



The Eastport Health Care Newsletter

Providing Comprehensive Care in Washington County

TAKE CONTROL WITH THE PATIENT PORTAL!

Q: What is the Patient Portal?

A: The Patient Portal is an online service that provides patients secure access to their health information. Various features may be available on the portal at your practice's discretion, including the ability to send messages to your health care providers, schedule appointments, and pay bills online.

Q: Is it secure?

A: Yes! All communications between you and your provider's office are carried over a secure, encrypted connection. This secure connection utilizes industry standard Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption to ensure secure data transmission as well as server-side digital certificate authentication.

Q: How do I sign up?

A: It's easy! Simply visit www.eastporthealth.org and click the Portal link!



STAR AWARDS: NOVEMBER NOMINEES

Beth Cosman, Brenda Voisine, Cindy Light, Deborah Kelly, Dr. Sammis, Dr. Simmons, Elaine Curtis, Ellen Krajewski, Erin Cox, Greg Lingley, Jodi Buskirk, Jordyn Turner, Lori Huckins, Mary George, Mary Stubbs, Maryellen Boone, Ron Boyle, Roxy Woodworth, Sue Drew



Elaine Curtis was the lucky winner this month and took home a special star award gift basket!

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Check out our newsletter every other month for EHC news and upcoming community events!

If you would like info added to this newsletter, please email us at

newsletter@eastporthealth.org

FOCUS ON: DOWNEAST RAINBOW ALLIANCE (BY KATHLEEN DUNBAR)

The Downeast Rainbow Alliance is a civil rights group based in Washington County and consisting of LGBTQ+ community members and allies. Their mission is “advocacy, education, and support for the LGBTQ+ community in Washington County.”

Originally formed in 2014 as a community circle focused on forming GSTAs (gay-straight-trans-alliances) in local schools. Evidence shows that GSTAs decrease suicide and drop out risk for *all* students. **The group meets every 4-6 weeks and rotates between Eastport and Machias.**

The DRA is currently engaged in hosting youth

programs, supporting local activism, and planning Pride 2020! ALL ARE WELCOME!

Maine Transgender Network recently said this of the DRA, “*DRA is a prime example of the many small, and often overlooked community groups that are in the trenches changing Maine for the better for all people. 2019 was the culmination of just a few short years of work in which DRA has coalesced the local LGBTQ+ community by insisting again and again on the vital role queer and trans people play in the close-knit fabric of rural communities.*”

For more information email : downeastrainbowalliance@gmail.com.

QUESTION 1

Keep Our Kids Safe: Vote NO on Question 1 on March 3rd

Cynthia Sammis, MD, Medical Director, Eastport Health Care

Don't let anyone confuse you: the current campaign against childhood vaccination is based on misinformation and is unsafe for our children and anyone immunosuppressed.

Vote No on Question 1 to keep our children, families, and communities safe from deadly disease, including measles, mumps, rubella, polio, chicken pox, tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).

Vaccines save lives and are safe and effective. **It has been scientifically proven that they do *not* cause autism. Vaccines are not money makers for big pharma.** Maine has required immunizations for school entry since 1868, and the current law retains defined medical exemptions. (Vaccines are provided free of charge at many providers of pediatric care in the state of Maine.)

High rates of non-medical vaccine opt-outs put children and other vulnerable people, including the elderly and individuals who are immunosuppressed due to chemotherapy, at risk for contracting deadly diseases. **When even a few parents refuse to vaccinate their children because they've bought into rumors, myths, and bad science, they put us all at risk.**

Maine's vaccine opt-out rate is one of the most threatening in the nation. Our state's high unvaccinated rate in children has led to dangerous outbreaks of whooping cough and chicken pox in daycares and schools. It makes us vulnerable to potentially serious outbreaks of dangerous and deadly diseases that are 100% preventable. (continued on page 3)

QUESTION 1, CONTINUED...

We at Eastport Health Care put our children, families and communities first and defend public health efforts like vaccinations that protect children and individuals from vaccine-preventable disease. **We urge you to get informed –it means the health and safety of our children.** Maine Families for Vaccination, an advocacy group made up of doctors, nurses, parents, scientists, and experts who care about public safety and are united by the singular focus of protecting Maine kids from preventable disease. They offer extensive information (www.maineamiliesforvaccination.com). **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has specific clinical recommendations to prevent the spread of disease** (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/index.html).

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) comprises medical and public health experts who develop recommendations on the use of vaccines in the United States. **The recommendations stand as public health guidance for safe use of vaccines.**

Not vaccinating a child is a dangerous act because it puts the child at risk of serious illness and death and it undermines Maine's public health immunization efforts to prevent these dangerous illnesses. **Maine already has the 4th highest rate of unvaccinated children in the nation. We are below safe thresholds for prevention of disease outbreak.** Our children and families are at risk for these deadly diseases that threaten our health. Law 154, passed in 2019, tightened school-required immunizations in an effort to put us over the safe threshold and make our children safer.

Achieving a safe immunization rate ensures a safe learning environment in our schools, results in fewer missed school days, and protects students from preventable diseases.

Without safe vaccination laws in Maine, vaccine-preventable diseases will spread and place our children at even greater risk for acquiring a life-threatening illness.

Vote No to Question 1 on March 3.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Senior Needs-Age Friendly Community Circle:

Next meeting is March 13 1:30 pm in the Eastport Clinic board room. Guest speaker: Hilary Fernald from Legal Services for the Elderly.

The Butterfly Effect:

Formerly known as the Circle of Hope, this group now meets every 2nd and 4th Thur. at 6pm in the Downeast Recovery Support Center in Machias.

Downeast Rainbow Alliance:

Please call for the next meeting date! 853-6001

Way to Wellness:

Classes are Tuesday in Machias and Thursday in Eastport. Topics vary, please contact Barb at 322.0960 for more information or talk to your provider for a referral!

All support groups meet at variable times and locations. It is best to call us ahead of time for the most up to date information.

The Senior Center :

Lunch Wed. @ 12 and
Exercise Class Tue./
Thur. @ 10.

Eastport Arts

Center: Yoga Sat. @
10, Ecstatic Dance Tue.
@ 5, and International
Dance Thur. @ 4:30.

Labor of Love Food

Pantry: Fri. 2:30 -
6:30 pm, 2nd Tue. 9 - 11
a.m. Emergency Rations
on 3rd, 4th and 5th Tue.
9 - 11.



Eastport Health Care, Inc.

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Machias: 255.8290

Calais: 454.3022

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COMMUNITY NEWS

EHC and the Community: Everyone is welcome to join the discussion about how EHC can better serve community members of all ages. The next meeting is March 11 at 4:45 pm in the EHC Board room.

Safe Indoor Walking: Shead High School welcomes walkers in the gymnasium Mondays through Fridays from 7—9 a.m. Please park in the High Street lot and bring your sneakers!

In Case of Emergency Bands: Eastport residents are invited to join this program developed by the Senior Needs-Age Friendly Community Circle! Obtain a free I.C.E. band to alert emergency responders that 911 dispatchers have your emergency contact information securely stored. Please call City Hall to sign-up.

DID YOU KNOW?

Eastport Health Care Helps Address Food Insecurity

Good Shepherd Food Bank supplies Free Emergency Food Bags to EHC. Simply ask any staff member for more information if you have an urgent need for food.

Good Shepherd Food Bank also supplies fresh produce to be distributed on the first Monday of every month. A couple hundred pounds of fresh produce of all varieties are available. Get here early as doors open at 11 AM and they go quickly!

There is NO income requirement for either of these programs and neither is limited to EHC patients. Food is available to all community members who express a need, there will be no questions asked. We do ask how many people are in the household simply to provide information to Good Shepherd Food Bank so that they can track their impact.

Both programs are coordinated by Elaine Abbott, EHC's Outreach and Enrollment Coordinator. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please call Elaine at 853-0189.

