Dementia Friendly

Dementia Friendly. It’s a fairly new concept that you will be hearing more about here on the Outer Banks.

Why? Because people with dementia and their caregivers have special needs. A common question is, “How is dementia different from aging and forgetfulness?” Aging happens to everyone; dementia does not. Aging is a natural and expected aspect of human life; dementia is a disease. Forgetfulness may make retaining new information frustrating at times, but new information can be retained. In contrast, a person with dementia will eventually be unable to retain new information. Dementia is an ‘umbrella’ term used to describe changes in brain function that interfere with a person’s ability to do everyday tasks. There are many different types of dementia, one of which is Alzheimer’s.

It is important that we care for our friends and neighbors with dementia. That’s why the Healthy Carolinians of the Outer Banks (HCOB) Dementia Task Force is leading a local effort to encourage local businesses and organizations to become Dementia Friendly. Dementia Friendly means creating an environment that accommodates the special needs of people with dementia and their caregivers. As part of this initiative, The Outer Banks Hospital was the first local organization to create a Dementia-Friendly environment. Our hospital’s participation is key because, based on Medicare data, people with dementia will have three times the number of hospitalizations, four times more hospital days and three times as many emergency room visits as those without dementia. Persons with dementia may cope fairly well at home; however, a change in environment, such as going to the hospital, will often aggravate the cognitive impairment.

A Dementia-Friendly Hospital provides an environment where patients with dementia are valued and respected, and where the changes in the person will be noticed, understood and accepted.

Based on the special needs of people with dementia in the healthcare setting, The Outer Banks Hospital is working to become a “Dementia-Friendly Hospital.” This is a special designation that we are pioneering and sharing with other health systems across the country.

What does a ‘Dementia-Friendly Hospital’ mean? A Dementia-Friendly Hospital is one whose providers care about the community they serve; listen to the feelings of families dealing with dementia; recognize the signs; understand the special care needs of patients with dementia; and take appropriate action. A Dementia-Friendly Hospital provides an environment where patients with dementia are valued and respected, and where the changes in the person will be noticed, understood and accepted. A Dementia-Friendly Hospital takes the point of view of a person with dementia, then does everything it can to create an environment where patients can participate as independently and safely as possible.

Serving Up Friendly Meals

The caring leaders and staff of The Outer Banks Hospital Food Service Department are serving up dementia-friendly meals.

“As a food service professional, I know that every detail matters — from food selection to presentation — food matters,” shared Ken McLean, Manager of Food Services at The Outer Banks Hospital. “Offering healthy meals in the hospital setting is crucial, as proper nutrition is a major factor in preserving health.”

As part of the dementia-friendly initiative, Ken teamed up with Inpatient Nursing Director Lisa McGaha. Together, they learned that people with dementia have a hard time seeing food on a white plate. Patients are not able to see the food on their plate, so they don’t eat it. Over time, this could result in malnutrition. They also discovered that it is better to offer fewer types of food because too much variety can be overwhelming for patients with dementia. Further, it’s all about the approach. When food service workers deliver trays, a calm and quiet approach is always best.

All OBH food service workers are now trained on how to deliver food in a calm and quiet manner to a patient with dementia. These patients are also offered healthy meals with just a few choices on plates and bowls in bright colors so that they can see their meals.

What’s the moral of this story? Hospital food will never win the contest for best presentation. The purple seahorse has been selected as our local symbol for dementia. Seahorse is a noun translated from the Latin word hippocampus, which is a portion of the brain that plays a major role in memory. Within the hospital, the seahorse is placed on a patient’s door to indicate the patient has memory or cognitive challenges. This puts staff on notice to use their dementia-friendly skills as they provide care.

“We are happy to go first and lead the way for other local organizations and businesses. We hope others will join us,” emphasized Marcia Bryant, the hospital’s chief nursing officer.

For more information about becoming a Dementia-Friendly Business, call HCOB Dementia Task Force Chair Dianne Denny at 252-449-4455.

Your Dementia-Friendly Hospital

- Recognizes the signs and symptoms of dementia upon a patient’s admission.
- Provides training for staff on how to care for a person with dementia.
- Asks family members and caregivers to provide detailed information about the patient’s preferences.
- Makes special clinical and non-clinical accommodations for patients with dementia.
- Emphasizes the non-pharmacological management of the expression of the disease.
- Provides specially trained companions to help patients with dementia feel comfortable and safe.
- Involves family and caregivers in the discharge planning process.
- Provides dementia education to patients and caregivers.
Health Education

Patient Education Classes
WEDNESDAYS IN MAY AND JUNE | 8:30AM – 10:15AM AND 2:00PM
Join us for weekly Wednesday classes that will cover a broad range of topics!
These free and informative 30-minute classes are designed to help both cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation patients, as well as community members, learn ways to live a healthy lifestyle. For class locations and to register, call 449-5930.
- May 3: Blood Pressure and Exercise
- May 10: Intimacy with Cardiac and Pulmonary Disease
- May 17: Menu Planning
- May 24: Communicating with Your Healthcare Team
- May 31: Inhaler Techniques
- June 7: Exercise and Diabetes
- June 14: Psychological Aspects of a Heart Illness
- June 21: Stress Management

Cancer Lunch and Learn: “Melanoma — Early Detection and Therapeutic Progress”
Featuring David W. Ollila, MD, and Andrea Saccone Snyder
FRIDAY, MAY 19 | NOON-1:00PM
OBH Cancer Resource Center
Learn from nontraditional healthcare providers about early detection methods and the therapeutic progress in metastatic melanoma. Lunch will be served. Seating is limited. Please call 449-7300 to register.

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION BETTER BREATHERS CLUB
3RD MONDAY OF EACH MONTH | MAY 15 & JUNE 19 | NOON-1:00PM
OBH Cancer Resource Center
Taking care of your emotional health is a key part of managing COPD or other lung disease. The Better Breathers Club can offer you a place to share your thoughts with others who know what you are going through. Family members and caregivers are also welcome to join. Please call 449-7300 to register. Lite bites will be served.

Proactive Approach to Healthy Living
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28 | 6:00PM
NAGS HEAD CHURCH, 105 W. SOUNDSIDE ROAD, NAGS HEAD
Dr. Lindsey White will moderate a panel discussion that will touch on integrative health, managing your medications, healthy eating, and effective respiratory practices. Panelists include Dr. Christina Bowen, Vance Collins, OBH Director of Pharmacy, Karla Coughenour, MA, RD, LDN, Clinical Dietitian, and Deborah Hunton, RRT, OBH Respiratory Care. Lite bites will be served, and seating is limited. Please call 449-7300 to register.

Cancer Lunch and Learn: “Understanding and Living with Chemo Brain”
Featuring Karla Thompson, PhD
FRIDAY, JUNE 30 | NOON-1:00PM
OBH Cancer Resource Center
Chemotherapy can affect attention, memory, and thinking. Learn about tips and strategies for dealing with this condition and discover resources to help you or your loved one cope with “Chemo Brain.” Lunch will be served. Seating is limited. Please call 449-7300 to register.

Health Screenings and Services

- All Aboard The Health Coach!
  Free Wellness Screenings by Appointment
  THE EVENTS LISTED BELOW ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR A HEALTH SCREEN AT ONE OF THE EVENTS LISTED BELOW, PLEASE CALL 449-7300.
  The Health Coach also visits local businesses and organizations to serve their employees and patrons directly. These events are not listed and are not open to the public. If you would like The Health Coach to visit your business or organization, call 449-4529.
  TUESDAY, MAY 16 | 9:00AM-NOON
  THE MARKETPLACE PARKING LOT, SOUTHERN SHORES
  WELLNESS SCREENS WILL BE PROVIDED.

Community Events

OBH WELLNESS CAMP
Mondays at 7:00am, Wednesdays at 6:00am & Fridays at 7:00am
May 1 – June 23 | Ocean Bay Blvd. Beach Access at MP 8
Designed for men and women of all skill levels, OBH Wellness Camp is a FREE 8-week wellness camp featuring yoga, light exercise, stretching, meditation and more.

PREPARED CHILDBIRTH AND BREAST FEEDING SUPPORT
Mondays in May and June | 7:00pm-9:00pm
May 1, 8, 15, 22 | June 5, 12, 19, 26
OBH PORT ROOM
Classes are offered each month, beginning the 1st Monday of each month. First 3 classes are childbirth education, and the 4th week is breast feeding support. Classes are free of charge for any patient. To register, please call 449-5690.

GENTLE CHAIR YOGA
WEDNESDAYS IN MAY | 1:15PM-2:15PM
May 3, 10, 17, 24
OBH CANCER RESOURCE CENTER
Chronic illness and cancer survivors are invited to participate in our gentle chair yoga program. For more information and to register, call 449-4529.

RELAY FOR LIFE
SATURDAY, MAY 6 | NOON-11:00PM
FIRST FLIGHT HIGH SCHOOL TRACK, KILL DEVIL HILLS
Join us to remember loved ones lost, honor survivors of all cancers, and raise money to help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer.

LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER
MONDAY, MAY 8 | 2:00PM-4:00PM
OBH CANCER RESOURCE CENTER
Does cancer treatment have you feeling sluggish and looking a little bit less like yourself? Local licensed cosmetologists, estheticians, and nail technicians have volunteered to show you how to use makeup and skin care products to bring back your natural beauty and lift your spirits. Look Good, Feel Better is a collaboration among OBH Cancer Care Services, The American Cancer Society, the Personal Care Products Council Foundation, and the Professional Beauty Association. All instruction and beauty products are provided free of charge for women in active cancer treatment. Reserve your opportunity to Look Good and Feel better today by calling 449-8265.

MEDITATION DROP DRIVE-THRU
THURSDAY, MAY 11 | 7:30AM-NOON
THE OUTER BANKS HOSPITAL, NAGS HEAD
Join us in our lobby to receive a free meditation tape. All are welcome to join. Please call 449-7300 to register.

MEDICINE DROP DRIVE-THRU
MONDAY, MAY 15 | 10:00AM-3:00PM
COMMUNITY CARE CLINIC, 425 HEALTH CENTER DRIVE, NAGS HEAD
Unneeded unwanted prescription or over-the-counter medications will be collected by the Dare County Sheriff’s Department.

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING
THURSDAY, MAY 18 | 5:30PM-6:30PM | DARE CENTER, MANTEO
THURSDAY, JUNE 22 | 6:00PM-7:00PM | BAUM CENTER, KILL DEVIL HILLS
Free education sessions and clinics to complete your advance directives.

NC MEDASSIST OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE GIVE AWAY!
FRIDAY, MAY 19 | 10:00AM-3:00PM
COMMUNITY CARE CLINIC, 425 HEALTH CENTER DRIVE, NAGS HEAD
Free admission. Adults 18 and over can choose up to 10 items at no cost. Items include: cold, cough and flu medicine, Band-Aids, pain and allergy relief, vitamins and children’s medicine, and much more while supplies last. OBH will also host a medicine drop.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 24 | 11:00AM-2:00PM
OBH LOBBY
Donating one pint of blood can help save up to 3 lives! Register online to donate at www.redcross.org and use the keyword search OBHhospital.