

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Courtney Sjostrom
President

It is a delight to finally enjoy the many beauties of spring! This winter has not been an easy one with the pandemic. However, many of us have had our immunizations now and feel more at ease venturing out again. Returning to our “normal” activities is great, but it is not yet time to stop following the guidelines from the CDC. Continue to wear a mask, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds regularly, and maintain a safe distance with others.

Most of our volunteers have been immunized and are able to safely provide transportation and other services.

The HomePorts board members are planning for the remainder of 2021. Educational programs will resume once the Town Hall reopens and we feel it is safe to gather. We are hoping to have a Health Fair again in October. There is a great deal of planning and work to be done to accomplish this. If we do have a Health Fair, we will be looking for your support. Volunteer opportunities include serving on the planning committee, selling or buying program ads, working with the vendors, assisting Karen and helping on the day of the event. If you are interested in assisting with the Health Fair, please call or email Karen. We will keep you informed and look forward to being with you again.

Coming Up ...

Dutch Treat Luncheon

Thursday, May 20
11:30 am

Location to be determined.



Chestertown Farmers Market



Open Saturdays 8 am to noon
Fountain Park
Downtown Chestertown



SAVE THOSE REDNER'S RECEIPTS!

Many, many thanks to those of you who have been saving your tapes for us. Since we began this program in 2019 we have reached the \$900 mark from Redner's. That means we have collected \$50 for every \$5000 in receipts that we have turned in to them! Remember, you need to use a Redner's card for us to get credit. All you need to do is use your card and turn in the tapes. We'll do the rest. Receipts are good for up to three years, so if you haven't had time to bring them in, no worries! You can give them to any HomePorts' board member or just mail them to us. Every little bit helps!

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HomePorts is a non-profit 501(c)3 membership alliance providing access to a wide range of services designed to offer mature adults what they need to remain in their own homes. Membership is available to those over 55 in Kent County and the adjacent area in Queen Anne's County within the 21620 zip code.

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Karen Wright
Executive Director

I am delighted to report that most of our members and volunteers are fully vaccinated. Kudos to the Kent County Health Department for their administration of this overwhelming task. I know we are not out of the woods yet, but many of us are breathing a sigh of relief.

If, for some reason, you were unable to get vaccinated and need assistance to register, contact the Kent County Commission on Aging at 410-490-5360 and they will be able to assist you to get a vaccine.

In the “getting back to normal” category, we’re going to reinstate our monthly dutch-treat luncheons in May. The third Thursday is May 20 and we will meet at 11:30 a.m. I am pursuing several venues and will let you know where we will dine soon.

Included in this newsletter is a recent press release from UM Shore Regional Health which indicates that at some point they are going to expand some of their services in Kent County, including a mobile unit. In the meantime, many of our local physicians have moved their offices out of Kent County to Centreville or Easton. HomePorts recognizes the need for our members to get to their medical appointments. We have a few volunteers that are willing to transport our members to these out-of-county appointments on a limited basis, so we are going to try to expand our volunteer transportation services to Centreville and Easton, but will limit these rides to once per month per member. Please understand that these resources are limited and we will do our best to accommodate everyone, but we cannot guarantee a ride outside of Kent County. We will do our best. As always, Sally and I are here to assist you in any way we can. Don’t hesitate to call us and leave a message if we don’t answer, we will always call you back.

IMPROVE YOUR BALANCE & PREVENT FALLS BY LEARNING CHAIR EXERCISES

Along with improving strength, flexibility, and blood circulation, exercise also boosts mood, helping to keep seniors as healthy and well as possible. Chair exercises, done while seated on a chair with back support, are an excellent option for seniors who are frail, at risk of falling, or have limited mobility. The goal is to provide a steady base so you stay safe while moving your arms and legs during a workout. Chair exercises can be just as challenging as regular standing workouts, especially for upper body or abdominal muscles. Another advantage is that exercising while sitting takes less effort than standing and puts less pressure on lower body joints like knees or ankles. Seated exercises help build or maintain muscle, get heart rate up, improve blood circulation, increase flexibility, and increase range of motion.



There are various video programs available online - here are just a few of the websites that offer free video programs. There are also many programs available on www.youtube.com, just do a search for chair exercises to research available programs.

www.rmhcare.org/seated/exercises
www.seniorplanet.org

www.dailycaring.com
www.wordsiwheelby.com



UM SHORE REGIONAL HEALTH, CHOPTANK COMMUNITY HEALTH ANNOUNCE COLLABORATION TO EXPAND HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN KENT AND NORTHERN QA'S COUNTIES

University of Maryland Shore Regional Health (UMSRH) and Choptank Community Health System (CCHS) have announced a collaborative plan to expand health care services for Kent and northern Queen Anne's County. The plan includes the introduction of primary care, behavioral health and dental care services offered by CCHS in Kent County, headquartered in Chestertown and complemented by mobile van health care delivery services in more remote locations such as Millington, Worton, Galena and Rock Hall.

Choptank Community Health System, Inc., is a federally qualified health care center (FQHC) serving more than 30,000 patients in Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot counties. Choptank has been in operation for over 40 years and has more than 200 employees, including primary care, behavioral health and dental care providers and support staff. In addition to accepting most major insurance plans, Choptank participates in Medicare and Medicaid, and also offers a sliding fee scale to uninsured patients.



*Ken Kozel
UM Shore Regional Health
President & CEO*

"We are excited to build on our history of collaboration with Choptank Community Health," said Ken Kozel, UMSRH President and CEO. "We began formal discussions regarding service to Kent and northern Queen Anne's this past fall and quickly realized that the network's strengths in outpatient care and in serving Medicaid and Medicare patient populations make Choptank Health an excellent fit as a provider for the most immediate health care needs in the region."

Implementation of the plan will take place over three years, beginning with primary care in the first year, followed by behavioral health and dental care. Choptank Health will establish a primary care office with full-time providers and support staff in Chestertown, according to Sara Rich, Choptank Health's President and CEO.



*Sara Rich
Choptank Community Health
System, President & CEO*

"Together, Choptank Health and UM Shore Regional Health have been looking at the best ways to take care of patients in Kent and northern Queen Anne's counties," says Rich. "This expansion and continued collaboration with Shore Regional Health is a natural extension of our mission to provide access to exceptional, comprehensive and integrated health care for all."

BEWARE OF COVID-19 SCAMS!

We are currently living in unprecedented times, and this provides ample opportunity for scammers to come up with new ways to take advantage of unsuspecting people. These scams are often targeted at the elderly, and it is essential that we are aware of the types of scams these individuals will try. Right now, there are two major scams that are happening: contact tracing scams and COVID-19 testing scams.



COVID Tracing Scams

Contact tracing is the process of identifying and contacting people who have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Contact tracers will work with someone who is positive to collect the names and numbers of anyone they have been in close contact with while infectious. Contact tracers might begin by sending you a text message. They also might reach out with a phone call, but there are several things they will **NOT** do.

- **Contract tracers will not ask for money**
Contract tracers will never ask you for payment, whether that is through cash, card, gift card, or any other form of payment.
- **Contract tracers will not ask for your bank account or credit card number**
A good rule of thumb is to never give this information to anyone who contacts you and asks for it.
- **Contract tracers will not ask for your social security number, even the last 4-digits**
- **Contract tracers will not ask for your Medicare number**
- **Immigration status does not matter** - If contract tracers are asking for this information, they are not legitimate, and this is a scam.
- **Contract tracers will not send links through email or text** - clicking on these links could download malware to your computer or phone.

Testing Site Scams

Some scammers are contacting recipients of medicare and offering free COVID-19 testing or testing supplies for them. What to look for ...

- **Be wary of advertisements on social media** for COVID-19 tests or supplies
- **Make sure that any appointments you make are at actual locations**
- **Do not open links sent to you through text messages from unknown sources**
- **Medicare and Medicaid will not call asking for your plan number** – if you receive a call from them, this is likely a scam

The best thing you can do is get a referral from your doctor for a COVID-19 test. You can also contact your local police or sheriff's office to see if the testing site is legitimate.

What to Do If A Scammer Contacts You?

If a scammer has contacted you or if you suspect that someone has attempted to scam you, report it online with the Office of Inspector General (<https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/report-fraud>) or by calling 1-800-HHS-TIPS (1-800-447-8477).