



## BPS is Expanding into Wisconsin

We are excited to announce our expansion into Wisconsin. Starting this spring, Bluestone Physician Services Wisconsin will launch our on-site primary care program in the Madison, Milwaukee and Oshkosh areas.

### Mankato Clinic Partnership

Bluestone Vista is partnering with Mankato Clinic to provide on-site medical services in the Mankato region. The Mankato Team launched in February 2014, with Dr. Brennan and Johanne Bates, NP from Mankato Clinic.

### St. Cloud Team

Our expansion into St. Cloud has been going well. Team Cash is now into their fourth month of providing services in the area. We are currently serving over 80 residents. A full time Care Coordinator has been hired for the team; Lona Hovde, RN will travel the St. Cloud area with Team Cash.

## Accessing Our Patient's Health Information/Medical Records - It's not that simple!

In order for your Bluestone provider to release any protected health information about a patient to a family member or other friend/guardian, Minnesota Law and HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) Privacy Rules require that the individual is designated as a Health Agent in a **Health Care Directive** form (available at Twin Cities Medical Society's website: <http://www.metrodoctors.com/dev/index.php/healthcare-directives>), **Medical Power of Attorney or Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care** form (available from your attorney). Bluestone must receive a copy of the form to keep in the patient's health record. This differs from a Short Form Power Of Attorney, which only allows for financial decision-making, not health related decisions or access to records, unless amended to include a **Health Care Directive** section. The Health Care Directive form is comprehensive, as it allows for control over a person's medical decision making, therefore **it does require the signature of two witnesses or a public notary**. If you need help filling out the Health Directive form, a helpful tool kit is available online at MN Aging.org under Health Care Directive: <http://www.mnaging.org/Advisor/HealthCareDirective.aspx>.

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# Why We Advocate for Medication Reduction

*Submitted by Dr. Preston Hatlestad, Bluestone Physician Services*

## Why So Many Meds?

Elderly patients often end up on multiple medications to treat a number of chronic conditions and a variety of symptoms. Often this is done for appropriate reasons as guidelines instruct providers that certain medications should be used for certain conditions. The more chronic conditions one has, the more medications they will probably be on. When patients have seen multiple providers, each prescribing different medications, each provider is not always aware what other providers have prescribed and why. This results in a situation where a patient may be on multiple, unnecessary medications.



People over 65 make up about 13% of the population but are on about 30% of all prescription medications. Medications can cause significant side effects and can interact with each other causing adverse drug events. The risk rises with each additional medication. The risk of drug interactions is about 6% for two medications and goes up to 50% with 5 medications.

## Medications and Aging:

- As we age the body becomes more sensitive to medication. The changes with age affect what the medications do to us and what our bodies do with the medication.
- Medications are often absorbed more slowly with age and multiple medications and foods affect how other medications are absorbed.
- The amount of fat and body water percentage changes with age. This affects how medications are distributed in the body.
- Aging also greatly affects how drugs are metabolized, used, and excreted from the body. The liver and kidneys have to break down medications and the function of these organs decline with age and chronic disease.
- Certain drugs can also make existing diseases/conditions worse. For example, some medications helpful for the bladder or sleep issues will make memory and behavior problems worse and vice-versa.
- Many medications for chronic disease are designed to prevent disease complications 10-20 years down the road. The honest reality is that many of our patients have a life expectancy of a few years or less. In these circumstances the medication may do more harm than good.

## It's Complicated:

It would not be possible for any provider to know every possible side effect and interaction of every medication as individuals respond differently to them. Sometimes a medication may cause an opposite effect of what was expected. In medicine and science we sometimes just don't know exactly how medications work. Some medications haven't been around long enough to fully know what problems they may cause over time.

## Patient Centered Care:

The providers at Bluestone Physician Services are very aware and proactive about addressing these issues. We focus on the whole person and their entire well-being and not the individual diseases. We know that it is often better to be on as few medications as possible to reduce many chronic problems. Just because we can prescribe a medication for a disease or symptom does not mean we should. We will often stop a medication, or not start one that is recommended by guidelines, as we believe the risk and adverse effects outweigh the potential benefit for a particular patient. We try to use medications that will work for multiple symptoms and diseases instead of using medications for each issue. There are times when we will use medications that have significant risk for side effects, when we believe they will provide comfort and treat specific symptoms. Having regular visits with our patients and communication with facility staff makes it possible for us to make changes to and monitor medications efficiently to improve the quality of life for our patients.

# Partnering with our Facilities/Communities to Track Hospitalization & ER Rates

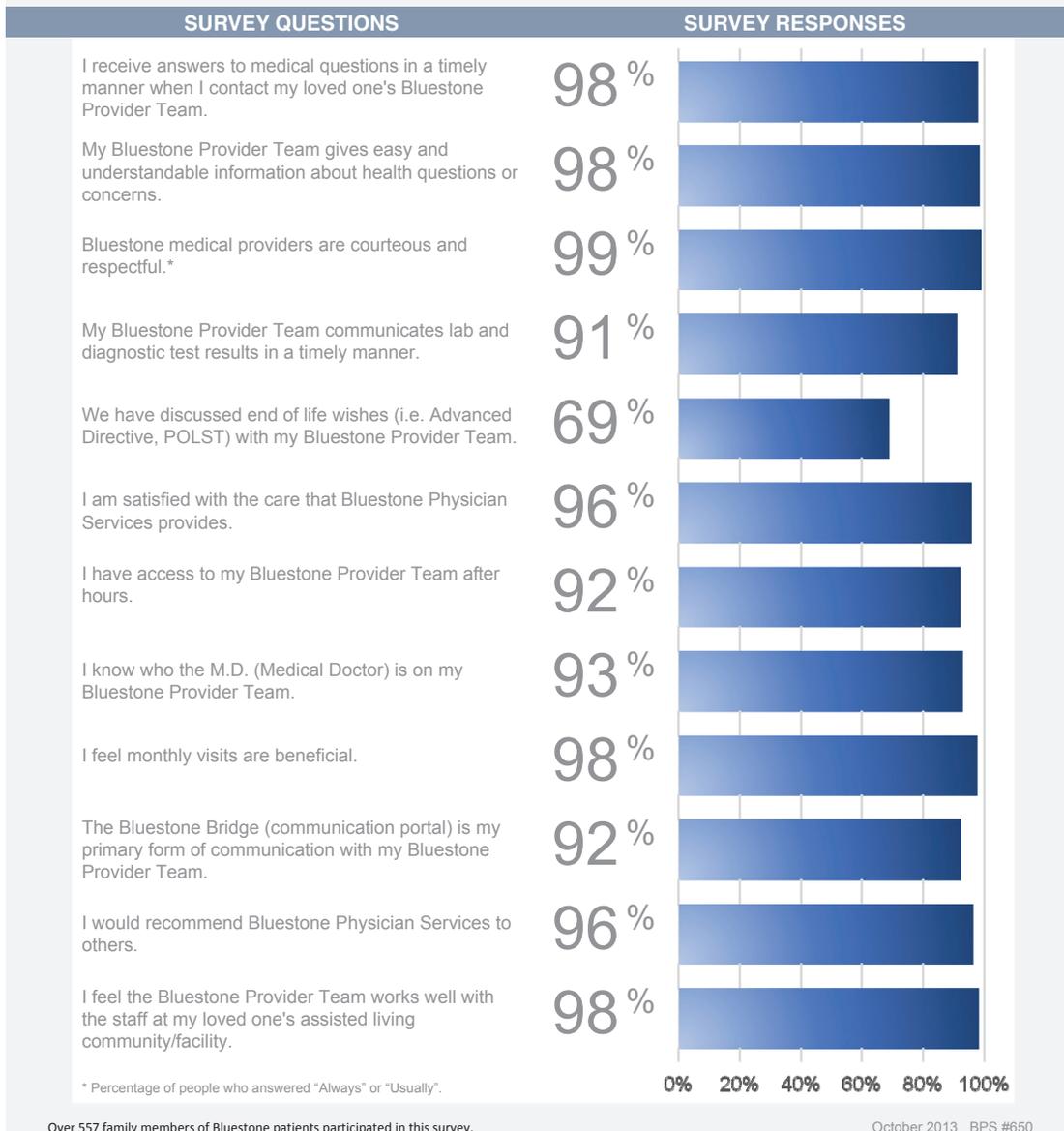
We appreciate the important work you do as our facility/community partners serving the frail elderly. Early data is showing us that our partnership with organizations like yours, is improving clinical outcomes, improving patient and family satisfaction, and lowering total health care spending. Our mutual effort shows great promise and we need your help in continuing to improve our performance serving these patients together.

You should have received an email from your BPS Community Liaison asking all of the facilities/communities we partner with to track data on hospitalizations/ER visits for all residents on a monthly basis. Each month, your BPS Liaison will send you a mid-month and end of month reminder. Quarterly, BPS will send you a report on the data we have on your community and blind comparisons with the other BPS communities.

We appreciate your partnership and assistance in gathering this important information as we work together to care for this aging population. Please contact Kim Mitchell 651-342-4210 or Jill Lindberg 651-342-4282 with any questions.

## PATIENT / FAMILY SATISFACTION RESULTS

In partnership with facility/community staff, our patients, and their families, Bluestone delivers customized, high quality, on-site healthcare management. We conduct surveys twice a year to see if we are meeting our family satisfaction goals. See our most recent survey results below.



Over 557 family members of Bluestone patients participated in this survey.

October 2013 BPS #650

# Bluestone Book Review

## All Gone: A Memoir of My Mother's Dementia. With Refreshments.

by Alex Witchel

Alex Witchel, a writer for New York Times Magazine, takes us on an extraordinary journey of the mind and heart as a vibrant parent fades into dementia. She shows us that despite profound loss, we can nourish ourselves with memories that sustain love and give comfort.

Witchel chronicles her mother's descent into stroke-induced dementia, recounting earlier incidents in her life with her parents, while attaching memories and emotions to the food/recipes that she associates with her family life.

This fiercely honest account of how her adored mother slowly began 'disappearing in plain sight' may make you cry, but will also make you smile and even laugh out loud... With humor, sensitivity and a deep love for her recipe-making mom, Ms. Witchell contributes insight to the struggles of the dedicated adult children who manage the care of a parent suffering from dementia.

Review Written by:

Nanc MacLeslie, BPS Operations Assistant

## Sudoku Puzzles

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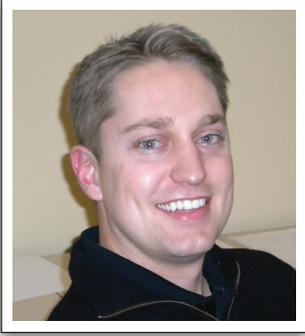
PrintFreeSudokuPuzzles.com

Puzzle Set #E3718 Level: Easy

Instructions, Tips, Answers, Reprints & More Sudoku Puzzles Online!

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## Meet Eric - Part of the Bluestone Team



### Eric Taylor- Senior Data Analyst

Bluestone Physician Services would like to introduce Eric Taylor, Senior Data Analyst. Eric is instrumental in analyzing data to enhance and refine our quality reporting programs. His background is not originally in the healthcare industry so he brings a unique perspective and insights to this role. Eric grew up in San Rafael, California and attended the University of St. Thomas where he received a degree in Economics, Finance and Entrepreneurship. In his free time he enjoys practicing multiplying 4 digit numbers in his head and watching the San Francisco 49ers.

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The best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.  
*Andy Rooney*

## The Phlebotomist

Every day a phlebotomist endures demanding staff, some not so happy patients, difficult veins, departmental friction, and the dehumanizing habit some caregivers have of calling them "THE LAB."

All this plus having to endure "morning breath" on early draws, missed breaks and late lunches because of STATS, working short-staffed, bad traffic, terrible weather and that one client "that just has to have an INR done before 1pm because the clinic closes at 3:30pm. But this much is for sure: Phlebotomists ARE the backbone of the laboratory.

Without the dedication of a phlebotomist making sure samples are drawn, transported, and processed properly, patients would suffer. Patients would be misdiagnosed; they'd be overmedicated; they'd be mismanaged by their physicians because of inaccurate test results; and some of them would die. Instead, phlebotomists refuse to accept unlabeled samples, they defy requests to draw patients you cannot properly identify, and they resist temptation to stray from the laboratory's policies. They are every patient's last line of defense against medical mistakes.

So please be kind and remember the phlebotomist when they visit your facility and family member. It's not because they have to; it's because they want to. They know their role in patient care is essential to healing, vital to wellness, and critical to most of the decisions every physician makes on every patient.

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MEDICAL LABORATORY

HealthEast Medical Laboratory (HML) is a full-service, locally-owned and operated reference laboratory affiliated with HealthEast Care System. With over 40 years of serving clinics, long-term care and assisted living facilities, we have a reputation built on dedication to quality, commitment and service.

[www.healtheast.org](http://www.healtheast.org) | 651-232-3500

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*Collaboration. It's why our solutions work.*

**Bluestone Physician Services is excited to announce our partnership with additional assisted living and memory care communities in Minnesota.**

- Birchwood Arbors, Forest Lake – Team Kephart, Vista Fairview
- Brookdale Senior Living: Sterling House of Sauk Rapids – Team Cash
- Carefree Living of Saint Cloud – Team Cash
- Cherrywood Advanced Living, Saint Cloud – Team Cash
- Edgewood Senior Living, Blaine – Team Anderson
- Good Shepherd Community, Sauk Rapids – Team Cash
- Kingsley Shores, Lakeville – Team Enockson, Vista Fairview
- Nine Mile Creek Senior Living, Bloomington – Team Enockson, Vista Fairview
- Ridgeview Place, Sauk Rapids – Team Cash
- Shepherd of Grace Community, Becker – Team Cash
- Sterling Park Commons, Waite Park – Team Cash
- Waters of Edina, Edina – Team Enockson, Vista Fairview
- York Gardens, Edina – Team Enockson, Vista Fairview

**Thank you to all the community staff who have worked hard to learn the Bluestone Care Model, we are pleased to partner with you to provide high quality on-site care to your residents.**

We appreciate your comments and feedback. Please contact Trish Pitcher, Director of Marketing & Community Relations with any questions or comments at 651-342-4275 or [trish.pitcher@BluestoneMD.com](mailto:trish.pitcher@BluestoneMD.com)