



Relatively Speaking

NEWBRIDGE ON THE CHARLES



A Newsletter for Family and Friends of NewBridge Residents

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

News of Note: Recently, a book including chapters written by over 20 independent living members entitled "[Aging Wisely... Wisdom of our Elders](#)" was published by an academic press.

Co-edited by member Irving Silverman and his daughter Ellen Beth Siegel, the wisdom contained in this volume would be of value to any generation. The book has received a lot of [media attention](#); we hope you'll check it out [here](#).

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

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

In this issue, read on for:

- [Campus Spotlight: Long-term Chronic Care](#)
- [Staff Spotlight: Scott Ariel](#)
- [Home for the Holidays](#)
- [Institute for Aging Research News](#)
- [Upcoming Programs](#)
- [Numbers to Know](#)

Upcoming Events Just for You:

- 12/20: [Monthly Support Group \(note date\)](#)
 - 1/21: [Bagels, Coffee & Conversation](#)
- [Get more info >](#)



Campus Spotlight: Long-Term Chronic Care

Hebrew Rehabilitation Center at NewBridge on the Charles offers the most comprehensive medical support available within the NewBridge continuum. You may have formerly known this area of

NewBridge as a "skilled nursing facility." In fact, our unique long-term chronic care hospital license allows us to offer a higher level of comprehensive medical programs and therapies that exceed those of a standard "nursing home." By calling ourselves a long-term chronic care hospital, we can more clearly alert consumers to the depth and quality of our services.

While the way we refer to this part of our campus has changed, the commitment to innovative, person-centered care has stayed the same. There are 9 distinct services within our long-term chronic care hospital that we consider to be aligned with the gold standard in elder care:

- **Geriatric specialists and Harvard Medical School-affiliated physicians** dedicated solely to our patients on a full-time basis.
- **"Small house" households** help to maximize patient independence with assistance from an interdisciplinary team of clinicians and patient care associates. The "small house" movement aims to deinstitutionalize care through the following hallmarks: conscious elimination of medical model signage, private rooms, home-like configuration (living room, dining room, kitchen, den), and easy access to outdoors/nature.
- **Specialized therapists** who provide a wide range of rehabilitative therapies, including physical, occupational and speech therapy, in addition to dietitians, expressive arts therapists and social workers.
- A **palliative care specialty team** that includes physicians, social workers, nurses, and spiritual care providers who focus on pain relief and the symptoms and emotional stress brought on by serious illness.
- A **life enhancement team** offering patients a wide range of programs to optimize quality of life and to provide opportunities for continued personal growth.
- **Specialized fitness trainers** who provide exercise programs to encourage patients to continue to work toward wellness goals.
- **Rabbis and chaplains** who attend to the spiritual and religious needs of our patients.
- A **culinary team** offering personalized nutrition services.
- **On-site pharmacy.**

Learn more about long-term chronic care at NewBridge by contacting Collaborative Care Advisor Tara Fleming Caruso at 781-234-9404 tflemingcaruso@hsl.harvard.edu.



Staff Spotlight: Scott Ariel

Scott Ariel serves as executive director of Hebrew Rehabilitation Center, which includes both the Rehabilitative Services

Unit and Long-Term Chronic Care at NewBridge on the Charles. We recently talked with Scott about his personal background as well as reflections on his role.

You live in downtown Boston now, but is it true you grew up in Honolulu?

My father was with the army and we moved to Honolulu when I was just 3 weeks old. Both my maternal and paternal grandparents were here in Boston, so that was the driving force for our family's return when I was 13. Hawaii was beautiful. I went to school barefoot. But I understand why some people get island fever, as it is difficult to travel and you end up experiencing all the same people, same weather, same culture all the time. When I would visit my grandparents as a kid, my grandfather, an architect, would walk me through the city from his place in the South End. We would walk to China town and the North End, and he'd note all the different cultures, architecture and influences. It made this place magical. I knew I always wanted to be in Boston and would do anything to return to live here. And here I am.

So that explains some of your favorite hobbies.

That's right. I love to scuba dive and salt-water sail. Those are my two passions. I like to get the boat in the water early, say in April, and keep going until November until it becomes so cold it starts to hurt. I don't dive much locally, because the water is so murky, but my favorite places to dive are protected areas, where visibility is great, like Turks and Caicos, where you will see species of fish you don't see anywhere else. And of course Honolulu. I love going back there to dive for the same reasons.

You have held several roles at Hebrew SeniorLife, including vice president of post-acute and support services, before becoming executive director of Hebrew Rehabilitation Center. What inspires you about working at Hebrew SeniorLife?

I'm really amazed by the extent to which my Hebrew SeniorLife colleagues truly embody our mission to honor our elders. When you look at the longevity of service here among staff, it's incredible. And the heart of this organization - whether in volunteerism or advocacy - is just huge.

In terms of our patients and families, I have the luxury of seeing two extremes. In our short-term rehabilitative services unit, we see a really sick patient population that comes here for an average of 11 days. We see varied acuity, with some very complicated patients like traumatic brain injuries or spinal cord injuries, and we witness their remarkable outcomes. They leave here with abilities they didn't have when they came, less than two weeks earlier. Our science and medical management is second to none.

On the other side, in long-term chronic care, our opportunity to make relationships with family and patients is unique because of the time we have together. While the average stay is 2.9 years, many patients have been here for far longer, and some even since we opened. We become an extended part of their families. Those relationships are real, permanent and long lasting, even beyond the lifespan of our patients. There are many examples of family members who continue to volunteer with us even after their loved one has passed. They call themselves Gen-to-Gen'ers - and continue to spend time with fellow patients they got to know during their loved one's time here and to give back to Hebrew SeniorLife.

Home for the Holidays

by Tara Fleming Caruso, MA, LMHC

The holiday season is upon us! A time when generations gather together; creating new memories and reflecting on the old ones. There can be many moments of joy during this time of year! At the same time, there very well may be a sense of loss, particularly if family structures have changed or if aging parents/relatives are experiencing cognitive or physical decline.



Observe

For adult children that live faraway and who mainly visit during holidays, these changes can be more obvious. You may have noticed some of the following during your own recent visits:

- Weight loss
- Mood changes (depression/anxiety)
- Increased difficulty with planning and organizing (managing appointments; paying bills)
- Physical decline (difficulty with walking; incontinence; poor hygiene)
- Vision/hearing loss
- Increased clutter
- Increased confusion

Taking an inventory of the environmental, cognitive or physical changes gives you important feedback on what may or may not be working for your loved one at this time in their life.

Talking about change

Acknowledgement of change allows for an honest conversation about how the elder's quality of life can be improved. Talking about this can be difficult. If the right questions are asked, and if you accept the challenge of really *listening*, you might find the conversations to be valuable gifts. The elder is the center of this process. Everyone has feelings and opinions that are valid. But the most important data to take from the conversation, in light of physical/cognitive change, is "*what matters most*" to the *elder*. Is it their apartment? Is it medical supervision? Community? Independence? Having private help in their home? You may think you already know, but actually having the conversation may surprise you.

Support and education

Once challenges have been identified, as well as important themes of what matters most, families often reach out to the team here at NewBridge, whether with the [Rabbi](#), [Social Worker](#) or with [myself](#), to learn more about resources on campus and how they can be utilized for increased quality of life. It's helpful to partner together to get a broader picture. The family member brings the life-long perspective of who their parent is, and the NewBridge team can share feedback on their daily life within the context of the NewBridge community.

Our guiding philosophy around eldercare is helping our Residents access supports so that they can live their best life on our campus. Sometimes that means enriching the current environment and sometimes that means changing the environment. Solutions may be as simple as switching to a pharmacy delivery system for medications, or to adding a course of outpatient physical therapy to improve balance and stamina. Other times, a decision is made to transition to a more therapeutic environment within the NBOC continuum. Whatever the process, the team works to educate both elders and their families so that they are in a position to make informed, smart decisions.

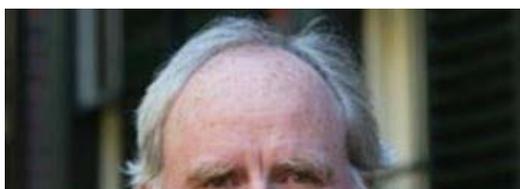


Institute for Aging Research News: New Clinical Trials Guide Helps Aging Researchers, Improving Senior Health

The Institute for Aging Research (IFAR) is one of the few research institutions in the country translating clinical and health services research discoveries into interventions that improve the experience of aging.

"Most advances in medicine come from clinical trials," says Susan Mitchell, M.D., M.P.H., senior scientist and director of Palliative Care Research at IFAR. "But many of the interventions that we are examining can be more complex than testing a pill," she explains.

"This is a special niche that we have developed here at IFAR," says Dr. Mitchell. "For example, one of our trials involves studying whether an educational video platform can improve nursing home care for patients. The clinical trial is testing whether showing a short video about advance care planning to families can help them make better treatment choices for their loved ones." [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?

Our 2018 calendar will begin with programs by two renowned scholars of history. **MIT economist Peter Temin will discuss "The Vanishing Middle Class"** on Wednesday, January 3 at 2pm and author **James P. Carroll will present "Christian Reckoning with the Jews"** on Thursday, January 4 at 7:30pm. Both programs take place in Great Meadow Hall.

These are just some 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, December 20, 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. Refreshments are served. [RSVP>](#)

Bagels, Coffee & Conversation

Sunday, January 21, 10-11:30am

Do you know about the continuum of care 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 weekdays option? Join a similar informational session designed for members on Thursday, January 18 at 2pm. [RSVP>](#)

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

Numbers to Know

Campus Supports and Education **Tara Fleming Caruso, MA, LMHC**

Collaborative Care Advisor

781-234-9404 / TFlemingCaruso@hsl.harvard.edu

Social Work

Janet Gottler, LICSW

Community Care Advisor

781-234-9214 / JanetGottler@hsl.harvard.edu

Spiritual Needs

Rabbi Judi Ehrlich

Chaplain

781-234-9213 / JudiEhrlich@hsl.harvard.edu

*Maintenance and IT Requests
(One Stop Shop)*

781-234-9500

Security

Emergency Only: 781-234-9911

Non Emergency: 781-234-9260

Restaurant Reservations

Nosh: 781-234-9102

Centro: 781-234-9100

Special Events Catering

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.

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