As Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health’s employees continue their heroic work on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ongoing work can take a toll on them mentally, physically and emotionally.

In order to keep providing high quality, reliable health care services to our communities, we first need to support our own employees, by encouraging regular self-care and offering resources to care for their mental health.

The MyHealthyLiving program at LG Health is an employee wellness program dedicated to supporting the well-being of our own employees. Employees can access in-person and online resources to help support their mental health needs and develop a healthy mindset.

Resources include:

• Quest EAP: The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers confidential counseling, educational tools and referral services to help you manage life’s problems. The EAP is provided through Quest Behavioral Health, an employee assistance firm. Employees receive three free sessions per year for themselves and immediate family members.

• Penn COBALT: Developed by Penn Medicine for the entire Penn Medicine community, this online resource lets employees sign in or anonymously access tools and resources for mental health support, including peer connections, resilience coaches, therapists and psychiatrists. Penn COBALT also hosts self-directed learning opportunities, podcasts, and webinars on a variety of topics impacting mental and emotional employee health.

• meQuilibrium Resilience Platform: meQuilibrium is a digital coaching app designed to help employees discover simple techniques to build resilience and shift responses to stressful thoughts and situations. meQuilibrium includes an assessment, short videos and interactive tools that can be completed on the employee’s own time.

Brynn Kline, manager, Corporate Health and Wellness says, “The silver lining we see is that mental health has always been part of overall well-being, but the pandemic has given everyone the opportunity to make it a priority. We are entering a new space where it’s encouraged to speak about it and seek help when needed.

“The message to all employees is: be in tune with yourself every day. Listen to your body, recognize when you go through longer than normal periods of uneasiness. Reach out. Seek help. Take care of you. It can change your day, your year, and your life.”
Occupational Medicine and Employee Health
TRANSITION TO INTEGRATED MODEL

Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health recently updated the organizational structure of its Occupational Medicine, Workers’ Compensation and Employee Health services to an integrated model that aligns with other Penn Medicine entities. The integration involved changes in leadership roles and reporting, adding new positions, and converting software tools for systemwide data collection.

The teams also streamlined how LG Health employees access services in order to improve safety, efficiency and communication. In May, LG Health transitioned reporting of all workplace injuries and exposures from the StarNet portal to the Employee Health Call Center. Employees also have a choice of locations note for receiving health services like injury care or vaccines. “The operational improvements we are continuing to make will allow Employee Health and Occupational Medicine to respond to injuries and exposures with more timely, coordinated care. Employees are going to receive personalized guidance and follow-up through every step of treatment and recovery,” said Wendy Fitts, director, Quality. Communication will be enhanced under the integrated structure as well. Workers’ Compensation will keep managers informed of any workplace injuries and employees requiring modified duties or time off. Staff safety committees have been reestablished to help identify areas of risk or barriers to reporting incidents.

“We hired a safety and environmental health specialist who will focus on injury prevention. By taking proactive measures, we can help avoid accidents rather than react to them,” said Angela Mackley, CSP, director, Safety and Emergency Management. “The triage and coordination we’ve put in place behind the scenes will make our services more convenient and seamless for employees, and allow for better handoffs and follow-up care,” Mackley said.

NURSE STATION DECORATING CONTEST
Showcases Joy and Creativity

This year’s nurse station decorating contest showcased 11 stations all competing for the title of most creative and beautiful station across Lancaster General Health services to an integrated model.

The Emergency Department won the contest with their Luau-themed nurse station. “The triage and coordination we’ve put in place behind the scenes will make our services more convenient and seamless for employees, and allow for better handoffs and follow-up care,” Mackley said.

The Emergency Department at Penn Medicine Lancaster General Hospital was recently awarded Bronze – Level 3 Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation (GEDA) from the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). The achievement reflects LG Health’s commitment to the highest standards of care for Lancaster County’s older adults. LGH is one of 10 hospitals in Pennsylvania with this accreditation and one of three within Penn Medicine, along with The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Hospital.

Older adults can present to the Emergency Department with more serious medical conditions that can make diagnosis and treatment more challenging. ACEP provides more than two dozen best practices for geriatric care, including geriatric-focused education and interdisciplinary staffing, specialized equipment, and routine screenings for dementia, fall risk and more. The accreditation stems from years of cumulative progress made by our ED team and we will continue to evolve our geriatric practices to ensure this progress continues.”

“I am incredibly grateful to the entire Emergency Department for their passion and commitment, and specifically for Brett Levy, MD, and Allison Carlos, RN, for leading the GEDA effort,” said Don Berkw, MD, FACEP, chair, Lancaster General Hospital Department of Emergency Medicine. “This achievement reinforces Lancaster General Hospital as a top hospital in the nation and reassures Lancaster’s older population that they will receive optimal care while in our facility.”

LGH ED EARNS GERIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT ACCREDITATION