



Relatively Speaking

NEWBRIDGE ON THE CHARLES



a Newsletter for Family and Friends of NewBridge Residents

Welcome to the May edition of "Relatively Speaking," a quarterly newsletter designed just for you, the family members of NewBridge on the Charles residents.

Our goal is to educate, inspire, and engage. In each issue, we share campus resources, aging research and education, staff highlights, and information about special events and programs.

Thank you for joining us. We are happy that you are part of the community your parents call home.

~ Tara Fleming Caruso, Collaborative Care Advisor, MA, LMHC

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- ***Staff Spotlight: Dr. Kouta Ito***
- ***Conversations about Health Care Proxies***
- ***Institute for Aging Research News***
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Upcoming Events Just for You:

- ***6/21: Monthly Support Group***
 - ***7/9: Bagels, Coffee & Conversation***
- [Get more info >](#)



Campus Spotlight: Primary Care through HSL Medical Group

The Hebrew SeniorLife Medical Group— one of the largest geriatric practices in the United States— is dedicated to providing exceptional care for seniors within a holistic approach to wellness.

Our robust NewBridge office opened in October of 2009 and is open solely to NewBridge residents. Without even having to

walk outside, NewBridge residents can access some of the finest clinicians in their fields, including geriatricians, a nurse practitioner, psychiatrist, audiologist and podiatrist. Many of our clinicians hold faculty appointments at Harvard Medical School and are involved in advancing geriatric medicine through teaching and research.

The HSL Medical Group offers innovative, evidence-based programs to help patients manage their chronic conditions, including:

- Wellness assessments and customized programs
- Same-day urgent care appointments
- A geriatrician on call 24/7 with access to EMR
- Onsite lab services
- Blood pressure clinics

The practice also distributes a [bi-monthly newsletter](#) to remind NewBridge residents about the services offered as well as to educate on a variety of different health topics.

For those residents who are not members of the practice, the clinic is still available for minor issues such as wound dressings, assessment of infections and checking of blood pressures. Clinicians would refer a residents back to their primary care physician or to the E.R. for such issues as respiratory concerns, very high/low blood pressure, chronic kidney disease, and diabetic issues.

The clinic team will communicate with family members of NBOC residents if the Health Care Proxy has been activated and/or if the resident gives their permission. Open Monday through Thursday from 8:30am to 5:00pm and on Fridays until 3:30pm, you can reach the NewBridge medical practice by calling 781-234-9600.

[Learn more about HSL Medical Group at NewBridge on the Charles.](#)



Staff Spotlight: **Dr. Kouta Ito**

As geriatric primary care physician, Dr. Kouta Ito joined the Hebrew SeniorLife Medical Group at NewBridge last August. The Hebrew SeniorLife blog recently featured an interview with Dr. Ito that sheds light on his background and interest in geriatric medicine.

Q: What drew you to being a physician?

A: I was drawn to medicine because of my Dad, who worked as a physician in the VA system. Geriatric medicine is one of the rare fields that allow a clinician to use both right and left brain skills. The work is rarely straightforward and every person is so different. As a fellow, I remember being taught that... [Read more >](#)



Having Conversations: Health Care Proxies and What Matters Most

*Hebrew SeniorLife partners with Mass.
Coalition on Serious Illness Care to
empower seniors and families on health
care decisions*

*Janet Gottler, LICSW
Independent Living Social Worker*

"What matters most?" That's a question we should all ask ourselves from time to time. And it's one that is easy to lose sight of in the rush and routine of day-to-day life. So every now and then, it's wise to take a fresh look at our lives and our resources—be they time, energy or money—to make sure we are dedicating them in a way that aligns with our values, preferences, and life goals.

At NewBridge on the Charles we ask "What matters most?" all the time. It's a question we pose to our residents, to their families, and to each other as we work to create a community that meets the unique needs of each of its members.

Founded by Hebrew SeniorLife, an affiliate of Harvard Medical School, we take the "life" part of our name very seriously, working daily to help each of our residents live their lives in accordance to their personal values, preferences, and life goals.

Because of our passion for helping seniors live their best lives, it is a natural extension of our work to bring the same approach to "end of life" as we do "daily life" in partnership with the Massachusetts Coalition for Serious Illness Care, co-chaired by Dr. Atul Gawande and Maureen Bisognano. Alongside more than 70 other Massachusetts-based organizations, we have been inspired by April's "Health Care Decisions Month" which aims to empower adults across the Commonwealth to advocate for their own goals, values, and preferences in all stages of their care. We are embarking on an initiative to promote family conversations and encourage you to make a time for reflection and conversations around this important topic by taking the following steps:

- **Designate a health care proxy.** We believe every adult over the age of 18 in Massachusetts should choose someone to express their health care preferences to in case there ever comes a time that one is unable to do so for oneself. This is important for people at every stage of life, as crises are not typically foreseeable. A health care proxy is usually a one-page document, easily found online. It takes only a few minutes to complete and no lawyer or notary is needed. The person you choose to serve as your health care proxy does not need to be present or even to sign it. This short form is the only legally binding way for you to make sure the person you choose is the one making decisions on your behalf.
- **Define your values and preferences regarding end of life.** What makes

YOUR life worth living? Think about your life over just the last two weeks. What was your best day? What did you do? Who were you with? What brought you joy? This is a great way to isolate which parts of your life, as you are living it today, are most important to you. Think about what you might be able to give or take and still find life worthwhile. This exercise can help you pinpoint the quality of life factors most precious to you.

- **Communicate these unique preferences** with your family, your medical provider, and the person you've chosen to be your health care proxy. Make sure your health care proxy knows how you hope to live the last chapter to your life as well as the last moments of your life. Maximize your quality of life, as you alone define it, by empowering a loved one with the knowledge-and legal right-to direct your health care according to your wishes, every day of your life. The focus is not on dying, but instead on living your best life until your last breath.

Our social worker Janet Gottler is available to meet with you and your parents to open up these conversations. To live our lives to the fullest, each of us should prioritize the areas of life that bring us the most joy. By designating a health care proxy, defining your own values and preferences for care, and then communicating them, you can make sure you're able to life fully every day of your life, including those at the end.

Learn more at Massachusetts Serious Illness Coalition at www.maseriouscare.org/.



IFAR News: Hebrew SeniorLife collaborates on free app for CareGivers

These days we rely on hand held devices to manage almost every aspect of our daily lives. Alarm clocks? Forget it. We wake up to the beeping of our phones. Maps? Gone. Siri can direct us anywhere we need to go. Whether we're communicating with our

loved ones, reading the daily news, or updating slides for our next meeting, we're often doing it with the help of a mobile device.

Caring for our elders shouldn't be any different. For this reason, researchers from Hebrew SeniorLife teamed up with affiliates from Harvard Medical School and several other organizations to create a senior care coordination app called InfoSAGE. We caught up with Dr. Lew Lipsitz, Director of Hebrew SeniorLife's Institute for Aging Research to discuss the program, and the many ways that it can aid families and caretakers.

Q: What organizations were involved in the creation of the program?

Dr. Lew Lipsitz: InfoSAGE is a collaborative project that came together with the help of... [Read more>](#)



Upcoming Campus Programs

Did you know that families are welcome to join NewBridge residents for any of our robust cultural and intellectually stimulating community life programs?

Two upcoming calendar highlights are a discussion of **Puccini's La Boheme presented by Musicologist Elizabeth Seitz** on Thursday, June 1

and **Tony Award Predictions with Boston Globe Art Critic Don Aucoin** on Monday, June 5. Both programs are begin at 7:30pm in Great Meadow Hall.

These are just two of the countless program offerings on the NewBridge campus. Stay in the know about them all by signing up for our weekly and monthly programming newsletters. To subscribe, send an email to DavidRaider@hsl.harvard.edu.



Events Just for You

Monthly Adult Child Support Group Wednesday, June 21, 7-8:15pm

This group for the children of independent and assisted living members is designed to provide both emotional support as well as education related to aging parent issues. The group is facilitated by Janet Gottler, LICSW, and Tara Fleming Caruso, LMHC and meets on the third Wednesday

of each month from 7-8:15pm in the Community Center. Refreshments are served.

[RSVP>](#)

Bagels, Coffee & Conversation

Sunday, July 9, 10-11:30am

Do you know enough about the continuum at NewBridge? Join other adult children and caregivers in an informal setting to learn more about the variety of care options on the NewBridge campus -- and how we help elders live their best lives. Get answers to your specific questions and meet other family members. [RSVP>](#)

Prefer a weekday option? Join a similar informational session designed for residents on Thursday, June 15 at 2pm. [RSVP>](#)

Do have questions about these programs? Contact Tara Fleming Caruso at TFlemingCaruso@hsl.harvard.edu or 781-234-9404 to learn more.

Numbers to Know

<i>Campus Supports and Education</i>	Tara Fleming Caruso, MA, LMHC Collaborative Care Advisor 781-234-9404 / TFlemingCaruso@hsl.harvard.edu
<i>Social Work</i>	Janet Gottler, LICSW Community Care Advisor 781-234-9214 / JanetGottler@hsl.harvard.edu
<i>Spiritual Needs</i>	Rabbi Judi Ehrlich Chaplain 781-234-9213 / JudiEhrlich@hsl.harvard.edu
<i>Maintenance and IT Requests (One Stop Shop)</i>	781-234-9500
<i>Security</i>	Emergency Only: 781-234-9911 Non Emergency: 781-234-9260
<i>Restaurant Reservations</i>	Nosh: 781-234-9102 Centro: 781-234-9100
<i>Special Events Catering</i>	Joan Grant Mann Catering Manager 781-234-9131 / JoanGrantMann@hsl.harvard.edu

Is there a topic you'd like to see in a future edition? Email your suggestions to TFlemingCaruso@hsl.harvard.edu. Know another family member who might like to get this newsletter? Send along their email address to DanaGitell@hsl.harvard.edu.

NewBridge on the Charles | 5000 Great Meadow Road, Dedham MA 02026 | 781-234-9500 | <http://www.hebrewseniorlife.org>

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