BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

Baltimore

DEAR NEIGHBORS,

Spring is finally here, and our COVID-19 numbers are better but still not zero. In this month's issue, we want to remind you to get your COVID-19 vaccine or booster. March is Chronic Kidney Disease month, and this is important because our community is at particular risk for developing kidney problems. It is important to get screened for kidney disease so you can prevent any problems from this. As you likely know, the Public Health Emergency is ending, and many members of our community may lose benefits such as insurance, SNAP, and Energy Assistance. Our Community Health Workers, Kat Dustan Stokes and Shannon Adams, can help. We look forward to hearing from you about what you'd like to see in the next issue. Until then, stay healthy.

-The Brancati Center Team

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

37 million American adults have chronic kidney disease, and millions of others are at increased risk.

What is it?
Chronic kidney disease includes conditions that damage your kidneys and decrease their ability to keep you healthy by filtering wastes from your blood. When kidney disease progresses, it may eventually lead to kidney failure, which requires dialysis or a kidney transplant to maintain life.

Who is at risk?
Kidney disease disproportionately affects communities of color. Black/African Americans are almost four times more likely, and Hispanics/Latinos are 1.3 times more likely to have kidney failure compared to White Americans.

How to prevent it?
The major causes of kidney disease include diabetes and hypertension. You can protect your kidneys by preventing or managing health conditions that cause kidney damage, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. Many people with kidney disease do not know they have it because they do not have any symptoms until their kidneys are badly damaged. Early detection and treatment can often keep chronic kidney disease from getting worse.

Resources from the National Kidney Foundation about chronic kidney disease can be found **here**.

Tanjala Purnell, Ph.D., M.P.H

COVID CORNER

Everyone 6 months and older is recommended to stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines to protect themselves from severe COVID-19.

- You are considered up to date if you have completed your primary series and got the most recent booster dose

- If you recently had COVID-19, you can consider delaying your next shot until it has been 3 months since you tested positive.

Website: www.brancaticenter.org
Email: brancaticenter@jhmi.edu
Facebook: BrancatiCenter
Twitter: @BrancatiCenter

The Johns Hopkins Brancati Center is based in Baltimore, Maryland

End of the Public Health Emergency: What do you need to know?

As you may know, the Public Health Emergency (PHE) will end on **May 11, 2023**. This decision will greatly impact healthcare access and many benefits that have been granted over the past few years.

Who will be affected?
We expect the most affected to be Medicaid, SNAP, Energy Assistance recipients and uninsured individuals.

What changes are expected?
- Medicaid insurance and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) will no longer automatically re-enroll recipients.
- Members will be required to renew their benefits as they have done in the past, according to their month of renewal.
- Patients who no longer qualify for Medicaid or do not go through the redetermination process may lose their Medicaid coverage.
- Uninsured people will no longer be able to access free vaccines through state Medicaid programs.
- COVID-19 vaccines and booster costs will vary based on your health insurance plan.
- By March 2023, all SNAP households' benefits will return to lower, pre-COVID SNAP amounts.

What do you need to do?
- If you are Medicaid, SNAP, or Energy Assistance recipients make sure the Department of Social Services (DSS) has at least two ways to contact you: a **telephone number** and a **mailing address**.
- The eligibility criteria for these programs will be the same as before the PHE.
- Expect the DSS to contact you to inform you of any coverage changes.
- For those who may lose eligibility, you may still qualify for subsidized health insurance through the Health **Insurance Marketplace**
- A special enrollment period will open on **April 1, 2023**.
- If you have lost your coverage through Medicaid/CHIP, you have 60 days to apply through the marketplace.

If your benefits are cut or you are denied during this process, here are a few resources to look at:
1. To apply, re-apply, or appeal, visit **here**
2. To find more information about SNAP, visit **here**
3. To find food resources near you, visit **here** or **here**

Find more about how Johns Hopkins Medicine clinicians, administrators and support staff are preparing patients for the end of COVID-19 **health insurance flexibilities.**

As always, feel free to contact us at brancaticenter@jhmi.edu and 410-614-2701, if you need help accessing these programs.

Kat Dustan Stokes & Shannon Adams

Spotlight:

Meet our Community Health Workers

Do you have a challenge that needs resources or some additional support?

Our Community Health Workers (CHWs) are here to help! Our CHWs are here to identify barriers or challenges you face and will help address them by connecting you to resources that will enable you to live the healthiest lives possible and empower you to be able to take control of your health.

Please, meet Kat Dustan Stokes, who started working with the Brancati Center in 2019, and Shannon Adams, who joined the Brancati Center in 2022. You can contact our CHWs at **brancaticenter@jhmi.edu** and **410-614-2701.**

Announcement

To support the Baltimore City Health Department's effort to increase COVID-19 vaccination rates in **Midway/Coldstream, Clifton-Berea, Madison/East End, and Greenmount East** the Brancati Center will hold COVID-19 discussions with church leaders at:
- **Israel Baptist Church** on April 06, 2023
- **Garden of Prayer Christian Church** on April 13, 2023

To learn more, contact Megan Brown at mbrown61@jhmi.edu.

The Sydney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center Education Sessions

Join our Webinar:
Understanding Prostate Cancer: Risk, Reduction, Screening, and Treatment

April 18, 2023
at 6:00 pm

REGISTER HERE