

# CIRCLE of Care

Winter/Spring 2017

THE LATEST NEWS FROM HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES

## WELCOME TO THE NEW HVCS NEWSLETTER!

Hello, and welcome! I'm Andi Straus, Executive Director here at Hudson Valley Community Services (HVCS). We're pleased to introduce you to our new newsletter specifically for those who access HVCS' programs and services.

One thing that our new Consumer Advisory Boards asked for was more communication from HVCS—and so a newsletter is a great way to start. We will email this to clients who have opted to receive news from us via email, and we'll also print out hard copies and make them available in our offices' waiting areas. Our goal is to send out a newsletter twice a year, but if there's demand, we may increase it!

This is truly a newsletter for *you*, so we welcome your feedback. Send us your ideas, comments or questions via email to: [clientnews@hudsonvalleycs.org](mailto:clientnews@hudsonvalleycs.org). Or, call (914) 785-8290. Thank you for trusting HVCS, and happy reading!



## HEALTHY EATS

Eating clean is a good way to refresh your eating habits: it's about eating more of the best and healthiest options in each of the food groups—and eating less of the not-so-healthy ones. And since you don't have to count calories or give up whole food groups, it's easy to follow. Here are a few helpful tips to get you started.

1. Limit processed and prepackaged foods.
2. Bump up your veggie intake.
3. Swap in vegetable-based fats (nuts, avocado, olive oil) for dairy-based fats like cheeses and cream.
4. Reduce your alcohol intake.
5. Cut back on sugar, including sugars hidden in foods like yogurt and bread.
6. Watch the salt!
7. Eat more whole grains: look for the words "whole wheat" or "whole grain" in the ingredient list.

## Did You Know...?

Here are a few things you may not know about HVCS or the big health concerns that affect many of our clients:

- \* Did you know we provide **emergency food bags** to any of our clients who need them? Talk to your HVCS contact person if you don't have enough food.
- \* Did you know that if you live in Orange, Sullivan and Ulster county, we can help you (or those you know) sign up for **SNAP** (food stamp) benefits? Call (845) 522-5754.
- \* Did you know that people over 50 (the "baby boomer" generation) are at a much higher risk for **hepatitis C**? HVCS offers free Hep C testing! There are also new cures (that's right, cures!) for Hep C out there, so talk to us if you are hepatitis C-positive. Call (845) 471-0707 ext. 12 for more information.
- \* Did you know that March 22nd is **National Diabetes Alert Day**? Talk to your doc or an HVCS staffer to find out if you're at risk for diabetes.
- \* Did you know that HVCS has expanded its **housing assistance program** for HIV-positive clients? We provide short and long-term rental assistance, emergency assistance, help with utilities, and more. Call (845) 471-0707 x17 for more info.

We're here to listen to your concerns and questions. Talk to your HVCS contact to learn more about the programs and services we may be able to offer you.

*What's the Best Way to Reach You?*  
Phone? Mail? Email? You can tell us by filling out a Client Communication Consent form. These forms are available from HVCS staff.

## FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL HEART DISEASE MONTH



Did you know that more than one in four deaths in the United States can be attributed to heart disease? Here are four things you need to know about heart disease.

1. Heart disease is the number one killer of women. Women are more than five times as likely to die from heart disease as from breast cancer. In fact, nearly twice as many American women die from heart disease and stroke than from all types of cancer combined.
2. Anyone, including children, can develop heart disease. Minimize your risk by quitting smoking, lowering cholesterol and high blood pressure, getting more exercise, and avoiding obesity and/or diabetes.
3. Getting only 20 minutes of moderate exercise per day (150 minutes per week) can help prevent heart disease.
4. Most heart attacks involve pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. If you think that you or someone you know is having a heart attack, you should call 911 immediately.



It's not too late to get your flu shot! Influenza (the flu) peaks in February, so if you haven't gotten your annual flu vaccine yet, you may be at high risk. It's much better to get it now than to go without and risk getting the flu. Talk to your medical provider or ask your care manager for assistance with accessing a flu vaccine.

## DAWN CARNEY: FROM CLIENT TO EMPLOYEE



*This September, Hudson Valley Community Services celebrated its thirtieth year of incorporation with a dinner dance in Jefferson Valley. We invited one of our employees, Dawn Carney, to tell her story there. Here's a small part of her address:*

"My name is Dawn. I was diagnosed with HIV in 1992. Prior to that, I had been incarcerated for assault, and I was only living to use drugs. I did not care about myself or others, and I was depressed and suicidal. I thought that I was worthless. I needed help, but I had a really hard time asking for it. I really didn't feel like I needed to go see a doctor. It took others to help show me how important my medical care was. Someone introduced me to AIDS-Related Community Services, which later became Hudson Valley Community Services. I would show up now and then, and hope that no one noticed me. But that's not what happened. They had people working there that cared about me too much to let me slip away. They made sure I stayed connected.

HVCS has seen me struggle and watched me grow and become a woman. They believed in me. They believe in me so much that I am now employed by them. I am a Peer Navigator for not one but two programs: Project LEAP, which offers Behavioral Health Education, and the Housing program. The employees at HVCS believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. They were patient and caring and tolerant.

It takes special people to do this kind of work and I thank HVCS with all my heart for being there for me. Thank you so much for this opportunity to share my story."

### *Say what's on your mind.*

HVCS has two Consumer Advisory Boards, or CABs, one for Lower Hudson (Westchester, Rockland, Putnam) and Mid-Hudson (Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Ulster). CABs meet two times per year. It's a great way to get involved and share YOUR experience of being an HVCS client. Transportation and light dinner are provided. Contact (914) 785-8290 to participate!