



A NEWSLETTER FROM MAYO HEALTHCARE  
Summer 2015

# Community News

## Mayo Administrator, Chris Scott, Receives National Leadership Award

Being the top administrator in a health care facility has a different complexion than say being an executive of a technology firm. In both cases, employees are the most important asset, but within an organization that takes care of elderly people, some of whom are very fragile, the staff's well being and work satisfaction is critical to maintaining a high quality of life for the residents.

In May, the American College of Health Care Administrators (ACHCA) nationally recognized Mayo's Administrator, Christine Scott's exceptional leadership. The Eli Pick Facility Leadership awards are given to administrators in long-term care facilities

"whose teams have achieved dimensions of organizational quality that few others have been able to reach."

More than 1200 facilities and administrators across the country were considered, and out of these, 227 were given the award. In Vermont, 14 facilities were considered but only 4 received the award. (For more information about this award visit [www.achca.org](http://www.achca.org).)

"We are in the people business," Christine explains. "The people who work in the health care field tend to be people who are caregivers. The challenge is making sure

the caregivers take care of themselves so that they can take care of our residents and fulfill our mission of providing the highest standard of care." This means giving people time with their families, preventing burnout, building confidence, and empowering them to do their best.



Each morning the department heads at Mayo meet to discuss the happenings of the previous day and to discuss current issues that may need the team's input. It is often a time to reflect on successes and on areas that need attention. For Chris, it is a critical time to have an open discussion in a nurturing environment.

"I am very interested in hearing concerns and

letting my staff know that I value their input in both problem solving and decision making. Seeing things from many perspectives helps me make the best decisions for maintaining an environment where both residents and staff feel valued and well cared for."

What is Christine's greatest satisfaction as Mayo's administrator?

"A happy staff, good surveys, and financial stewardship. I want to be sure that our employees are here because they

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*Building a strong team, collaborating, listening, getting different points of view, inspiring people to do their best are the core of Christine's leadership style.*

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#### **Our Mission Statement:**

Mayo Healthcare's mission is to provide exceptional, high quality health care that exceeds the expectations of our residents and families and to promote and maintain an environment in which every resident, every family member, and every staff member feels respected and valued.



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## Comfort & Understanding: The Companion Aide Project

The Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living has selected Mayo Healthcare to participate in a new Companion Aide pilot project. Mayo is one of five continuing care facilities to receive this honor.

This pilot project places emphasis on a person-centered approach to dementia care. Person-centered care provides a greater opportunity for staff to learn more about each resident as individuals: where did they grow up, what did they do for work, what are their likes and dislikes, what are their strengths, and what provides them comfort. With a more complete understanding of each resident, needs and wishes can be more clearly identified and met. This is especially important for residents with dementia who are not able to communicate clearly. Often behaviors such as wandering or anxiousness are the result of an unmet need. Through interviews with family members and direct observation of resident behaviors, the Companion Aide will learn what works best to bring a sense of well being to the resident.



Sheila Davis, Mayo's Staff Development Coordinator, believes the Companion Aide project will be "an amazing program for dementia care. For many people with dementia, the last memories to go are those from their earlier years. There is great value in understanding a resident's life history because this is often the world they live in, and feeling understood brings a great sense of comfort." The Companion Aide will be an expert in person-centered dementia care. They will be a source of information and support for an individual resident and an educator to fellow co-workers.

Mayo has been using person-centered care as a strategy for some time and has found it successful for improving quality of life, meeting unmet needs, and reducing the use of antipsychotic medications. Barbara Connor, RN, DNS, explains that person-centered care focuses on "a resident's strengths and builds in a high level of respect and compassion." The results of this pilot program will be tracked and will assist in implementing a person-centered care environment in continuing care facilities statewide. The Companion Aide pilot project is expected to last for two years.

*Caregiving will never be one-size-fits-all.*

Nancy L. Kriseman,  
*The Mindful Caregiver*

## Summertime Safety

Summer is a wonderful time to enjoy the outdoors and after a long winter it is much appreciated. The summer, however, like the winter presents some safety concerns, especially for the elderly. Taking simple steps to minimize dangers will give you an opportunity to enjoy a carefree summer.

**1 Stay Hydrated.** It can be challenging for seniors to take in the proper amount of fluid. In fact, dehydration is a common and widespread problem among the elderly population. Physical changes that occur with aging decrease our sense of thirst. Often seniors don't know they are thirsty. This combined with a decrease in the ability to conserve water means special attention should be made to how much you drink. Check with your doctor regarding a recommended fluid intake and drink up. Keep a bottle of water available for sipping and include drinks that offer sodium and potassium to restore electrolyte balance like fruit juice or sport drinks.

**2 Sun Protection.** The sunshine feels very good but can be damaging to our skin and eyes. Sunscreen application becomes even more important when you are taking medication that increases your risk of burning. In addition to protecting your skin, your eyes also need protection. Over exposure to the sun can irritate eyes and can exasperate any eye problems. So make sunscreen and sunglasses readily available.

## Mayo Health Tips

**3 Avoid Extreme Temperatures.** Air conditioning is recommended for the elderly. With age the senior's ability to recognize and regulate body temperature becomes less efficient. This means that seniors are likely to not realize when they are hot, and when body temperatures do elevate it takes longer for them to be brought down to a normal range. So turn on the AC and wait to enjoy the outdoors until the early morning or early evening.

**4 Know the Signs.** Dehydration, heat stroke, and heat exhaustion are all serious health problems that must be addressed immediately. The signs of dehydration include thirst, confusion, irritability, and poor skin elasticity. Heat exhaustion can reveal itself through heavy or no sweating, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, paleness, and cold or clammy skin. And the signs of heat stroke include a body temperature of 103 degrees or higher, red, hot and dry skin, a fast pulse, headache, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, confusion, and passing out. If you experience these symptoms call 911 immediately.

**5 Stay Connected.** It is a good idea to have a family member or a friend check on a senior daily to ensure all is well. In Central Vermont, RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) has a program that does just that. TeleCare Telephone Assurance volunteers call seniors daily to check on them. Call your local Area Agency on Aging and ask whether they have a similar program in your area.

## Thanks to all of Our Contributors. The New Van Is Here!

Our new van arrived on May 26, just in time for all of the summer outings we have planned. The van seats 12 residents comfortably and has extra safety measures such as navigation and blue tooth for hands free calling.

We are very grateful to all who made this possible through individual donations and attendance at our Taste of Maple fundraiser. We have heartfelt memories of this event and hope to see you again next year when we bring the community together for an evening of jovial conversations, delicious food, and prize winning.





## Legacy Giving Program



There are a number of ways to support Mayo's mission of providing exceptional, high-quality health care and creating an environment where every resident, family member, and employee feels respected and valued. Whether it is volunteering your time or donating financially, your investment goes directly toward improving the lives of our patients and residents.

Please visit our website ([www.mayohc.org](http://www.mayohc.org)) to learn more about the many ways you can invest in Mayo. All contributions are tax deductible. If you are interested in speaking to someone about our mission and work, please get in touch with Christine Scott at (802) 485-3161 or at [cscott@mayohc.org](mailto:cscott@mayohc.org) for more information about our Legacy Giving program.

*"The care at Mayo brought our mother back to us." ~Michael Seaver*

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want to be, that they love their work, value working as a team, and respect our residents' needs. With that assured, I can be confident our residents and families will be equally happy. I want to know our surveys reflect adherence to regulatory expectations and the care we provide is recognized by the State of Vermont as being exceptional, and last but not least, I want to know that the financial decisions I make as administrator are being carried out with great care and will best benefit Mayo as a whole."

*"I am very interested in hearing concerns and letting my staff know that I value their input in both problem solving and decision making."*



*Christine Scott (center) with her management team. From left to right: Barbara Connor, Director of Nursing Services; Lois Lusignan, Business Office Manager; Jim Roux, Maintenance Manager; Sally Choquette, Housekeeping and Laundry Manager; Kim Marcotte, Activities Director, and Marge Gulyas, Dining Services Manager.*