



HOUSE CALL

DFD Russell
MEDICAL



CENTERS

WINTER 2010

A Community Update

On Good Health

From Your Friends

& Neighbors at

DFD Russell Medical Centers

www.dfdrussell.org

A message from our CEO, Laurie Kane-Lewis:

Resolutions

It is that time of year again, to make New Year's resolutions, and start on our way with high hopes of achieving whatever goal we have set for ourselves. On the face of it changing our behavior seems easy, for example taking controlling your weight: eat less and exercise more. But it is much harder than it sounds, daily stressors interfere with our best laid plans to get adequate exercise and it is easier to pick up a prepackaged meal or fast food than to cook a healthy one with fresh fruits and vegetables. Yet we continue to pursue our goals resolutely with the idea that this might be the time that we make effectual change and the behavior sticks.



Research shows that by making a solemn resolution and telling our family and close friends about it, we tilt the scales against succumbing to temptation. If we fail to keep our resolution, we will have to admit that we are less in control of our behavior than we had

hoped.

This fits well with what psychologists have discovered about how we can improve the odds that we will keep our resolutions. According to a recent study only about one in 10 individuals managed to stick to what they had resolved. However there are steps that you can take to improve your odds at success: Break your resolution into a series of small steps; tell your family and friends about your resolution; regularly remind yourself of the benefits of achieving your goal; give yourself a small reward each time you achieve one of the steps towards your goal; and keep track of your progress towards your goal, for example by keeping a journal or putting a chart on the fridge door.

Individually, each of these factors may seem trivial; collectively, they are ways of exerting our self-control now and in the future. If we succeed, the behavior we are hoping for becomes habitual and part of our daily routine. These tools for keeping a New Year's resolution can help us to make progress in losing weight, increasing exercise, or quitting smoking – all goals with proven health benefits.

At DFD Russell Medical Center we are committed to helping you achieve your resolutions and our Medical Assistants will be asking you about Self Management Goals at each of your visits and help you break them into manageable steps, we will also ask about your progress toward those goals at subsequent visits to remind you of the benefits. We have Behavioral Health Consultants on staff trained to assist you with behavioral modification techniques and who are versed in smoking cessation counseling. In addition if weight loss is your goal, we have a nutritionist to assist with a healthy eating plan that fits within your life style. Let us know how we can help you with your goal to a healthier New Year and new you.

A Letter To Our Patients

After careful consideration we will no longer be able to supply free drug samples to our patients after February 1, 2010. We take this action because it is not a reliable source of medication for our patients.

For several years we have actively helped with access to assistance programs that are administered by pharmaceutical companies based on the ability to pay. This has been a valuable service to many of our patients. However this program takes some time and often patients have to wait for medications that are critical to their health. In the past we have used samples as an unreliable way to close this gap. However we now have access to a program which will provide medication quickly while the patient waits for the Pharmaceutical assistance program. There is a fee for this service but the DFD Russell Medical Center will bear that cost.

As always if you have any question about any of the programs at the DFD Russell Medical Center pleased contact us.

By John Yindra MD, Medical Director

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.dfdrussell.org
We offer On-LINE Prescription refills

DFD will be providing H1N1 flu clinics.

For more information check out our web site at www.dfdrussell.org or the Maine CDC public flu finder calendar at www.maine.gov/dhhs/boh/maineflu/fluclinics/index.shtml.



Three Convenient Locations To Serve Our Neighbors



11 Academy Road

Monmouth • 933-9646

Monday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

180 Church Hill Road

Leeds • 524-3501

Monday 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Sick visits only
Sunday 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Sick visits only

7 So. Main Street

Turner • 225-2676

Monday 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Telephone Hours: Monday thru Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. / 12:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
24 hour on call coverage is provided for our established patients by calling 524-3501.

Knowing your Health Plan

By Laurie Kane-Lewis, CEO

While reading the latest issue from the Journal of Family Practice I came across an article that left me roaring with laughter and I'm sure drew suspicion from my fellow colleagues who share office space next to mine; but laughter is the best medicine – right? The article by Dr. Timothy Laird and was entitled “What if Quiznos Were Run Like Health Care?”.

The premise of the article is that if a restaurant customer came in to order a sandwich, chips and soda but said, “oh, just bill my insurance” when in fact they didn't know if their policy paid for the entire lunch it would create a bogged down system of food delivery. After being served the lunch the patron was then enraged to receive a bill two months later for the soda that was not covered. However, they did consume the soda (but they were very thirsty at the time) and did not read their insurance coverage contract (which was their responsibility but had tiny print).

The article was a very tongue and cheek way of explaining the astronomical costs of delivering health care these days because patients have hundreds of individual insurance plans with varying levels of coverage and deductibles. There is no way for medical facility staff to determine what an individual plan covers or doesn't until we receive payment or denial from the insurance company. For a family practice facility with 10 clinicians we need to employ 3 individuals to bill insurances and collect

from patients in order to ensure that we are compensated for services. In fact it costs us on average \$10 to send out a statement for a copay of \$20, if it is not collected at the time of service, and that cost goes up with each successive billing if patients don't pay within 30 days.

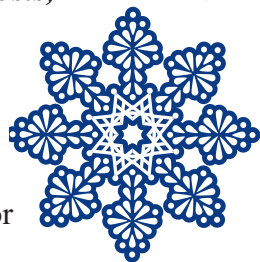
While the health care debate was raging in Congress, DFD's health insurance premiums for our employees increased by 32% in January, requiring us to increase deductibles to hold our premiums at a level where we could afford to provide coverage at all. Now our staff also has to navigate new insurance plans, deductibles and copays but they understand all too well the impact of not “knowing your plan” or reading the contract from the delivery side so I'm sure that they are informed consumers. As health consumers we are all called upon to perform the same due diligence and know our plans so that we are not surprised by invoices or lab charges (billed by Quest or DFD) and so that we can responsibly plan to pay for the soda that isn't covered at the time of visit.

In the article Quiznos responded to the consumer outrage by installing a complex computer system to read every membership card, collect payment or refuse services. It lead to longer lines, patient dissatisfaction and the sandwich shop going out of business due to cash flow issues. Ultimately clients had to make their own sandwiches from ingredients purchased at the grocery store where they paid with cash, check or a credit card.



If you have difficulty interpreting your health plan or need financial assistance with health costs, contact our Patient Assistance Coordinator, Tia Knapp at 207-524-3501.

Tia has been providing information and assistance to our patients at DFD since December, 2004. She has assisted patients with community resources, understanding their healthcare and prescription coverage, transportation, housing resource information, and financial assistance program options. Tia also provides special focus to elders and disabled individuals who have Medicare and/or Maine Care health coverage.



Providing the help you need, when you need it...

- Health care coverage information/counseling
- Financial assistance program information
 - Transportation services
 - Housing
 - Nutrition programs

Medical care assistance...

- Sliding fee for medical services (Income eligibility required)
- MaineCare application assistance
- Medicare insurance benefit Counseling and enrollment assistance (including Part D)
 - Social Security benefit counseling, application assistance and referral.

Prescription Drug Assistance...

- Free medications through drug company assistance programs
- Discount pharmacy and mail order pharmacy programs.

DFD Russell Medical Centers are accepting new patients.

One-on-one confidential assistance available at each of our 3 community health center locations.

HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE BILLING OFFICE:

In order to accurately bill insurance companies for your services, we need to see your insurance card at every visit and to ask if any information has changed. If you have not been seen in the last year we need to obtain a new registration form and have you sign certain forms. Ask about our sliding fee program.

Co-pays are expected at the time of service