

## Horizon's Medical Unit: providing much-needed medical care to Western New Yorkers.

"Many of our consumers have lacked medical care for a variety of reasons," says Maria Pasceri, Horizon's vice president of services and development. "Horizon's Medical Unit provides the care and services they need to live a healthier life. In addition, it helps put them in a better position to participate in recovery. A person who is physically healthy is in a much better position to participate in counseling and rehabilitation."



Horizon's Medical Unit specializes in primary medical care for individuals with mental health or chemical dependency disorders. Horizon opened its Medical Unit in 1987 after realizing the benefits of integrating behavioral health practices with medical services for its consumers and other community members. Today, the Unit sees an average of 150 patients each week out

of four locations around Western New York. Supervised by a physician, the Unit is staffed by nurse practitioners and registered nurses who treat a variety of medical conditions, including hypertension, diabetes, colds, flu and much more.

The staff of Horizon's Medical Unit works in tandem with the behavioral health counselors and staff, sharing critical information that contributes to a consumer's overall health and welfare. Often, an addiction can mask a serious physical condition, or medications can cause physical ailments the consumer is unaware of. Working as a team, the Horizon staff keeps one another informed, and the better communication contributes to consumers' all-around holistic health.

Certified by the NYS Department of Health, Horizon's Medical Unit provides a spectrum of medical and psychiatric services, including:

- Primary medical care
- Physical examinations including associated assessments and studies
- Medication administration
- HIV counseling, testing and alternative treatments
- Consultation to Horizon's mental health and chemical dependency staff
- Referral for medical specialty services

"Without the services provided by Horizon's Medical Unit," says Pasceri, "many of our consumers would have no place to go."

Horizon's Medical Unit accepts Medicaid and other insurance plans.

For more information on Horizon's Medical Unit, call Maria Pasceri at 831.1800. ♥



Gordon James Photography

From the desk of...

**Anne Constantino**  
President & CEO

September was  
National Alcohol and  
Drug Addiction Recovery Month.

As such, it is important to remember that addictions are serious health problems. Addictions cause significant consequences to families and communities. Many of us have been affected directly or indirectly by addiction.

Addictions are chronic but treatable diseases. For people who are active in their addiction, recovery seems almost impossible. Less than 10 percent of those who need treatment for an addiction will receive treatment. The barriers to treatment and recovery are many, including stigma and financial barriers due to limited insurance coverage.

Recovery is the process of initiating and maintaining abstinence from alcohol and other drugs. Treatment can help individuals understand their addiction and learn new skills, and it provides support for building a new lifestyle that does not include alcohol or drugs. We know treatment works. Research indicates that treatment will reduce alcohol and other drug use, reduce high-risk behaviors and improve physical and emotional health.

You can help recognize the signs of addiction in people you know and help refer them to treatment. Signs can include strained relationships, legal problems, money problems, accidents or arrests (DWI), health problems, school or work problems and depression. If you know someone whose life is being negatively affected by alcohol or drug use, encourage him or her to get information and help from a treatment professional. ♥



## A very special celebration at Horizon Village.

On Friday, September 16, Horizon celebrated the grand opening of its new 3,100-square-foot wing with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Horizon Village. The new wing, which will house Horizon's Women Empowering Women Program, contains rooms designed to hold women-specific activities and classes, as well as a comfortably decorated lounge and family visitation area. Construction of the new wing was made possible by funding from the New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services (OASAS).

Speakers at the event included Horizon President & CEO Anne Constantino; Maria Pasceri, Horizon's vice president of services



(L-R) Judge Mark Violante; OASAS' Ed Carter; Assemblywoman Francine DeMonte; former board member Lyn Telesco and Horizon President/CEO Anne Constantino prepare to cut the ribbon at the celebration.

and development; New York State Assemblywoman Francine DeMonte and Lyn Telesco, Western New York native and former Horizon board member.

*Continued on page 3*

## MEET OUR Board

Name:

Jennifer Parker

Title: President and CEO

Company: Black Capital Network LLC and OraBind Communications

On which Horizon Board(s) do you

serve? "I serve on the Horizon Health Services and Horizon Village Boards."

How did you come to be on the Boards?

"I was introduced to the mission of Horizon Health Services and the much-needed services it provides by Anne Constantino. We met as members of the 2003 Leadership Buffalo class."

What have you found most rewarding about serving on the Boards? "I have established a broader awareness of the state of mental health in this community and in the United States. I am impressed by the dedication of the Horizon staff and the void Horizon fills in its person-centered approach to mental health services."

What do you want people to know about Horizon? "Horizon is on the cutting edge of providing solutions for mental health issues. It is apparent that the consumer's well being is paramount in Horizon's dedication to implementing innovative and consumer-focused programs and services." ♥



Cordton James Photography

**Hello**  
My name is  
**JoAnne Hambridge**  
Family Nurse Practitioner – Certified  
Horizon Medical Unit



Cordton James Photography

spent 30 years as a nurse at Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital.

"I like the patient contact," says JoAnne. "I enjoy taking care of people who truly need my help. If it wasn't for Horizon's Medical Unit, many of my consumers would not receive proper medical treatment because they'd have nowhere else to go."

JoAnne has worked hard to get to know the consumers she assists, and is gratified that so many of them have responded so well by returning to the unit when they need to and by doing what they're asked to do in terms of taking prescriptions, eating properly, etc.

"Horizon is doing a wonderful job providing much-needed medical services in the community," says JoAnne. "The entire staff is truly focused on giving care to those who need it, and letting them know someone cares."

JoAnne works out of Horizon's Medical Unit at 699 Hertel Avenue in the city of Buffalo and 6520 Niagara Falls Blvd. in Niagara Falls. A native of Niagara Falls, NY, JoAnne currently lives on Grand Island with her husband, James, and her daughter, Kristen, and also has another daughter, Kimberlee, and a son, Joseph. JoAnne received her Associate's degree from Niagara County Community College, her Bachelor's degree in Nursing from the University at Buffalo and her Master's degree in Nursing and Nurse Practitioner Certification from D'Youville College. ♥

At Horizon, the idea is to treat the "whole" consumer. That's why the company set up its Medical Unit in 1987 (see article on page one of this newsletter) and that's why there's a need for people like JoAnne Hambridge, a certified family nurse practitioner on the Unit.

JoAnne has been with Horizon for just three months, but says she already has developed a good rapport with the consumers she sees on a regular basis. Her job duties as family nurse practitioner include tending to all the medical needs of Horizon consumers – such as hypertension, asthma, diabetes, kidney problems, etc. – which tend to go hand in hand with the other issues that have brought them to Horizon.

"The Medical Unit staff works closely with the counselors and clinicians," says JoAnne. "Our focus is to bring both sides together to cover all aspects of care for each consumer. If we are both aware of what's happening on the other side, we are in a better position to help the consumer more completely."

Before coming to Horizon, JoAnne worked for Niagara Family Medicine and WNY Occupational Medicine. Before that, she

**Drinking any kind of alcohol when you are pregnant can hurt your baby. Alcoholic drinks are beer, wine, wine coolers, liquor or mixed drinks. A glass of wine, a can of beer and a mixed drink all have about the same amount of alcohol.**

## thePathtoRecovery

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles to turn her life around. Last names have been omitted for privacy.

"I have really made up my mind that that part of my life is over."

These are the words of Sherri, a woman in her mid-30s who is recovering from a dependency on alcohol, crack cocaine and marijuana with the help of Horizon Health Services.

Sherri is on her way to overcoming her dependency, and her counselor at Horizon's Bailey-LaSalle facility, Genesta Wilson, believes she has made many of the necessary changes in her life that validate Sherri's stated commitment to changing her life.

Sherri had been in other treatment programs, which worked on and off for her. But she was fearful of not maintaining her abstinence, believing she could not resist drugs if they were offered to her. Ending a very negative relationship with a man she'd been involved with for nearly

five years – who turned her on to cocaine – helped Sherri overcome that fear.

Having her mom and daughter nearby as a support system has also helped Sherri.

"Sherri is working very hard to live a recovery-based lifestyle," says Genesta. She's realizing she has options, she's making better choices and she's getting all she can out of her recovery treatment."

As she attends her relapse prevention and self-help groups, Sherri is also looking forward to taking GED prep classes and becoming a receptionist. She has a sponsor, and receives a lot of moral support and assistance from her brother, who is also in recovery. Later this fall, Sherri will speak at a Narcotics Anonymous conference, using her experiences to help others in recovery.

"Horizon has really helped me look forward, not back," says Sherri. "They've helped me find the good things in me and bring them out."

And for Sherri, that means heading down the right path, the path to recovery. ♥

### A very special celebration cont'd from page 2

Miracle of Recovery Awards were presented to Ed Carter, addictions program specialist for OASAS; Niagara Falls Chief City Court Judge Mark Anthony Violante and JoAnne Paxon, director of medical operations for Independent Health Association, all of whom have been consistent advocates for treatment and recovery for individuals in Western New York.

Thirty percent of those in recovery in Western New York are female; most are mothers and sole providers for their families. Women in recovery face more and different obstacles to recovery than do men, and research indicates women will open up

more and be more productive in recovery when they are around other women rather than mixed in with men.

"Guilt and shame are two of the biggest obstacles for women seeking recovery," said speaker Lyn Telesco, a credentialed counselor in Miami, Florida. "Women typically put their own needs last and, therefore, are less likely to seek treatment."

Horizon's program will explore more women-oriented issues that affect addiction, break down the barriers for women in recovery and encourage them to think beyond their current thoughts about themselves, explore their options and capitalize on their strengths.

## Digging in for a cause



The new wing at Horizon Village would not be complete without landscaping to match the beautiful landscaping already in place at the facility. So, on September 18, several Horizon staff members and residents came together to plant trees and flowers and shrubs. Pictured, left to right, are six of the capable gardeners who pitched in: Donna McKinney; Marissa Shepherd; Marcia Valente; Anne Constantino; Carolyn Messana-Morrow and Brenda John-Banach.

Roughly one-third of the residents at Horizon Village are women. ♥



Horizon Village board member Susan Morrow (left) and former Horizon board member Lyn Telesco were on hand for the festivities.

**Drugs that are both legal and freely available (such as alcohol and nicotine) are among the most often abused. Other drugs (such as sedatives and tranquilizers) are available by prescription and are considered safe for medical purposes, but they are highly addictive, even at prescribed dosages.**

# Helpful information is just a click away!

**Need to know who to call if you think someone you love has a drinking problem?** Want to know the signs and symptoms of depression? Want to meet the Horizon staff? Read about consumers' stories of recovery? Very soon you'll be able to do all that and more!

Horizon is currently in the process of revamping its website. The new site will be much easier to navigate and download information, and will be full of helpful information about all of our services and provide answers to often-asked questions about alcoholism, chemical dependency, tobacco addiction and more, all in a friendly, upbeat format.

Plus, there will be information on available positions at Horizon, as well as maps to our locations, links to helpful websites and numbers to call if you are having an emergency.

Coming soon to [www.horizon-health.org](http://www.horizon-health.org)! ♥



**Alcoholism tends to run in families, and genetic factors partially explain this pattern. Risk, however, is not destiny. A child of an alcoholic parent will not automatically develop alcoholism. A person with no family history of alcoholism can become alcohol dependent.**

Horizon is the largest and most comprehensive outpatient provider of integrated mental health, chemical dependency and medical services in WNY.

HorizonHealthPulse is published for the employees, consumers, Board and friends of Horizon Health Services. Please share this newsletter with a friend. If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or if you have any questions or comments about its content, please call Pat Chrzanowski at 716-831-1800 or email her at [pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org](mailto:pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org).

**President & CEO . . . . .Anne Constantino**  
**Medical Director . . . . .Hak Ko, M.D.**



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**INSIDE:** New wing opens at Horizon Village!

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