

MEDICAL CARE AT HOME IS AVAILABLE IN BRIGHTON

By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter, Contributing Writer



Marie Aydelotte, MD, medical director for JSL and the Physician House Call Service



Brenda Baratta, MD, one of the PHC physician providers

The pandemic has increased the need and preference among older Rochesterians to receive medical care at home, and the Physician House Call (PHC) service of Jewish Senior Life (JSL) is responding to that trend.

The program has been around for quite awhile, although it is an aspect of JSL that many Monroe County residents may not know about. Founded about 35 years ago with 35 patients when a new chief medical officer brought their private home care services to JSL, PHC now has about 250 patients, according to Marie Aydelotte, MD, chief medical officer. "It's a huge help for many people," she said. And PHC would like to extend their help to more people: "We're always trying to grow," Aydelotte said. "The people we serve are so frail that we have a lot of turnover."

Even without that sad factor, Aydelotte expects the need

for home medical care to only continue as an increasingly long-lived population prefers to age in place — that is, in their homes. "We think there is a demand for a larger practice, especially in these pandemic times," Aydelotte said. "We are one of the only, if not the only, practices that provide home care in private homes." The goal is to help people stay in their homes as long as safely possible, whether "home" is in the JSL community or in Brighton, Pittsford, and other eastern county locations.

PHC is staffed by two physicians — one in family medicine and geriatrics, the other in internal medicine — who "job-share," and one full-time nurse-practitioner (NP) who is certified in family medicine and has experience in geriatric medicine. "All they do is home care, so they're rarely here (at the JSL campus on Winton Road). They are our employees, not associated with Strong Memorial Hospital or the University of Rochester medical school."

Then again, most of PHC's medical personnel to date have trained at the UofR; the local community is a natural fit with this program.

A nurse coordinator provides administrative support to the program and its patients.

The service is open to anyone over age 65 who is homebound; patients do not have to be Jewish to use PHC. "We work in several ZIP codes, mainly in eastern Monroe County — we don't cover the whole county," Aydelotte said.

To participate requires changing from a primary care practitioner to PHC, but participants can continue seeing specialists they already use. PHC's physicians make routine visits every six to eight weeks and respond to acute issues as needed — the team is available "24/7, 365 days a year." The program takes all insurances and Medicare, but not Medicaid.

For more information about Physician House Call go to www.jslphysicianhousecalls.org or call (585) 244-5993.

Disclaimer: The author's mother and husband received Physician House Call services from Jewish Senior Life from 2010–2013 and 2017–2018, respectively. "PHC was a lifesaver for all of us."