

April 25, 2025

# THE PATIENT PRESCRIPTION

Your Health Begins Here



## Quality Spotlight - Senior Health

HopeHealth's quality focus for April is senior health. This clinical focus includes measures like Annual Wellness Visits, senior immunizations, advanced care planning, and cognitive screenings. [Click here](#) to learn more about HopeHealth's senior services. [Click here](#) to review the last edition of the Seniors with Hope quarterly newsletter.

Below, read about how social engagement is tied to positive health outcomes for seniors.

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### Seniors, Staying Socially Active Is Good For Your Health!

#### **Corey Remle**

*Community Health Worker*

A 2023 U.S. Surgeon General's Report discussed the healing effects of positive relationships with family, friends, and the community. Engaging in social activities like volunteering, joining a church community, or being a part of clubs are all valuable ways to stay connected, boost your health, and live longer with lower stress. Planning and coordinating activities may increase mental stimulation and have a positive effect on memory. This is especially important for seniors.



Among people with diabetes, social connection has been associated with better disease management and better self-rated health. Family support encourages individuals with chronic diseases like diabetes to take better care of themselves. Studies show that patients with diabetes who have strong social networks are more likely to take medications properly, monitor blood sugar levels carefully, and manage their diet.

Psychologically, social connections increase resilience and hopefulness. Making connections through an activity like volunteering can strengthen one's sense of purpose and meaning. Being socially active improves our awareness that we can cope with daily challenges and access support in times of need – even just by knowing that others care about us.

On the other hand, loneliness and social isolation are associated with high blood pressure, heart disease, and depression. Socially isolated adults may also have trouble sleeping. Many health specialists worried about physical and emotional effects like these during the COVID-19 pandemic and people who work with seniors today remain concerned.

Feelings of depression or anxiety can have a negative effect on your interest in social activities and increase feelings of loneliness. The effects of loneliness and social isolation can be as dangerous as smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day, drinking six alcoholic drinks daily, or not engaging in physical activity, according to the 2023 U.S. Surgeon General's Report.

Suicidal ideation and self-harm are associated with loneliness and isolation, especially among men. According to one study of over 500,000 middle-aged adults, the probability of dying by suicide more than doubled among men who live alone. Multiple other reports have expressed concerns regarding suicide among Veterans. Social connections and friendships can offer protection against someone experiencing such isolation.

Living alone, being a caregiver, or having vision difficulties that affect driving (especially at night) can challenge one's level of social connectedness. Try being creative and open to new solutions that might work around those factors. Senior Centers, churches, and libraries in the area may have free daytime activities that you would enjoy.

Another suggestion to avoid disconnection is to get your hearing checked! Someone who cannot hear well may avoid socializing and become isolated. It can be very frustrating to ask people to repeat themselves during conversations so it may seem less stressful to avoid social events. With hearing aids, these frustrations can go away and you can enjoy social events again!

To enjoy time with friends, you can ask someone to go with you to try a new or different restaurant or local event. Some local organizations or groups might also offer respite care if you are a caregiver for a loved one. Respite care would provide someone to stay with your loved one while you engage in a social activity for yourself. In the Pee Dee, call Vantage Point at **(843) 383-8632** for more information about the availability of respite care vouchers.

Here are some tips for increasing your social connections with others in order to boost your emotional, psychological, and physical health:

- Find an activity you enjoy that involves interacting with others. Examples include card games, a yoga class, a book club, or potluck dinners with family and friends.
- Learn something new. Join a cooking, art, or language class in person or online. You can meet new people with similar interests. Local technical colleges may allow seniors to attend classes for a nominal fee.
- AARP and other organizations offer online communities for caregivers to share experiences, ask questions, and create support groups.
- Get moving! Go for a walk with friends or join a swimming class. Exercise boosts your mood and relieves stress.
- Volunteer in the community. Helping others can lead to you feeling better!
- Consider adopting a pet. Animals can be a source of comfort.
- Stay in touch with family, friends, and neighbors in person, online, or by phone. Have someone you trust visit you regularly.
- If you text or speak on the phone, it does not have to be a long

conversation. I text my mother a different “dad joke” each day. We may have a longer conversation if time allows, but no matter what, we share a laugh to start the day.

Start by adding only one or two activities to your routine and see how you feel. Introverts do not need to force themselves to become extroverted by engaging in too many social activities. The goals are to have fun and boost positive feelings!

HopeHealth offers Senior with Hope, a free monthly gathering for seniors to hear community presenters and HopeHealth providers discuss important health topics. There are door prizes and opportunities for socializing with other attendees.

Seniors with Hope meets once a month at the following locations:

- **Seniors with Hope at Bethea:** This group meets at the Bethea Retirement Community (157 Home Avenue, Darlington) from 2-3:30pm on the first Thursday of the month.
- **Seniors with Hope at Streater:** This group meets at the new Streater Community Center (301 N. Dargan Street, Florence) from 2-3:30pm on the second Thursday of the month.
- **Seniors with Hope in Kingstree:** This group meets at HopeHealth in Kingstree (520 Thurgood Marshall Boulevard, Kingstree) from 2-3:30pm on the third Thursday of the month.

We are planning other social events at the Streater Community Center soon, so stay tuned!

## Upcoming Closure

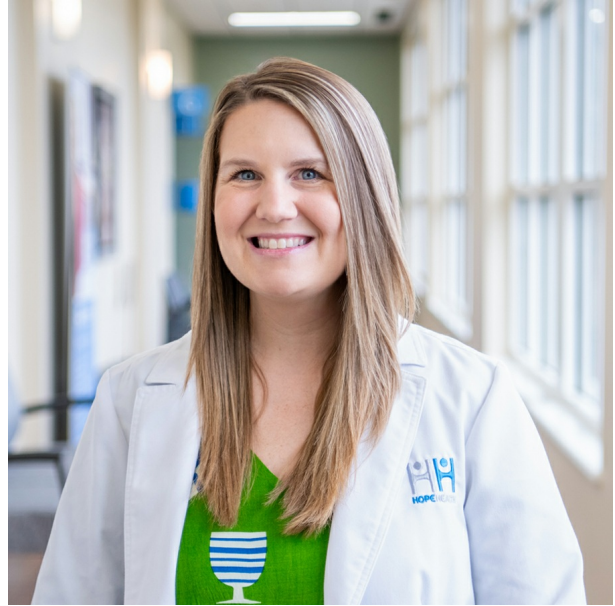


Please note that all HopeHealth locations (including pharmacies) will be closed on **Tuesday, April 29**, for staff training so we may better serve you.

Patients can reach an on-call provider by calling the number associated with their provider. In an emergency, please dial 911 or visit your nearest emergency department.

## New Providers At HopeHealth Pine Needles





Big news! HopeHealth on Pine Needles Road has gained two outstanding providers! **Deana Freeman, ANP**, and **Taylor Thompson, FNP**, moved from our Medical Plaza location to join Tim Weaver, FNP, Daniel Hyler, MD, Francheska Russell, LPC, and Kelsi Camak, LPC, at our Pine Needles location.

With their dedication and expertise in primary care and women's health, they will continue providing top-quality care to our community at this location. Help us give them a warm welcome as they embark on this exciting transition!

## April Is National Volunteer Month



During this National Volunteer Month, we are excited to spotlight volunteers who generously give their time and effort to make our organization and the communities we serve even better.

HopeHealth volunteers work hard to ensure our guests have a positive experience by greeting and guiding them, providing social support, assisting with outreach, and helping staff with special projects.

Keep reading as we spotlight a few of our HopeHealth volunteers. Keep an eye on the [HopeHealth Facebook page](#) for additional volunteer spotlights!

### **Patricia Green**

*Timmonsville*

Patricia has been volunteering at HopeHealth since October 2024. Her responsibilities as a comfort host include greeting the patients, making sure they feel welcome and cared for, and ensuring that waiting areas remain sanitized and clean throughout the day. She also offers snacks and

interacts with the patients as they wait for their appointments.

She enjoys the atmosphere at the Timmonsville location and says she's learned a lot through conversations with the patients and those who accompany them. "I enjoy knowing I've helped someone when they leave with a smile and a *thank you*."

Patricia is a widow and has two sons and three daughters. She retired from Blue Cross Blue Shield after 26 years.



### **Brittany Canty**

*Medical Plaza*

Brittany has been volunteering at HopeHealth for two months. She is stationed at the entrance to the Medical Plaza, helping to greet patients, guide them in the building, and provide comfort items to those in the waiting areas. She enjoys working with the other volunteers and seeing how people smile when she greets them.

Brittany is a Sociology student at Midlands Tech. She enjoys reading, writing, and drawing. She plans to use her degree to work in the mental health field.

### **Rose Buskey**

*Seniors with Hope*

Rose has been volunteering at HopeHealth for close to three years! She helps Diane Davis with the Seniors with Hope program by preparing birthday cards for the group and attending two Seniors with Hope meetings each month to assist with group activities and other needs. She enjoys the fellowship with the seniors and wants to help them in any way she can.

Rose spends most of her time volunteering! She also belongs to the Gleaners Ministry at her church, which donates clothing and household items to the homeless. She is truly uplifted

to see that she makes a difference in people's lives.



Join HopeHealth Volunteers and assist our guests in navigating their health care experience while also growing your skills, forming new friendships, and improving your mental and overall health. By volunteering at HopeHealth, you help us provide services to those who often encounter social and financial roadblocks to receiving health care. To learn about how to become a volunteer with HopeHealth, or to encourage others to give their time, visit [hope-health.org/volunteer](https://hope-health.org/volunteer) or contact Cindy Averitt, manager of volunteer programs, at (843) 432-2942 or [volunteers@hope-health.org](mailto:volunteers@hope-health.org).

## Online Bill Pay

Did you know that you can conveniently and securely pay your HopeHealth bill online? You don't even have to be signed up for the patient portal. [Visit this link](#) or use the "Online Bill Pay" button on the home page of our website, [hope-health.org](https://hope-health.org).

Online Bill Pay

## Recipe Spotlight

### Slow Cooker Chicken Tacos

*Serving size: 3 tacos*

#### **Ingredients:**

##### ***Chicken***

- 1-1.5 lbs. boneless chicken breast
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ¾ tsp. ground cumin
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup mild or medium chunky salsa

##### ***To Assemble Tacos***

- 1 cup shredded purple cabbage
- Juice of ½ lime



- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- 12 corn tortillas
- 1 medium avocado, sliced

### **Directions:**

- Season the chicken with garlic powder, cumin, and salt and place in a crockpot.
- Top the chicken with the salsa, cover, and cook on low for 4-6 hours or until the chicken is easily shredded.
- Once cooked, drain excess liquid while keeping as much of the salsa as possible. Shred with two forks. Keep warm until ready to serve.
- Make the slaw by combining the cabbage, lime, salt, and cilantro in a medium bowl.
- To heat tortillas, you have two options:  
 Microwave: Place 3-4 tortillas on a microwave-safe plate, cover, and heat for 30 seconds. Check and reheat until warm, then remove, place on a plate, and put a towel over them to keep warm. Be careful not to overheat the tortillas, as they can get stiff.  
  
 Oven: Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Stack and wrap 4 tortillas at a time in foil and bake for 15-20 minutes or until heated through.
- To make the tacos, add 3 tortillas to a plate, add the chicken, slaw, and avocado. Serve with lime wedges.

### **Tips:**

- Add red pepper to the chicken as desired for more heat
- Substitute green cabbage for red cabbage as desired
- Parsley can be substituted for cilantro
- Other toppings can include cheese, sour cream, or extra salsa
- Add corn, black beans, or yellow rice for a side
- Prep the chicken and slaw ahead of time for an easy meal prep option

Visit [hope-health.org/community/events](https://hope-health.org/community/events) to learn about and sign up for free community classes offered by HopeHealth! Topics range from healthy cooking to diabetes management, prioritizing movement, carbohydrate counting, and more.

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