



LINKED TOGETHER

THE PARKINSON ASSOCIATION OF MINNESOTA NEWSLETTER



Mark Your Calendar

ANNUAL SPRING SOIREE
Thursday, April 22, 2010
Crowne Plaza
St. Paul Riverfront Hotel

**TWIN CITIES WALK FOR
PARKINSON'S DISEASE**
Saturday, May 1, 2010
Wolfe Park in St. Louis Park

**8TH ANNUAL GOLF
TOURNAMENT**
Monday, July 26, 2010
Minnesota Vally
Country Club



an affiliate of



National Parkinson Foundation, Inc.

Walk for PD, May 1

The major annual fund raiser for the Parkinson Association of MN is just around the corner. Please plan to join us on the morning of Saturday, May 1, for the Twin Cities Walk for Parkinson's Disease. The walk will again be held at Wolfe Park in St. Louis Park. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., the starting ceremony is at 10 a.m., and the prize ceremony is scheduled for 11:30 a.m.

IT'S FUN...

The committee has been meeting monthly and working hard to plan another successful Walk. It will be a fun morning that includes music entertainment by The Skirts, clowns, face painting and refreshments. And for the seventh year, volunteers from Lifetouch photography will be at the Walk to take individual pictures of families and groups that attend the Walk.

IT'S EASY...

To participate in the Walk, all you do is collect donations from your family, friends, co-workers, etc. and bring those donations with you on May 1 (or mail them to the PAM office). There is not a set distance to walk; you may walk as much or as little as you like. The goal is to share the time with family and friends, have fun, and raise money to support those with PD!

YOU CAN WIN PRIZES...

We will have the Family Challenge and wonderful prizes will be awarded to:

- Family or individual that raises the most money from sponsors
- Family with the most participants
- Family with the most creative Walk sign
- Family or individual that traveled the farthest to attend the walk
- Oldest participant at the walk
- Youngest participant at the walk

For more information, go to www.parkinsonmn.org or call the PAM office at 763-545-1272.

DON'T MISS THE ANNUAL SPRING SOIREE!

Thursday, April 22, 2010
Crowne Plaza
St. Paul Riverfront Hotel

- 6:00 p.m. Reception & Silent Auction
6:15 p.m. Dinner & Entertainment
7:15 p.m. Medical Update by Jawad A. Bajwa, MD, Medical Director, Capistrant Center
Dr. Bajwa has been recognized for his work in the diagnosis and treatment of neurodegenerative disorders including Parkinson's disease.
7:45 p.m. Silent Auction closes & drawing for "Wall of Wine"



EVENT ACTIVITIES include dinner, wine and entertainment by Opus Ensembles. Minimum \$25 donation requested per household.

HELP MAKE the "Wall of Wine" bigger than ever by bringing a bottle of wine to be included in the "Wall of Wine."

RSVP by April 12 to Jill Brezczinski at 763-545-1272 or email her at info@parkinsonmn.org. Donation may be made the evening of the Soiree, or by mailing it to the PAM office at 2205 Zealand Ave. N., Golden Valley, MN 55427.

Capistrant Center Received \$40,000 Grant

In fall 2009, the Parkinson Association of Minnesota (PAM) gave a \$40,000 gift to the Capistrant Center for Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders. The gift was used to support the Resource Center, speaker's bureau and support groups, Living Well with Parkinson's classes, and exercise classes. In making this gift, Paul Blom, President of PAM, said, "I am delighted to be part of answering Dr. Capistrant's call to 'spark an era of combined effort to attack Parkinson's disease.'"

"This generous gift puts us in a landmark position to collaborate metro- and state-wide in providing world class care for patients with Parkinson's disease," says Jawad A. Bajwa, MD, Medical Director. "Support of this kind is important to patients and families as they navigate their journey with Parkinson's," comments Cathy Barr, CEO, Bethesda Hospital. "This allows us to take a holistic approach to care."



Food Perspectives Fund Raiser Update

Until recently, Food Perspectives required all eligible adult testers to be between the ages of 18-65 years. Testers can now be 18-84 years and be part of their database. Tests are in a variety of locations and you will be asked to tests within a reasonable drive from your home. Day and evening times are offered for all tests. The tests you participate in are totally at your convenience. Each time a tester takes part in a study they receive a payment of \$21 to \$30 and PAM receives payment of \$10.

If you (or someone you know) are interested in helping PAM by participating with Food Perspectives, please call 763-354-2776 to speak one of the representatives, or you can sign up online at www.fpitesters.com. Click on "Become a Tester" and follow the online instruction. Thank you!

200 Perfect Jumps for Parkinson's Disease

The 200 Perfect Jumps for Parkinson's Disease is set for Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at Skydive Twin Cities in Baldwin, Wisconsin. Visit www.perfectjumps.com for more information.

The event will go on all day, starting in the very early morning and going until 9 p.m. Kevin Burkart will be completing 200 skydives in one day to raise \$60,000 and awareness for Parkinson's disease. He'll shatter his previous record of 100 skydives in a day that raised \$45,000 for PD in 2008. This is a child friendly event with a "Kid's Jump for PD," a moonwalk, jump rope and coloring contest.

Kevin wants every jump to be in memory or in honor of someone affected by Parkinson's disease. Please submit your entries at www.perfectjumps.com or phone 952-233-1474. Donations are being accepted in any amount.

T-shirts and food will be available that day and there will be a BBQ starting at 5:30 p.m. followed by a presentation at 7 p.m. in the hangar by Dr. Steven D. Stein. Dr. Stein is from the Struthers Parkinson's Center and his presentation is entitled: "Reach for the Sky: Life Enabled," a discussion of modern day Parkinson's disease.



Glynn A. Cooks, Vice Chairman of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, owners of Mystic Lake Casino, present Kevin Burkart a check for the Parkinson Association of Minnesota in the amount of \$10,000 as sponsorship for his record attempt "The 200 Perfect Jumps for Parkinson's Disease" which take place June 16.

Medicare Caps on Rehab Therapy Reimbursements Effective January 1, 2010

Saturday, February 6, 2010— Parkinson's disease patients and those who care for them should be aware of a change in Medicare's caps limiting outpatient rehab services. These therapy caps went into effect on January 1, 2010 and apply to outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services.

A limit of \$1,860 in reimbursement applies to all who receive outpatient therapy, with the exception of hospital outpatient departments. Thus, those who receive therapy services with a skilled nursing facility (Part b), a therapist's or physician's private practice, a home health agency (Part b), or a re-

habilitation agency are subject to these caps. Once the limit of \$1,860 has been reached, beneficiaries who require additional services in a 12-month period are responsible for 100% of the cost.

According to the American Physical Therapy Association, approximately 13% of Medicare beneficiaries who receive rehabilitation services exceed the arbitrary limit on coverage.

These caps were originally imposed by the Balanced Budget act of 1997. In the past, Congress voted to allow Medicare beneficiaries to exceed the cap if the services were deemed medically necessary. This year, Congress did

MEDICARE *continued next page*

not vote to allow exceptions and the cap limit went into effect January 1. While both the House and Senate versions of health care reform legislation addressed the therapy cap by extending the exceptions process temporarily, failure to enact reform means that Parkinson's patients will only receive Medicare reimbursement for up to \$1,860 of therapy services, unless those services are provided in a hospital setting.

Physical therapy and speech therapy, in particular, have been demonstrated to have a significant positive impact on the health and well-being of people with Parkinson's, including improving speech and swallowing, gait and balance and helping to prevent falls. In addition, many people with Parkinson's have one or more other conditions, such as arthritis, for which ongoing therapy is essential.

The National Parkinson Foundation and the Parkinson Action Network (PAN) have together identified this as a high priority issue. PAN is currently working with a broad coalition to craft a legislative strategy in Washington to remedy the situation as soon as possible. People with Parkinson's, those who care for them and healthcare providers should contact their member of Congress to urge that this issue receive the highest priority and that any solution be retroactive to January 1, 2010.

Patients who are currently receiving rehabilitation therapy should:

- Determine whether hospital-based outpatient services are available in your area. These are not subject to the cap. To look for physical therapy services, visit <http://www.apta.org>
- Keep track of all costs for physical or speech or occupational rehabilitation therapy services as those exceeding the cap may be reimbursable once Congress takes action.

FOR PROVIDERS OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES:

- Be aware that the billing code for the Medicare exception, Modifier KX is no longer a valid modifier. Claims with this code will be rejected for all services after January 1, 2010.

We will follow up with additional information when our coalition has

identified specific legislation that will address this problem. In the meantime, work with your provider to identify a physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy plan that will work for you given these caps.

Peter Schmidt, Ph.D.
Chief Information Officer
Vice President, Programs
National Parkinson Foundation

PAM Provides Annual Grant to Struthers Parkinson's Center

The Struthers Parkinson's Center in Golden Valley, MN is designated as a National Parkinson Foundation Center of Excellence, and serves the Parkinson's community through interdisciplinary clinical care, support, education and outreach services. A \$50,000 grant from the Parkinson Association of Minnesota has helped support education, outreach and operational costs of our on-site therapeutic day program for individuals living with Parkinson's. Outreach and educational events were held in all five states of the Struthers Parkinson's Center service area (Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota and Iowa). Struthers staff presented a variety of topics relating to Parkinson's management reaching 697 community members, 844 health care professionals including rehab therapists, nurses, pharmacists, physicians and social workers. Two hundred and five individuals attended educational classes as a part of the FOCUS project, a one-year program for those diagnosed with Parkinson's within the past year.

In addition, PAM was a sponsor for the annual support group facilitator and patient conferences held on October 23 and 24, 2009. Thirty five support group facilitators were trained and 220 individuals attended the patient conference.

Struthers Parkinson's Center appreciates the financial support from PAM. Our collaboration gives the center the opportunity to raise public awareness and provide valuable education about Parkinson's to all parts of Minnesota and our upper Midwest service region.

Update! PAN Works to Extend Exceptions to Medicare Therapy Caps

Thursday, March 4, 2010—The Parkinson's Action Network (PAN) joined together with other leading patient advocacy and provider groups at a press conference urging Congress to extend exceptions to Medicare therapy caps and ultimately repeal the therapy caps. The press conference was hosted by the Therapy Cap Coalition, of which PAN is a member. John Schall, PAN Deputy Chief Executive Officer, spoke at the press conference, noting the toll the therapy caps have on people living with Parkinson's and other diseases.

"For Parkinson's, therapy is literally a life-saver," said Schall. "We are talking about therapy that both provides invaluable benefits to a patient's way of life and does so in a cost-effective manner."

The Medicare therapy caps are limits on the amount of outpatient physical, speech, and occupational therapy a Medicare beneficiary can receive each calendar year. For 2010, Medicare will cover a combined therapy cap of \$1,860 for outpatient physical therapy and speech language pathology services, and a separate cap of \$1,860 for outpatient occupational therapy services. Once the limit of \$1,860 has been reached, beneficiaries who require additional services in a 12-month period are responsible for 100% of the cost. In 2006 Congress created an exceptions process that allows access to medically necessary services without additional costs.

"We are talking about a lot of patients," Schall added. "We estimate a half-million Medicare patients living with Parkinson's, and in 2006, almost 26% of beneficiaries diagnosed with Parkinson's surpassed the cap threshold."

Congress allowed the exceptions process to expire on December 31, 2009 and therefore the cap limit of \$1,860 went into effect on January 1, 2010. In a very hard fought victory, on March 2, Congress extended the Medicare therapy cap exceptions process through March 31, 2010 and retroactively to January 1,

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Special Thanks to:

Newsletter Staff.....Jill Breczinski
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Thank You for Respite Care Grant

How does one say “Thank you” sufficiently for a few hours a week that to others doesn’t seem significant.

Although I love my husband dearly, 24-7 was getting to be too much for me. Anger and tears were a daily occurrence. His daughter, a nurse, recommended I get help. We applied at the Struthers Clinic. When Joe heard what it would cost for one day, he said “No way!” although we were financially able to cover the cost for one day a week. The social worker informed us of the Respite Care Grant Program and he had no excuse.

He went for a few months and that gave me time to get myself back together. Hopefully, he will go again in the Fall when we return from the cottage.

What a Godsend for a few hours a week. It helped me realize the necessity of some time for myself. Thank you again for this opportunity.

Delores K.

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2010. Unfortunately, this is only a temporary fix. Additional Congressional action will be needed to ensure that the exceptions process is available to people living with Parkinson’s on April 1, 2010 when the current extension expires. PAN will work in coalition for a permanent repeal of the Medicare Therapy Caps.

Please stay tuned for updates as this important issue continues to move forward.

The Parkinson Association of Minnesota, a nonprofit, voluntary alliance, is dedicated to improving the lives of those affected by Parkinson’s disease, through fundraising, community building, advocacy and increasing public awareness.
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