

**October Donors**

Nancy and Preston Arnold  
Jewell Baker  
Sandy and Bill Bath  
Lois and Ralph Bergstad  
Angela and Roger Box  
Cheryl and William Buckles  
Christ Community Church  
Penny Eccelston  
Milton Enderlin  
Bobbie and George Johnson  
The Lyon Foundation  
McAnaw Family Foundation  
Phillips 66  
Network for Good  
Mrs. Paul (Narnie) Roll  
Sandra and Richard Skinner

Cynthia and Steve Smith  
Victoria Travaglini  
Carol and Thomas Wesson

**In-Kind Donors**

Mary and John Ford

**In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in October 2021**

We sincerely apologize for any unintended error or omission. Due to publication deadlines, acknowledgement of gifts may take up to 60 days in PrimeTimes Publication. If you feel there is an error, please call Angie Thompson at 918-336-8500, ext. 129.

**amazon**smile

**Shop and 0.5% goes to**



<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/73-1197617>



# PRIME TIMES

An Elder Care Publication

Issue 8  
Volume 29

November 2021



1223 Swan Drive  
Bartlesville, OK 74006  
918-336-8500  
[www.AboutElderCare.org](http://www.AboutElderCare.org)





# Neuroplasticity

by Kaitlyn Warren, PT, DPT, NCS at Foundation Therapy Specialists



Have you ever set out to learn a new skill? Maybe learning how to ride a bike when you were smaller? When you first start learning how to ride your bike, you feel clumsy. You have to really concentrate on what you are doing. You make a lot of mistakes. As you continue to practice and practice and practice, that new skill becomes more automatic. You don't have to think about steadying yourself on your bike anymore because your body has learned how to balance itself. This is neuroplasticity at work!

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to adapt in both structure and function based on the input it receives. Think of your brain as a huge power grid with billions of little connections, or pathways, all throughout it. These pathways carry signals between different areas of the brain and from the brain to other parts of your body. The more often a pathway is used, the stronger that pathway becomes. The opposite is true as well; the less frequent a pathway is used, the weaker the pathway becomes. Anytime you learn a new skill, like riding your bike, you form new pathways, and the more you perform that new skill, the stronger those new pathways become.

So, what happens to the brain following a stroke? Strokes, or any type of brain injury, result in cell death. There is an area of your brain that is damaged, and once a cell dies, it cannot come back to life. So, how is recovery from stroke possible? Neuroplasticity!

As mentioned above, the brain has an incredible ability to adapt in both structure and function. The uninjured neurons in your brain can grow new structures and create new pathways to compensate for the damaged area of the

brain. The second half of the definition of neuroplasticity is equally important: based on the input it receives. This is why physical and occupational therapy is so important following any type of injury. When provided with the correct input with the correct amount of intensity, your brain will form new pathways to help improve function and maximize recovery after a stroke. However, if provided with incorrect input, like the use of compensatory strategies or movements, your brain will form pathways that might not be optimal in helping you move or perform activities of daily living.

There is a principle of neuroplasticity that says, "Use it or Lose it." Let's say for example that following a stroke, you have lost some movements in your arm. Now, because it is not as easy to perform activities with that arm, you start using the arm less. Because you start using your arm less, that pathway in your brain weakens; the more that pathway weakens, the less you are able to move your arm, and the cycle continues. Physical and occupational therapy disrupts this downward cycle and instead uses another principle of neuroplasticity that says, "Use it and Improve it." Physical and Occupational Therapists are highly trained in utilizing specific interventions and techniques to help grow new pathways, strengthen those pathways, and help you maximize recovery following brain injury.

The recovery capability of the body is incredible, and we hope this information has provided you with a better understanding of Neuroplasticity. If you or anyone you know would benefit from skilled Physical or Occupational therapy to maximize function following brain injury, please contact Foundation Therapy Specialists at 918-766-0391.



Prime Times  
published monthly by  
**ELDER CARE**  
Excellence in senior care  
since 1983

Tel. 918-336-8500  
info@AboutElderCare.org  
www.AboutElderCare.org

**Program Management**  
Cordell Rumsey  
*Executive Director*  
Christina Bishop  
*Operations Director*  
Angie Thompson  
*Development Director*  
Leah Alexander  
DayBreak  
*Adult Day Health Director*  
Kearl Coke  
*Brighter Living Services Director*  
Frank Danel  
*Facility Manager*  
Deanna Dodson  
*Case Manager Supervisor*  
Josh Lindblom, PT, DPT  
*Foundation Therapy Specialists Director*  
Jerry Brad Jarrell, MD  
*W.R. Bohon Health Clinic*  
Tracy Stuckey, APRN, MSN  
*W.R. Bohon Health Clinic Director*

**Board Members**  
Steve Smith, *President*  
John Ford, *Vice President*  
Debbie Mueggenborg, *Treasurer*  
Stephen Colaw  
Glenda Garrison  
Steve Grogan  
Jerry Maddux  
Dr. John Manley  
Richard Mitchell  
Wayne Walthall  
Mark Wilburn  
Craig Yocham  
Kathy Zervas  
Virginia Sawyer, *Ex-Officio*  
Programs and services are  
partially funded by



# Change is in the air

by Christina Bishop, Operations Director

Autumn is in the air. Most of us will prepare to visit loved ones as the holiday season is fast approaching. As we visit our senior friends and loved ones, we need to be on the lookout for signs that their needs may be changing. As we all progress in age our needs and capabilities change. If these changes are recognized early on and provisions are made to accommodate the changes, one can anticipate living an independently healthier lifestyle for a much longer duration. It is when needs go unmet that problems surface and challenge our independence. The first step in assessing the situation is to be present in your visit.

Take time to listen to your loved one and hear not only what they are saying but listen closely for what they are not saying. Listen for what's missing; For example, do you usually hear stories of friends or church events and this time there are no stories to be told. Look around do things appear different. What about your nose is it telling you that something is astray?

The following are a few signs that a senior is likely needing more help in the home.

- The home is much more unkempt than usual; there might be piles of newspapers or clothing lying around.
- Maybe there are stacks of unpaid bills or notices from utility companies.
- You may find spoiled food in the refrigerator or notice a bug or rodent problem.
- If mobility is a problem, you are likely to notice spills that have not been cleaned up or dust in places they cannot reach, light bulbs that need replaced

These are things that require us to bend over or reach higher and prove difficult and even potentially dangerous for the person with mobility issues.

- In addition, if you see that prescriptions are not being refilled this could be a cognition issue or it could be a financial issue, a lot of or seniors are living on a fixed income and may forgo filling a prescription that they feel is too costly.

If you notice any of these signs it is likely to be a good time to open a conversation about your loved ones needs and over all wellbeing. Remember to be kind and make no accusations. Offer real solutions and assure them of your support. Let them know that you value them and realize the importance of their independence and want to keep them safe and on that track.

Elder Care has multiple programs that are available to help your loved ones meet these very needs. We are here to help you and your loved ones navigate all the seasons of change. Call us. We can help. 918-336-8500.



IN-HOME





# Short-term respite care

by Leah Alexander, Adult Day Health Director

Life can be busy during this time of the year while preparing for guests, house cleaning, shopping, cooking and baking. The anticipation of the holidays is exciting, but can become overwhelming if you are also a full-time caregiver caring for a spouse or parent.

DayBreak Adult Day Health & Activity Center can help you and your family reach your goals, and live a healthy, happy, independent life.

DayBreak offers short-term respite care Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Respite care provides a “short break” for caregivers who are caring for family members in their own homes.

While you are making holiday preparations or out taking care of your own needs, your spouse or loved one can spend the day at DayBreak in an environment

that offers social activities, arts and crafts, music, and exercise.

Participants also enjoy a delicious lunch as well as breakfast and a snack.

Participants attend for a variety of reasons, including a desire to stay active, be social, create art, or in some cases, in order to be in a safe environment during the day. Whatever the reason, all participants enjoy the friends they gain in the experience.

During the holiday season, DayBreak is available for a one-time purpose or for a long-term solution. For more information, please call me at 918-336-8500.

**YOU SAID IT ...**  
***"Brighter Living was great, but we noticed an improvement in mom's mobility and socialization when we brought her to DayBreak."***

— Linda K.



## IN-HOME

### HOUSEKEEPING & ERRAND SERVICE

**AFFORDABLE FOR ALL SENIORS**

Clean & sanitize the kitchen and bathroom • Wash dishes • Dust furniture • Sweep • Mop • Vacuum floors • Change bed sheets (non-bedfast clients) • Assist with laundry • Perform essential shopping and errands • Assist with meal preparation • Assist with letter writing



1223 Swan Drive • Bartlesville • 918-336-8500 • [www.AboutElderCare.org](http://www.AboutElderCare.org)

Serving Nowata and Washington Counties



Services are funded in part by the state and Older Americans Act funds from Grand Gateway AAA Title III services and OK DHS Aging Services. In Home Services serves all individuals who are eligible for its programs without regard to race, national origin, religion, sex, or disability.





Brighter Living Services • 918-336-8500





# Why does my lower back hurt?

by Josh Lindblom, DPT, Director Foundation Therapy Specialists

Low back pain is highly prevalent and affects almost everyone at some point in their lives. One common diagnosis that may lead to a myriad of symptoms is spinal stenosis. Stenosis simply means a narrowing of spaces within your spine. The spinal cord and its branches have an intricate and complex relationship with the spine itself. This synergy hinges on the cord and the roots of each outgrowing nerve having adequate room to exit the spinal canal unimpeded. Stenosis can occur in this central canal, where the spinal cord is located, or at any vertebral level's foramen, where nerve roots exit spinal cord. Central stenosis may result in bilateral symptoms while foraminal stenosis will result in unilateral symptoms. Any narrowing may prove to become problematic over time. Possible symptoms include numbness or tingling in your legs, weakness in the lower extremities, cramping when standing or walking for long periods, or just localized back pain. In more severe cases, you may develop paralysis or urinary incontinence due to stenosis as well.

Spinal stenosis can be caused by several different factors but is most commonly a combination of issues. Normal

spinal degeneration can be accelerated by increased osteoarthritis. This arthritis coupled with poor, long-term posture may lead to the development of bone spurs. Herniated or bulging disks may also restrict the space that nerves have to operate. Also, as we age some ligaments have a tendency to toughen and thicken. One such tissue, the ligamentum flavum, lines the posterior wall of the central canal and is notorious for contributing to stenosis. Other more rare issues include spinal trauma, abnormal growths or tumors, and Paget's disease which produces an abundance of bone growth in the spine.

If you experience any of the above symptoms, it is important for you to consult with your physician or physical therapist. Your physician may order imaging studies to explore suspicions of stenosis. As a physical therapist, my main question is whether your symptoms are exacerbated by position or activity. If standing alone does not produce your symptoms, but they are produced with a few minutes of brisk walking, then you may have more of a peripheral circulatory issue. If your symptoms are produced in static standing and relieved with simply leaning forward or sitting

down for a short period, you may be dealing with stenosis. Leaning forward and sitting are postures that slightly flex the spine, opening up each foramen. While this provides temporary relief, it produces a poor feedback loop, meaning you always assume a slumped posture to avoid low back pain.

A physical therapist is trained to recognize and treat symptoms associated with spinal stenosis. Identifying and correcting compensatory postural changes, specifying tight or weak musculature, and classifying associated nerve tract symptoms are all vital to proper treatment of stenosis. In addition, we will also utilize decompression therapies to help enlarge any narrowed nerve pathways. At Foundation Therapy Specialists, we utilize manual therapy techniques, lumbar and

cervical traction, as well as an inversion table to provide spinal decompression. Decompression allows nerve root relief and increases the volume of any bulging disks, allowing them to take in more water and create more cushion for your spine. Decompression, proper posture, appropriate flexibility and core strength are the formula for maintaining a healthy spine.

If this sounds like you or someone you know, Foundation Therapy Specialists would love to help! We specialize in administering individualized care in a fun, compassionate environment. We dedicate ourselves to providing high-quality skilled services to manage multiple medical conditions, and the impairments that accompany these conditions. You can access treatment with or without a physician referral via direct access to physical therapy. Call us directly at 918-766-0391. A healthy life needs a solid foundation.



## Med D Counseling

by Angie Thompson, Development Director

It's time to think about 2022! Especially when it comes to Medicare Part D Enrollment.

Elder Care's three certified Medicare Part D counselors are meeting with clients now until early December. The consultation is free and valuable when considering all your prescription options for 2022.

According to Sue Lee, Elder Care's resource coordinator, participants should bring a current Medicare card, list of current medications, an identification card, and if interested in applying for extra assistance to help pay for drug costs, a statement of current income and asset information.



Our counselors urge participants to review their prescription drug plans each year. "Plans and formularies or other regulations may affect someone's ability to get medications. That is why reviewing plans is important for seniors."

"Seniors should also ensure they are reading all mail they receive regarding current prescription drug plans. Some plans may not be offering the same services in the upcoming year, which could result in having no plan at all as of January 1."

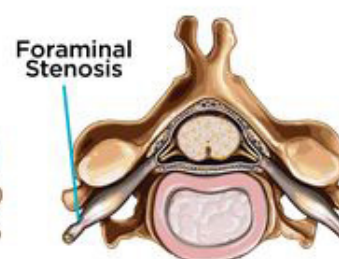
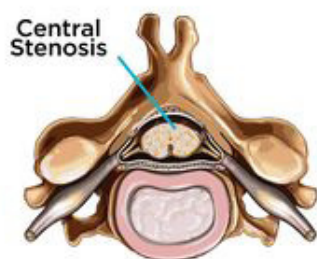
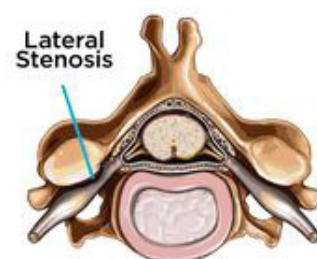
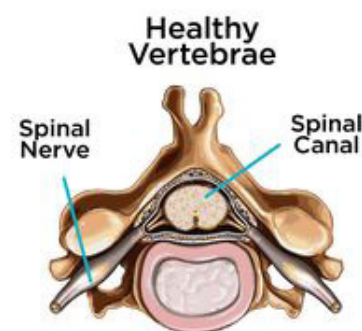
Appointments for Medicare Part D counseling at Elder Care may be made by calling 918-336-8500.

## STENOSIS TYPES

**LATERAL:** Nerve is pinched as it exits the spinal canal

**CENTRAL:** Nerve is pinched in the main spinal canal

**FORAMINAL:** Nerve is pinched in the passageways located on each side of your vertebra



**BRACEABILITY**



**SPECIALIZING IN  
OUTPATIENT THERAPY  
ADULT DAY HEALTH  
& PHYSICIAN SERVICES**