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## ABC in Action, Supporting the Community

ABC Home Healthcare has been enjoying a busy fall season! Staff was on hand at several health fairs and events this past season. We had a wonderful time sponsoring the Woburn Council on Aging Health Fair on Friday, September 16th, the Walk to End Alzheimer's on Sunday, October 2nd in Andover, as well as the Mystic Valley Elder Services Annual Provider Fair and the Radius at Danvers Health Fair, both held over the summer.

Another fantastic event that ABC co-sponsored was Seniorcare's Dancing on the High Seas, held in July. It was a beautiful night and a great fundraising event.

We are busy attending the many provider meetings across our service area. These meetings connect ABC Home Healthcare with other professionals, helping us to garner the resources to better serve our clients. We are also thrilled to again be a part of the Metro North Alzheimer Partnership and look forward to planning another caregiver conference for 2012.

We will be attending a Health Fair sponsored by Hallmark Health at Atria Maplewood Place in Malden on Friday, October 21st from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Remember to "like" our Facebook page to receive the most up-to-date ABC Home Healthcare whereabouts and events. Enjoy the Fall!

# the ABCs of Homecare

FALL 2011

Vol. 3 Issue 2



Greetings!

Welcome to the latest edition of the ABC's of Homecare. The Fall season is upon us. The days are getting shorter, and the nights are getting long. New routines for children have hopefully settled in. For some these are welcome changes, for others maybe not so. Changes in routines can be positive or negative. Sometimes that negative impact can lead to depression. October 10th was National Depression Screening Day. Nearly 20% of all seniors experience depression. To learn more about depression and how you can help see page 6.

The primary focus of this issue is Breast Cancer Awareness. This is something that unfortunately touches so many lives. It is for that reason that ABC also wants to do our part in sharing information on screening, symptoms and additional resources available. Early detection is the best defense against this disease. Please share the information on pages 4-5 with the women in your life.

On a more positive note, we're pleased to introduce a new feature in our newsletter, "Client Spotlight." In this edition we're excited to celebrate Mildred's 100th birthday. If you consider how much things have changed over the past decade...imagine the changes you'd have experienced over 10 decades! Special thanks to Mildred's family for letting us be a part of this special celebration.

As part of our continued efforts to "go green" we will begin to publish a digital version of the ABCs of Homecare. We'll still have print editions available. You can learn more about these changes on page 2-3.

As the holidays come upon us, I want to take the time to thank you for your readership.

Jeannette Sheehan, MSRN  
Board Certified Family Nurse Practitioner  
President and CEO

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# Client Spotlight: Happy 100th Birthday Mildred

By: Anna Roberts, Community Liaison

Jean Hennessey, Community Outreach Liaison for ABC, and I had the honor of meeting Mildred on her 100th birthday, July 27, 2011. Born in 1911, Mildred grew up in New York and eventually moved to Massachusetts where she married soon after. She had two children and has lived in Burlington now for many years. Mildred's son John planned a wonderful, all day party to celebrate Mildred's century of memories. Jean and I had the pleasure of meeting 4th generation grandchildren and many other visitors including family, friends, neighbors and even her doctor.

After introducing ourselves, Mildred mentioned that having an ABC caregiver come in during the week was a highlight of her day. Our home health aides have been caring for Mildred for over two years now. Care is provided four times a week by two wonderful aides. They help her with anything from personal care to a friendly conversation. How rewarding to know we can keep people smiling!



ABC's Community Liaison, Anna Roberts joins Mildred for her 100th Birthday Celebration

It was certainly a privilege to be part of such an honorable celebration. Even at 100 years old Mildred is sweet, caring and enjoys sharing stories and meeting with friends. Her house was filled with beautiful flower bouquets and generations of family and friends. Mildred even received a letter from President

Obama congratulating her on the milestone and how amazing it must be to have lived through so many historic events. Mildred was treated like a celebrity at her 100th birthday celebration, and rightfully so! We can all only hope to reach a 100th birthday and enjoy our lives to the fullest as Mildred has.

## Read the ABC's of Homecare Online

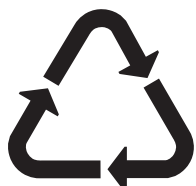
In an effort to make life easier for our readers and continue to reduce our environmental footprint, we are producing our newsletter, *the ABC's of Homecare* in both print and online beginning in 2011. If you'd like to receive our newsletter via email, please log-on to [www.abchhp.com/onlinenewsletter.html](http://www.abchhp.com/onlinenewsletter.html) and complete your request. Here you will also be able to remove your name from our print issue and read past issues.

## ABC Care Coordinators Have You Covered 7-Days a Week

ABC has you covered in the home and in the office with Care Coordinators available 7-days a week. The additional hours will allow field staff and clients additional access to coordinators for questions regarding their schedules. In addition, the office will be available to take calls from Visiting Nurse Associations, Hospices and Hospital Case Managers who are arranging private services on weekend hours.

"We are happy to be able to provide the best possible care to clients by increasing our office communication hours, allowing optimal client and employee relations," said Jeannette Sheehan, President and CEO of ABC Home Healthcare. "It is the mission of ABC Home Healthcare to continually strive to enhance our customer service and client care."

# ABC Home Healthcare Continues to Go Green by Going Paperless



“Reduce, reuse, recycle,” the push to act socially responsible is stronger than ever. ABC Home

Healthcare continues to work hard at doing their part to support these efforts. The healthcare industry by design involves large amounts of paperwork. Along with daily business functions of human resources, billing and payroll, there is clinical documentation surrounding each client. At ABC, we are always looking for ways to reduce our environmental footprint. We are pleased to announce that this year we moved to an in-house paperless system for Accounts Payable, Human Resources and patient records through the implementation of our Digiscribe document scanning system. A multi-part undertaking in

which previous paper documentation was scanned and indexed, all new documentation is now electronically completed and indexed rather than printed and filed. These scanned images are stored on a secure server and are also backed up in an offsite location for disaster recovery issues.

**By filing electronic documents with out the needless printing step, hundreds of reams of paper can be saved.**

In addition to the environmental benefit, the paperless system helps reduce time searching for information and files, having all documents secure yet easily

accessible to authorized personnel. This allows us more time to devote to our clients.

Other ways we’ve supported our environmental responsibilities includes installing large water coolers making staying hydrated a snap while limiting the number of plastic water bottles disposed of by the staff and visitors. To help reduce waste, recycle receptacles are conveniently located to ensure plastic, aluminum and paper are not simply tossed in the trash. In every office paper recycle bins make it easy to keep recycle top of mind. Any confidential paperwork is shredded by the local EMARC, keeping information safe and while at the same time supporting individuals with special needs.

## ABC Team Supports Alzheimer’s Action Day

ABC Home Healthcare staff members wore purple on September 21st for “Alzheimer’s Action Day” to raise awareness of the disease. Pictured are (front) Clare Papagallo, Clinical Nurse Manager; Anna Roberts, Human Resources Coordinator; Regina Salalayko, Client Care Coordinator; Linda Santorsola Muisse, Accounting Manager and Jeannette Sheehan MS, RN, CS, Nurse Practitioner; (Back) Heather DeOliveira, Client Care Coordinator; Jean Hennessey, Community Relations Liaison; Joan Lepore, Chief Financial Officer; Paula Surette, Office Assistant; Virginia Thompson, Accounting; Candi Brandano, Client Care Coordinator and Sue Kenney, Client Care Coordinator.



# Knowledge is Power: Breast Cancer Awareness

Breast Cancer is the most common cancer in women aside from skin cancer. As part of Breast Cancer Awareness month, we ask that you read and share this article with the women in your life. Education is an ongoing opportunity for all of us. The more we learn; the wiser we become; the better informed we are; the more prepared we'll be.

## Reducing Your Risk and Early Detection

While there are lifestyle changes like eating right and exercising that can help reduce your chance of developing Breast Cancer, the most important thing you can do is to follow the early detection guidelines recommended by the American Cancer Society. That means having a mammogram every year once you reach the age of 40 (if you are a high risk candidate, your healthcare provider might suggest you begin at age 30); having a yearly clinical breast exam (CBE); and performing regular Self-Breast Examination (SBE). SBE is important because you know your self best and may be able to identify changes in your breasts rather than waiting for your annual appointment. If you are in a high-risk category your health care provider may include an MRI screening along with the mammogram. While being proactive cannot stop someone from developing cancer – it can greatly impact the outcome and treatment course someone will undergo upon being diagnosed with Breast Cancer.

## Be proactive for your health

Early detection means to catch the cancer BEFORE you start having any symptoms. A mammogram is the cornerstone of the screening process which the American Cancer Society recommends. Self breast examination is important to be performed throughout the year so that you notice any changes with your breasts. Just because you perform self-examination does not mean you don't need to have a mammogram. A mammogram is designed to identify Breast Cancer that is too small to be felt during routine breast self-examination or a clinical breast exam. The sooner cancer is caught – the more successful the outcome from the treatment plan.

There is also a small chance that Breast Cancer might not be picked up as part of an annual mammogram. Therefore it's important that all women in good health continue to follow the American Cancer Society's recommended early detection guidelines.

## The Symptoms of Breast Cancer

The most common symptom of breast cancer is a new lump or mass. Traditionally it's a painless, hard mass with irregular edges, but it might be tender, soft, rounded or painful. With that in mind, it's so important to have any new lump or mass checked by your healthcare provider as quickly as possible.

Other symptoms of breast cancer may include: swelling of all or part of a breast (even if no distinct lump is felt); skin irritation or dimpling; breast or nipple pain; nipple retraction (turning inward); redness, scaliness, or thickening of the nipple or breast skin; nipple discharge (other than breast milk). It's possible for Breast Cancer to spread to lymph nodes under the arm or around the collar bone and cause a lump or swelling there, even before the original tumor in the breast tissue is large enough to be felt.

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**Most doctors feel that early detection tests for Breast Cancer save many thousands of lives each year, and that many more lives could be saved if even more women and their health care providers took advantage of these tests.**

**The American Cancer Society**

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## Your Health is Priceless

Do not let money be the factor that you put off your annual screening. Medicare, Medicaid, and most private health insurance plans cover mammogram costs or a percentage of them. Low-cost mammograms are available in most communities. Call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 for information about facilities in your area.

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## Breast Cancer Risk Factors

Some of the most common risk factors for developing Breast Cancer include:

- **Age** The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age. Women over the age of 60 have higher risk. Breast Cancer is not common, but it does occur in women under the age of 35.
- **Family & Personal History** Individuals who've had a previous diagnosis of Breast Cancer or other Breast Disease are at an increased risk. If immediate family members have/had Breast Cancer, your odds are increased. It's very important to know the age of diagnosis for those individuals.
- **The Breast Cancer Gene** A person may be born with a change in one of the two genes responsible for breast cell growth. Individuals with an alteration in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene have an increased risk of developing Breast Cancer. About 5-10% of all Breast Cancer cases are due to genetic changes.
- **Early menstruation** Women who began menstruating before age 12 are at increased risk for developing Breast Cancer.
- **Having later pregnancies** Pregnancy before the age of 25 might lower the risk, where pregnancy after the age of 35 might increase it.
- **Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)** Women appear to have an increased risk of Breast Cancer while on HRT and a short time thereafter, compared to those who have never used postmenopausal HRT (Women's Health Initiative Study (2002).

Talk with your doctor. It is so important that you share your family medical history to the best of your ability with your healthcare provider. It is through this communication that your doctor can help identify potential risks for your future health and implement the necessary precautions.

## Resources

The web seems to have limitless numbers of resources these days. We've pulled together a small list of online sites with valuable tools and information.

### American Cancer Society

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)  
1-800-227-2345

### Cancer.Net

[www.cancer.net](http://www.cancer.net)  
Patient information from the American Society of Clinical Oncology

### National Cancer Institute

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
1-800-422-6237

### National Comprehensive Cancer Network

[www.nccn.org](http://www.nccn.org)  
1-888-909-6226

### BreastCancer.org

[www.breastcancer.org](http://www.breastcancer.org)  
Breastcancer.org is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing the most reliable, complete, and up-to-date information about Breast Cancer.

## Depression in Seniors

Did you know that depression affects more than 6.5 million of the 35 million Americans 65 years of age or older?

So many things happen as we get older. Friends become sick, or we ourselves do. Our bodies no longer feel like they did years ago. We lose friends and loved ones. For those of us with children, they grow up and have lives of their own, no longer as dependent upon us as they once were. As we retire and have newly found free times, we may begin to feel isolated. Sometimes we feel as if we are no longer needed at all. These types of things can lead to depression. If depression is left untreated – it can take a toll on a person physically. Therefore, it's important to recognize the signs. At the same time, loss of any sort (job, freedom, friends) is painful. Grieving for a loss is normal and it might even take a long time. Losing all hope and joy is not normal.

The symptoms of depression in older adults can be clear cut like feeling helpless and hopeless, finding it hard to get through the day. But they may also be characterized by confusion and memory problems, social

withdrawal, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, and may even include delusions and hallucinations.

If you find a senior in your life that may be experiencing depression you can start to help just by being there. Perhaps a cup of coffee to be that listening ear; taking them out for a walk (a change of scenery does wonders for the mind, as exercise does for the body); if appropriate suggest they seek assistance and be sure they follow through with it. Some seniors don't want to acknowledge they might in fact be depressed because they come from a generation where mental illnesses was often kept quiet.

### Tips for avoiding depression:

- Keep active – studies show depression is less likely to occur when your body and mind are active.
- Schedule regular social activity. Depressed people often feel better when they're surrounded by others.
- Eat healthy, well-balanced meals.

For more information visit [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

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ABC Home Healthcare • Committed to Life at Home • [www.abchhp.com](http://www.abchhp.com)

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**We want to hear from you.  
Is there a topic you want  
to know more about?  
Call or email us.  
Your topic may be a  
feature in our next  
ABCs of Homecare!**

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