studio class**. Please contact Arice to register, if you have questions and to make payment at [arice@coreandmore.net](mailto:arice@coreandmore.net). Core and More Pilates Studio, 2141 Boston Road, Wilbraham. \$55 for 5 weeks of any session\* All mat class participants will have access to a video library for at home practice in addition to weekly sessions. You can mix & match in-person and Zoom classes.

\*Those who attend all classes in a session (1 missed class is acceptable) will receive a \$10 Amazon gift card!

**Zoom Pilates Classes:** Janet Burke-Allen is offering classes in-person & on-line through Zoom. You can mix and match from the following options: **Wednesdays, 9:00 AM weights/mat class**, **Thursdays, 3:45 PM mat class (in-studio option)** and **Friday 9:00 AM mat/stability ball class**. 6 classes for \$75 (discount for SVRHT) or 10 classes for \$125 (discount for SVRHT) Payment goes to Janet. Please email Janet for more information and to request the link. If you are interested in attending in-studio classes, please let Janet know ahead of time [pilates-centerofwmass@gmail.com](mailto:pilates-centerofwmass@gmail.com)

**Maintain Campaign weigh-out begins Jan 3!** The scales will be at the following locations according to the calendar. If you weighed in, please note the day that it will be at your site, weigh-out and e-mail me your weight. I will bring the calendars with the scale, please take one when you weigh out. All school staff can weigh out between Jan 3 and Jan 7 and I will drop off calendars with your nurse. All who weigh out and stay within 2 pounds will be entered into the Maintain Campaign raffle and will earn 10 points/raffle ticket for *Wellness Works*.

| Monday Jan 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Tuesday Jan 4                                                                                                                                                                          | Wednesday Jan 5                                                      | Thursday Jan 6                                                       | Friday Jan 7                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Long Comm House<br>East Long Town Hall<br>Wilbraham Library<br>East Long DPW                                                                                                                                                             | Long Comm House<br>East Long Town Hall<br>Wilbraham Library<br>East Long DPW<br><br>Wilb Sr Ctr/ EL Sr Ctr<br><br>East Long Fire Dept<br>Storrs Library<br>EL LPVEC<br>Southwick LPVEC | East Long Fire Dept<br>Storrs Library<br>EL LPVEC<br>Southwick LPVEC | East Long Fire Dept<br>Storrs Library<br>EL LPVEC<br>Southwick LPVEC | East Long Fire Dept<br>Storrs Library<br>EL LPVEC<br>Southwick LPVEC |
| Monday Jan 10                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Tuesday Jan 11                                                                                                                                                                         | Wednesday Jan 12                                                     | Thursday Jan 13                                                      | Friday Jan 14                                                        |
| East Long Fire Dept<br>Storrs Library<br>EL LPVEC<br>Southwick LPVEC<br><br><br>Wilbraham Police<br>Wilbraham Town Hall<br>Agawam LPVEC<br>Career TEC | Wilbraham Police<br>Wilbraham Town Hall<br>Agawam LPVEC<br>Career TEC                                                                                                                  |                                                                      |                                                                      |                                                                      |