



the PIONEER

brought to you by NORTH HEMPSTEAD PROJECT INDEPENDENCE

Project Independence is a program designed to support residents 60 and over to continue to enjoy good health and a rewarding quality of life in their own homes and communities.

NEWSLETTER VOL. 14 NO. 2

FALL 2020

MESSAGE FROM SUPERVISOR BOSWORTH:

2020 has certainly turned out to be a whirlwind of a year. It has brought some extremely difficult times, for many of us. In March, once we started to hear about the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic our Project Independence team worked around the clock to make sure our senior residents were safe, protected, and informed.

Our Project Independence exercise classes, workshops, and classes were transitioned to virtual programs - allowing our members to take part in these activities from the safety of their own homes.

Additionally, we worked to expand our food transportation program providing more off-peak hours for our residents to shop and the taxi program transitioned to all "cashless" including tips during this time.

With requirements to have people remain at home as much as possible, our Project Independence team developed the Neighbors Helping

Neighbors program, which provided for members to enjoy companionship and reassurance from their neighbors during a time where many can feel isolated and disconnected.

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked to provide our residents with the most up to date information they need through: robocalls, emails, website updates, and information on our government access television channel.

The Town has strived to do everything we can to assist our residents and will continue to do so. As we navigate this public health emergency, please know that in North Hempstead we are a family. We are all in this together and I believe our community will emerge stronger than ever before.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judi Bosworth".

Judi Bosworth

North Hempstead
Town Supervisor





Preparing for Flu Season 2020

By Urvashi Kohli, MD, Philip Solomon, MD, and Maria Carney MD
 Northwell Health Geriatrics, 410 Lakeville Road, Suite 200, New Hyde Park, NY 11042
 516-708-2520

As summer draws to a close and we continue to adapt to a “new-normal,” it is essential to prepare for the coming flu season. Typically lasting five months – from November to March – flu season has annual variability with the peak historically emerging between December and February.

Preliminary 2019-2020 estimates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention noted that the flu contributed to at least 18 million patient visits in the US, 410,000 hospitalizations and as many as 64,000 deaths – an estimated economic cost of nearly \$10 billion. Still, more than half of Americans do not receive a flu vaccine.

The inconsistent nature of flu season should be reason enough to encourage you to get vaccinated. With COVID-19 still a threat, you want to make sure you are best protected this fall and winter. Remember, vaccines are truly intended to minimize the severity of an illness. While they may not 100-percent protect you, they could be the difference between a serious case – hospitalization or even death – or not coming down with the flu at all.

Adults older than 65 should receive a high-dose flu vaccine, which stimulates a stronger immune response, as they are considered high risk for serious complications. The flu vaccine can also decrease the risk of cardiac complications if you have heart disease, and reduce hospitalizations for those with chronic lung diseases.

When and where to get vaccinated:

Try to get vaccinated before November. Flu vaccines are often available as early as September and manufacturers have already begun distribution for this season.

While the fall is the ideal time, it is never too late to get your flu shot. Just remember, it can take a couple of weeks after vaccination to form protective antibodies, meaning the vaccine’s effects are not immediate.

Flu vaccines can be administered in a variety of settings, including doctors’ offices, community health centers and pharmacies. With this season being unique, some communities are arranging outdoor drive-up vaccination centers. The CDC has assisted with compiling a database of locations, which can be found at vaccinefinder.org.

Flu shot misconceptions

Misinformation is disastrous to public health. Some common flu misconceptions include:

- The vaccine cannot cause the flu, as it is made with either inactivated virus or non-infectious viral proteins.
- While the flu vaccine does not provide complete immunity from all flu strains, it does target the projected common strains for the upcoming season and reduces illness severity.
- The flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, but it may prevent a dangerous co-infection of both viruses.

With many common symptoms – fever, cough and shortness of breath – it’s easy to confuse the flu with COVID-19. Many of the precautions we are currently taking can assist in the fight against the flu, so continue to be vigilant about hand hygiene, wearing a mask and physical distancing (at least six feet). Also, carefully consider the risks of activities outside of the home, particularly those in indoor public spaces like restaurants.

This fall will undoubtedly be different than usual, but advice regarding flu season remains the same. Talk to your loved ones about getting vaccinated, and continue to abide by precautions to stop the spread of respiratory viruses. Contact your health provider with any symptoms or questions.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



MAKE A PLAN



BUILD A KIT



BE INFORMED



Medicare during COVID-19 and Open Enrollment Updates

By Barry Klitsberg, Assistant Program Coordinator, Nassau County HIICAP Program

Many seniors who were still working and covered with their employer group health plan lost their jobs and subsequently their health insurance. However, they are eligible for a Medicare Special Enrollment Period. They have eight months to apply for Part B without a late enrollment penalty and have to file a CMS 40B and CMS 564 form to Social Security. Since the SSA offices are closed, these forms can be faxed to 833-914-2016. The forms can be downloaded online or by calling Social Security at 800-772-1213.

Medicare has adjusted benefits to expand coverage for COVID-19 testing. Medicare Advantage plans are not charging co-payments for testing.

The skilled nursing facility (SNF) 100 days of coverage for the first 100 days has been changed. Now, Medicare coverage for SNFs does not end at 100 days and there is no co-payment required for these extra days.

Flu vaccines are still covered at 100% with no deductible charged. It is important to make sure that

vaccines are current to prevent complications from viruses complicating each other.

Medicare Open Enrollment Season

Medicare Open Enrollment Season starts October 15 and runs through December 7. Medicare beneficiaries can switch drug plans and/or Medicare Advantage plans. You can also drop Medicare Advantage plans and go back to traditional Medicare with a prescription drug plan. If you are in a Medicare Advantage plan, you also have an additional period to switch your plan or drop it and go back to traditional Medicare.

Please call 516-485-3754 for more information on these updates.

You can also join us on Zoom to learn about the changes in Medicare advantage plans, Medicare Part D prescription plans and getting help with Medicare costs.

Tuesday, October 6, 2020 from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. or Wednesday, October 14, 2020 from 1 p.m.-2 p.m. Call 311 or 869-6311 to register.

Technology for Seniors and COVID-19

Otto Lohse, PI Member and Volunteer

We haven't been doing much dancing since March, but many seniors have learned how to use technology to reduce the loneliness and isolation created by the world of COVID-19. Many things have and will continue to change, but the number of Project Independence members learning and using technology is one of the positives.

One of the amazing happenings is how the use of Zoom has zoomed. PI members have taken advantage of our "Technology for the Terrified" sessions along with personal guidance in how to use Zoom. There is no doubt that technology like Zoom is not like real personal contact, but it sure beats no contact. The list of success stories in using this method by the Town and PI members is very long.

Andrea Taylor, LCSW, one of the great team of PI Social Workers and Nurses, tells how one of the programs she facilitates has continued without skipping a beat. Under normal conditions, she runs a weekly Social Discussion Group at the Parkville Library. This group enthusiastically still meets every week on a Zoom call. Many other programs have continued to thrive e.g., Advisory Committees, exercise classes, technology classes, FunDay Monday and PI Radio to name just a few.

Besides PI programs, seniors have taken advantage of learning this new technology for communicating with friends and family. As a result, many are also learning other wonderful things you can do with technology. All this helps get through the tough days of the COVID-19 crisis.

We encourage you to get on the bandwagon, take advantage of PI programs, and get started in the world of technology. Once you get going – it's fun and provides many benefits. Call 311 or 869-6311 to register for a program today!



Finding the Silver Lining in PI Virtual Programming

By Joan Ortiz (PI Member)

I have been a member of Project Independence since inception, and all the programs and events have become part of my daily life. On top of the COVID-19 Pandemic causing in person programs to be canceled, I am disabled, and over the years it is harder for me to walk. Since Project Independence launched its virtual programming, I have taken part in a lot of them! Some of my favorite virtual programs are the Advisory Committee, in which we learn what's going on in the Town and what new programs are in the works; the Social Discussion Group, where we talk about anything that interests us; the World in Motion Group, where we discuss current events and its pros and cons and lots more.

During this time, life can get you down, and not being able to meet and partake in programs that you normally would can be upsetting. However, I chose to look at this virtual programming as a wonderful addition! It is so easy to participate when all you have to do is click on a Zoom link.

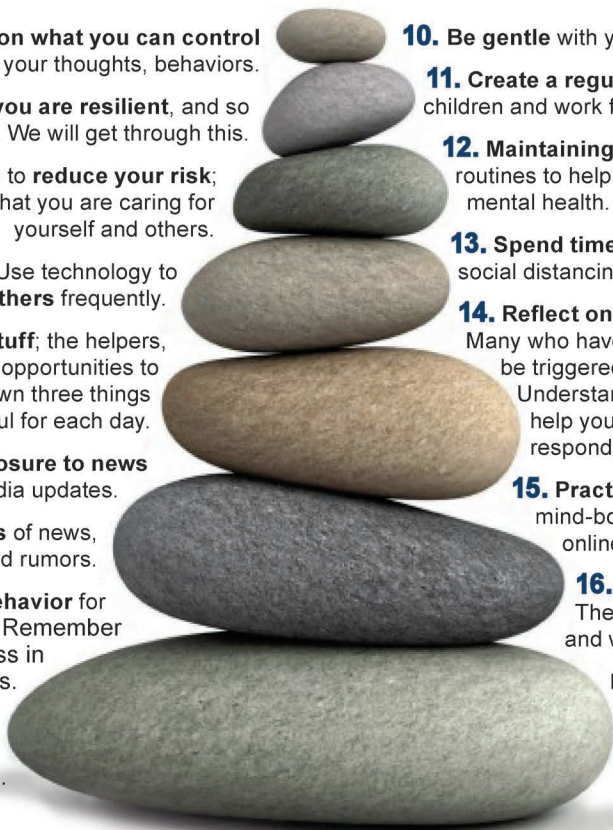
I want to encourage seniors who are homebound or with disabilities to give PI Virtual Programs a try. It's easy and if a new person makes a mistake, it doesn't matter, we are just local neighbors and are learning ourselves. I hope Project Independence continues this service after the COVID-19 Pandemic goes away!

Find your happy place.

TIPS TO REDUCE COVID-19 STRESS



- 1. Focus on what you can control** - including your thoughts, behaviors.
- 2. Remember that you are resilient**, and so is humankind. We will get through this.
- 3. Do what you can to reduce your risk;** take comfort that you are caring for yourself and others.
- 4. Use technology to connect with others** frequently.
- 5. Look for the good stuff;** the helpers, time with family, and opportunities to pull together. Write down three things you are grateful for each day.
- 6. Limit exposure to news** or social media updates.
- 7. Use reputable sources** of news, avoid speculation and rumors.
- 8. Model peaceful behavior** for those around you. Remember everyone experiences stress in different ways.
- 9. Don't let fear influence** your decisions, such as hoarding supplies.
- 10. Be gentle** with yourself and others.
- 11. Create a regular routine**, especially for children and work from home.
- 12. Maintaining a healthy diet;** and **exercise** routines to help your immune system and mental health.
- 13. Spend time in nature** while adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- 14. Reflect on your reactions.** Many who have experienced trauma may be triggered by feelings of powerless. Understanding what you are feeling can help you consider how you want to respond to the triggers.
- 15. Practice meditation,** yoga, or other mind-body techniques. Find apps or online videos to help.
- 16. Reach out if you need to talk.** There are local and national hotlines and warmlines that can help!



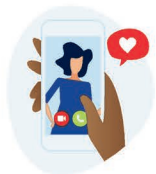
DISASTER DISTRESS HELPLINE
1-800-985-5990
'TalkWithUs' TEXT 66746.

MN Department of Health



In addition to PI Virtual Programming, check out these other tips to keeping engaged virtually!

(ACL Administration for Community Living)



SOCIALIZE

- Stay in touch with friends and loved ones, or even reconnect with people you haven't seen in years, through social media platforms like [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).
- Check out video call platforms such as [Skype](#), [FaceTime](#), and [Google Hangouts](#), so you can see the faces of family and friends while you talk to them.



EXPLORE

- Browse more than 2,500 free courses available on [edX](#). With subjects ranging from computer science to arts and humanities to foreign languages, there's something for everyone.
- Explore zoos and aquariums across the country, including [Smithsonian's National Zoo](#), through virtual behind the scenes tours and lessons. Many have live webcams so you can watch the animals any time.
- Enjoy artwork from around the world. Thousands of museums and galleries have partnered with [Google Arts & Culture](#) to display their collections through virtual tours.
- Tour one of the many [national parks](#) offering digital tours and experiences that you can access anytime.
- Learn from the pros. [MasterClass Live](#) is currently offering one free streaming class per week.



UNWIND

- Check your library's free e-books and audiobooks you can borrow without leaving home. Consider joining a virtual book club to connect with others enjoying the same book.
- Host dinner or a game night with friends over video chat. Good Housekeeping has [10 game ideas](#) to get you started.
- Catch free theater or opera performances online. [The New York Metropolitan Opera](#) is streaming a different encore performance from their Live in HD series every day, and the UK's [National Theatre](#) streams a different play on YouTube every Thursday.



CONNECT

- The [Eldercare Locator](#), a public service of ACL, is a nationwide service that connects older adults and their caregivers with trustworthy local support resources. Whether you are looking for help with services like meals and home care, or you want to learn more about caregiver education and respite, the Eldercare Locator can point you in the right direction.

Want something lower tech?

Watch a TV show or movie while talking to a friend on the phone. Many streaming services are offering free trials or certain shows and movies at no charge.

Write a letter to a friend and reminisce about one of your favorite memories of them. Ask them to write back and share their own favorite memory.

Keep up to date with current events and stay connected to neighbors by reading local newspapers and community bulletins.

PI Virtual Social Groups

World in Motion via Zoom

Wednesday, October 7, 21, November 4, 18 and December 2, 16, 2020 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Come join us on Zoom for a lively virtual discussion on current world issues! Presented by Professor Martha Cohen, PI Volunteer.

Social Discussion Group

Thursdays 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Come meet new friends via Zoom. Enjoy talking with others and meeting your neighbors. Open to North Hempstead residents age 60 and older. Facilitated by Andrea Taylor, LCSW, PI Social Worker

Men's Group

Fridays 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Come and join us via Zoom. The group is open to all men, age 60 and over living in the Town of North Hempstead. Come and discuss topics that are of mutual interest to men living in this community.

Zoom Training Available for PI Members

PI volunteer, and Technology for the Terrified Instructor, Barbara Mehlman offers assistance via the telephone to assist seniors interested in participating in Zoom programs. If you would like assistance call 311 or 869-6311.

Call 311 or 869-6311 to register and receive a Zoom link.



PI Social Worker & Nurse Updates

A special shout out and thank you to the helping heroes of Project Independence, the PI Social Workers and Nurses. The PI Social Work and Nurse team continues to work very hard at keeping connected to PI members remotely. PI Social Workers and Nurses have been figuring out creative solutions to help ease seniors' fears of isolation, anxiety and fears of getting food, medical management and many other services.

Here are just a few examples of human services provided during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

- Providing daily and weekly wellness checks to constituents. Including emotional support regarding feelings of isolation, fear of COVID-19, caregiver and bereavement counseling.
- PI Social Workers and Nurses have been in contact with children who live out of state and are concerned about their parents who live in TONH.
- PI Social Workers and Nurses working together in addition to coordinating with various community based organizations.
- PI Nurses have been coordinating with doctors and pharmacies to get prescriptions renewed and delivered.
- PI Social Workers have been coordinating to get food delivered to seniors' homes. Various mental health hotline referrals have been provided for those in distress.
- Coordination and referral to home maintenance organizations, Rebuilding Together LI and TRI Help at Home Program

If you would like to connect with a PI Social Worker or a PI Nurse, please call 311 or 869-6311.

PI Transportation Service Modifications During the COVID-19 Crisis

The Project Independence Taxi service for food shopping and for medical appointments has been modified to be “cashless” and only one rider at a time in the taxi through the crisis. This is to avoid close interaction and reduce the threat of potential transmission. There is no cost to the rider and the tip is included. The Town of North Hempstead is covering these costs to ease the burden during this time.

The food transportation program has been expanded to be **7 days a week, between 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Medical continues to be 7 days. Masks are required by driver and riders. These accommodations are being made through the crisis and is subject to change, please **call 311 / 516-869-6311 for updates.**

The PI Transportation program also services people with disabilities who reside in the Town, ages 21 – 59. **Residents can call 311 / 516-869-6311**, to make an appointment or for more information about PI Taxi Services.

Veterans Caseworker

The PI Veterans Caseworker is available to provide service to Town veterans. Services include emotional support/counseling and concrete services available. The PI Veterans Caseworker has worked to ensure veterans are aware of hotlines if needed, and that they should continue to call the 311 call center to speak to Veteran's Caseworker if they are in need of any services. The PI Veterans Caseworker introduced local veterans through phone introductions, in order to decrease feelings of isolation, to increase contact and be mutually supportive.



'Zoom' to New Heights with Project Independence



Town of North Hempstead
Project Independence

88.1FM
WCWP.org

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, the Project Independence and You radio show wanted to continue to provide timely and important information to the senior residents of North Hempstead, caretakers and service professionals. Previous guests and topics included Supervisor Judi Bosworth, County Executive Laura Curran, Congressman Tom Suozzi, State Senator Anna Kaplan, Latest Tips on Frauds & Scams, Financial Concerns surrounding COVID-19 Pandemic, NY State Attorney General Scam Awareness and From Crisis to Calm Coping in an Ever Changing Normal and many more.

After listening to an informative guest, be sure to listen to the Talk of the Town to find out about updates, programs and what's going on around Town!

Project Independence and You airs live on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. using the Zoom platform. Tune in on WCWP 88.1 FM or wcwp.org or download the app. Past episodes are available at northhempsteadny.gov/pi-home (Zoom videos also available for most shows). You can also catch various episodes on North Hempstead TV, on Cablevision Channel 18 or 63 or Verizon FIOS Channel 46 or visit www.mynhtv.com.

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors Telephone Reassurance Program

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors program launched on April 7 and aims to ease the growing sense of isolation as the coronavirus pandemic has forced seniors, who are most susceptible to the virus, to remain at home. During this time of uncertainty and social distancing, many can feel isolated and disconnected. This program is designed to help keep seniors connected with one another. Currently over 40 matches have been made.

During a wellness check from one of the PI Nurses, Mrs. W., a 104 year old senior expressed feeling lonely and isolated. The PI Nurse described to her the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program, and suggested she participate. Mrs. W. was agreeable, however she wanted the volunteer to be close to her own age. The PI Nurse reached out to one of the PI Social Workers and was able to match her with volunteer, Mrs. B, who turned 100 years old in August! Once the two women connected they found out they had a lot in common and even attended the same college many years ago.

As much as you have the seniors who are requesting for someone to call them, the volunteers themselves are getting so much out of it too. Everyone is isolated. It's really a give and take because we always say it's hard to say who the volunteer is at that point.

This program is for Town Residents aged 60 and over to receive calls. Volunteers must be 21 or older and a Town resident at this point. If you are interested in being part of this program, call 311 or 869-6311.



Photo: Newsday

Jerry Berkson, of New Hyde Park, volunteers to make calls to homebound seniors in North Hempstead during the coronavirus lockdown.



Town of North Hempstead
 220 Plandome Road
 Manhasset, NY 11030

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 New York
 Permit No. 460

PI Exercise Programs

North Hempstead’s Project Independence expanded their virtual exercise classes to keep seniors fit at home. Classes include Fitness, Tai Chi, Yoga and Dance. Many of the classes and times are the same as the Project Independence in-person fitness classes.

The PI exercise classes broadcast on the Town’s public access television station, North Hempstead TV. Channel 18 or 63 on Cablevision or Channel 46 Verizon FIOS. New classes air Monday through Sunday, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. You can also visit www.mynhtv.com/fitness to watch the classes online.

Join a Project Independence Advisory Committee via Zoom and Make a Difference!

Join us at a Project Independence Zoom Advisory Committee to discuss the needs of Town residents 60 and over and offer suggestions for new programs.

If you are interested in participating, please call 311 or 869-6311 to register for your regional meeting and receive a Zoom link.

Technology for the Terrified via Zoom: How to Sell on the Internet

Presented by Barbara Mehlman (Project Independence Volunteer). It’s time to declutter and make some money! Join us via Zoom to find out all the ways to sell your “stuff” online on Tuesday, October 27, 2020 from 2 p.m.-3 p.m. North Hempstead Project Independence invites all Town residents 60 and over.

If you are interested in participating, please call 311 or 516-869-6311 to register and receive a Zoom link. SPACE IS LIMITED.

2020 Saint Francis Hospital Outreach Bus

FREE Health Screenings

The screenings include a brief cardiac history, blood pressure, simple blood test for Cholesterol, and Diabetes screenings with appropriate patient education and referrals as needed for clients above the age of 18.

NO APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED. Flu shots will be available.

Friday, October 2, 2020

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Clinton G. Martin Park

1601 Marcus Ave, New Hyde Park

Thursday, October 8, 2020

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

North Hempstead “Yes We Can”

Community Center

141 Garden Street, Westbury

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Magnolia Gardens

899 Broadway, Westbury

Monday, November 23, 2020

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Port Washington Adult Activities Center

80 Manorhaven Blvd, Port Washington

Thursday, December 10, 2020

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Manhasset Valley Residence

155 East Shore Rd, Manhasset

*Dates are subject to change, please call 311 or 869-6311 to confirm.



Town Supervisor
Judi Bosworth



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Viviana L. Russell



Council Member,
 District 2
Peter J. Zuckerman



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 District 3
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Council Member,
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Charles Berman

Call 311 or visit www.northhempsteadny.gov for more Town information.

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