A Care Coordination Success Story

Richard Rubin is a genuine success story for the Care Coordination services provided by Palm Beach Medical Society Services (PBCMSS). Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Richard worked for more than 30 years in his family-run textile business. He spent much of his time in South America and became fluent in Spanish, French and some German.

Initially, Richard was referred to Project Access at PBCMSS for support related to his diabetes. Richard was enrolled in the Community Connections Program in 2017, a Project Access initiative to assist community members access health care resources and social supports related to medical plan of care. Through Community Connections, Richard receives assistance with his District Cares application every six months, as well as community resources as needed.

Since his diabetes diagnosis, Richard has shed 95 pounds and now regularly works out and maintains a more healthful lifestyle. He hopes his cardiologist will reduce his medications at his next appointment. Richard is currently working with Project Access’ application assistance and community referrals. He says the education and support he receives managing his chronic condition has changed his attitude about his health and his life. Because of Project Access, Richard now takes a more active role in his diabetes management and seeks support for additional resources as needed. Richard states, “Without the support of Project Access and the Health Care District, I do not believe I would be alive today.”

To receive assistance through the Community Connections Program, contact Karen Harwood at 561-433-3940, extension 122. Assistance is provided over the phone or in person through appointments.

From the Chairperson

Project Access takes pride in helping medically underserved patients in Palm Beach County obtain access to care and can serve as a starting point for the prevention and control of chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes — one of the most prevalent of these conditions. It affects young and old alike, and is amenable to both patient-directed prevention and control as well as physician-directed care including treatment by addressing and providing education regarding unhealthful behaviors as well as appropriately prescribing medications to control the condition and decrease the risk of complications.

In my role as a bariatric surgeon at JFK Medical Center and as the co-author of several healthy lifestyle books, I have quite a bit of familiarity with type 2 diabetes.

About 90 to 95 percent of diabetics are type 2 diabetics. In Palm Beach County, a recent study showed 119,000 adults have type 2 diabetes and an additional 49,000 — representing over 15 percent of the population. The two most significant risk factors for type 2 diabetics are age and weight. Increased weight dramatically increases risk. A slightly overweight woman with a BMI of 28 kg/m2 has a 4 times increased risk than one with an ideal BMI of 23 kg/m2. For men the difference is even more dramatic. A man with a BMI of 34 kg/m2 (not at all unusual) has a 54 times increased risk of diabetes as compared with a man having a BMI of 22 kg/m2. Genetics and lifestyle also play a large role. If both parents have type 2 diabetes then their child’s lifetime risk of developing the condition is 50 percent. Regular exercise helps a lot. When you are exercising your body burns the sugar stored in its muscles even if your body is insulin resistant; furthermore, Continued on page 2
your muscles can remove sugar from your blood during exercise and during the recovery period without the assistance of insulin, reducing your need for medication and over the long term improved hemoglobin A1C levels. Aside from exercise a healthful diet makes a big difference by helping control weight and by preventing and treating type 2 diabetes. Diabetic education is important and is readily available to Project Access patients. Foods that should be encouraged are whole fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds, whole grain bread and pasta products in moderation, fish, lean meat, coffee, zero-calorie beverages (other than diet sodas), and shellfish. It is important to note that some nutritionists using outdated data caution diabetics to reduce fruit consumption. This advice is not accurate. In general, whole fruits decrease the risk of diabetes while fruit juice increases the risk. What is more, fruit consumption significantly decreases the risk of other diseases such as heart artery disease and many cancers. Coffee is the single most effective food that can be consumed to prevent diabetes and should be encouraged so long as there is no added sugar and limited (or none) added whitener. Foods that should be avoided include sugar, soft drinks, chips, most crackers, cakes, processed snack foods, ice cream, dairy-based products, and fatty cuts of meat. Breads and pastas that are not made from 100 percent whole grain should also be strictly avoided.

It is possible for the educated patient to significantly decrease their risk for developing diabetes and to significantly improve their symptoms and prognosis by making relatively minor lifestyle changes. It is our hope that through Project Access we can make a difference in the lives of medically disadvantaged persons. I hope you enjoyed our cover story and please do refer persons who you think could benefit from our resources. We are fully prepared to work intensively with patients suffering from diabetes.

“Diabetic education... is readily available to Project Access patients.”
Dr. Larson

The Palm Beach County Medical Society Services
15th Annual Heroes in Medicine Awards honored individuals and organizations that utilize their skills in the field of health care to provide outstanding service to meet the needs of people in local, national and/or global communities. The event also featured Project Access patient Giselle Miranda and her son Julian, who explained how after receiving a devastating breast cancer diagnoses, the care she received through Project Access saved her life.

The following physicians and hospital were honored with the Project Access Hero of the Year Award:

**MSPB Neurology Group**
Dr. Eric Kramer, Dr. Yvonne Jurcik, Dr. Casandra Mateo, Dr. Teresita Casanova, and Dr. Jose Labault of the MSPB Neurology Group have been providing care to Palm Beach County’s uninsured patients through Project Access for the last 10 years. Their unwavering support has allowed dozens of patients to receive outstanding care for complex neurological issues including stroke, epilepsy, migraines, seizures, etc.

**St. Mary’s Medical Center & Palm Beach Children’s Hospital**
Through generous donations of time and staff, St. Mary’s Medical Center & Palm Beach Children’s Hospital have provided care for numerous Project Access patients in need of critical ENT, pediatric urology and general surgery procedures. This incredible support has allowed Project Access to provide its patients with the highest standards of quality medical care and has made life-changing impacts on the patients who receive care at St. Mary’s.

**Jesus Jimenez, MD**
Dr. Jesus Jimenez has been a key member of the Project Access volunteer physician network since 2011 and has provided numerous patients with charitable vascular surgical procedures. He also cares for patients of the Children’s Cancer Caring Center. As a recent recipient of his care through Project Access says, “There are not many doctors like him, with his kindness, I was able to trust him completely with my surgery. Thank you, Dr. Jimenez.”
Hello, my name is James Kitchen and I’d like to share my personal story of how Project Access, Dr. Michael Galin, DO, and the Wellington Regional Medical Center greatly improved the quality of my life.

Back in the day I broke my nose three times and had it straightened out the best I could every time. Over the years, it became more and more difficult to breathe properly because of these injuries and also because of my development of chronic sinusitis. The symptoms from these ailments caused me to experience Sleep Apnea, waking me up five or six times a night trying to breathe. I wasn’t getting enough rest, which was affecting my everyday life.

I really appreciate Project Access taking on my case and getting me an appointment with Dr. Galin. I owe him many thanks for donating his time, skills, and experience in resolving my medical issues. He is a great doctor. He explained every procedure to me from my first visit and throughout his treatment of my condition, and I would highly recommend him to anyone suffering from Ear, Nose, or Throat problems.

I am very thankful as well to the Wellington Regional Medical Center for donating their facility and their fantastic staff for my surgery. My treatment while there was most excellent. They get an A-One rating in my book. Again, thank you to all involved in Project Access for your generosity, it is most appreciated!!!
You are cordially invited to the

Starfish Gala

2018 Annual Gala and Installation

Saturday, November 17, 2018
Kravis Center, Cohen Pavilion
West Palm Beach, Florida

Presented by
Palm Beach County Medical Society & Services

Join us in gratitude as we honor our president
Brandon Luskin, MD
and welcome incoming president
Marc Hirsh, MD

6:30 p.m. Reception Holiday Hall of Trees and Lights Silent Auction
7:30 p.m. Dinner, Program and Entertainment

Elegant Evening Attire
RSVP by November 13, 2018
www.pbcms.org | 561-433-3940

Check out
Project Access’
new website
www.projectaccesspbc.org

Get to Know the PA Team

Welcome Carolina Herrera

Project Access welcomes Carolina Herrera as the new Project Access Operations Manager. Carolina is a leader in health care with 13 years of experience developing systems, processes and motivating teams in clinical and technology settings. She attributes her foundation in process improvement to the GE Lean Practitioner program she completed at Brigham & Women’s Hospital. There, she applied this methodology to implement organizational changes such as improved specimen tracking and charge entry reconciliation, later becoming standard protocols for operational efficiency throughout ambulatory clinics. In 2011, she was offered a unique opportunity to join the co-founder of Modernizing Medicine, Inc., where she worked with hundreds of medical practices across the country to implement a suite of specialty-specific products and services. Over 6 and a half years, Carolina shaped the Client Services On-boarding team, leading change efforts and scaling business needs to also provide revenue cycle management services and practice management solutions. Carolina has always found the heart of healthcare to help others and service the community. In her current role as the Project Access Operations Manager, she is thrilled to use her extensive experience to increase medical care access and resources within Palm Beach County. When she is not making plans to execute her ideas, she enjoys weekends at the beach with her family, making art and going on culinary adventures through cooking.