



THE GRADY REPORT

Aetna Employee Newsletter

May 2017

Spring

Issue 1





Kim Aroh, President

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy Spring to you All!

Glad to say it seems like spring has finally arrived! Changes are occurring over at Aetna, the new stretchers are in the trucks and Aetna's outside is getting a nice facelift; (well needed, thank you Matt and Matt). Fortunately, this past winter was mild compared to previous years, however, there were still some killer storms. I want to offer a sincere thank you for your hard work, patience, and teamwork in getting through the difficult transports we had this past winter. This month we look forward to celebrating EMS week (May 22-26nd) with great gifts, raffles and pizza at the end of the week. We encourage you to take advantage of all the events being offered at St. Fran and Hartford Hospital. The EMS Expo is also being held at the Foxwoods Casino the first week of June, checkout the classes and events on the website.

The last few months have been very busy and I think everyone realizes we are making some good changes. The investment in 9th Brain has proved to be extremely beneficial. It is an excellent database that houses all credentials, CME credits, incident reports, and it simplifies the communication within the entire company. It offers hundreds of courses and allows us to upload customized courses, like the proper lifting video that was put out last month. I understand learning new technology is never easy, my kids tease me when I ask them for help with the phone or computer. But let's face it, technology is not going away! The good thing is we have plenty of people to help you; please seek it out if you need help navigating through it. I encourage everyone to make it a habit to sign on to at least twice a week. It will then become a habit not a chore.

Wayne's vision in designing the new training room a couple years ago was to have everyone go through an annual course on proper lifting. I want to thank all the supervisors and managers that worked very hard to get it accomplished. I hope you all find the online course useful and I look forward to catching up with you when you come into do the actual test in the training room these next two months.

I realize with all the gloom and doom bombarding us on the news, radio, tweets and buzz feeds, it's hard to stay positive. However, I want to confidently say I see the exact opposite when I talk with you all. I see it in your faces, the stories I hear and the glowing patient satisfaction surveys I read. Our two companies are some of the most respected in the state. I have grown more impressed each week. Thank you again for all your hard work and delivery of excellent patient care.

Stay healthy and have a good day,

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Bethany Sullivan



SAFETY MATTERS

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) 21,300 Emergency Medical Service workers (EMS) were treated in a US hospital for work-related injuries in 2014.ⁱ The majority of the injuries resulted directly from an adverse physical response of the provider.ⁱⁱ As stated by NIOSH “about half of the overexertion and bodily reaction events were specifically identified as overexertion during lifting.”

In March, 2017, Aetna purchased 22 Stryker Power-Pro XT Model 6506 powered ambulance cots to replace the manual stretchers currently in service. The implementation of these stretchers will greatly reduce physically demanding tasks for crew members. Loading and unloading patients to and from the ambulance and raising/lowering the stretcher will now be accomplished at the touch of a button. This will eliminate the necessity for road personnel to manually lift and lower patients prior to, and following transports. Moreover, it allows EMTs and paramedics to make quick cot height adjustments to ensure patient safety while walking with the stretcher.

Some Key Features Include:

- Lightweight, rugged aluminum construction
- Battery-powered hydraulic system
- Manual back-up release handle
- Floor-mounted safety hook
- One-hand release, infinite positioning, pneumatically assisted backrest
- Automatic high-speed retract
- Two lap belts and one four-point shoulder restraint
- Reduces load time for EMS personnel down to 2.4 seconds

Performance-Load manual fasteners were also placed in each new ambulance to accommodate the new cots. Along with securing the stretcher during transport,

these devices offer guided loading and unloading to increase both efficiency and safety.

In addition to the numerous advances that come stock with these units, Aetna has added Stryker “Steer-Lock” mechanisms as an after-market upgrade that will in-

crease ease of use and maneuverability. When engaged, “Steer-Lock” reduces the likelihood of cot drift both inside and outside of the ambulance and provides better steering precision. According to Sr. Design Engineer Jacob Kloss “the system reduces the effort needed to maneuver the cot, and maximizes steering control, which allows for a more efficient patient transport.”ⁱⁱⁱ

This is an innovative system that assists with navigating the stretcher on difficult terrain preventing crew members from making quick, unsafe, adjustments due to road incline, environmental conditions, or other obstacles they may encounter.



ⁱ "EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WORKERS." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 06 Sept. 2016. Web. 16 Mar. 2017.

ⁱⁱ *ibid*

ⁱⁱⁱ StrykerEMS1. "Stryker Steer-Lock." YouTube. YouTube, 29 Aug. 2012. Web. 5 Mar. 2017.

Making the decision to lead a healthy lifestyle requires both commitment and discipline. Balancing shift work with exercise, family obligations, and social events is inarguably a challenge, however, not impossible. In this section you'll find a sample workout routine, and an interview with a health-conscious Aetna employee, Kat Steward.

Circuit Central Station

GOOD NEWS! Becoming physically fit does not require you to run a marathon, spend 2 hours on a yoga mat, or curl 135 pounds while taking a selfie. In fact, recent studies demonstrate a steady decline in dating success rates for males who participate in "selfie-taking" at the gym (or anywhere else). **Circuit Training** involves high-intensity calisthenics or aerobics, and can often be completed using just your body weight. Quicker workouts with limited breaks, work to increase both cardiovascular health and weight loss. In addition, these training regimens help to maintain, and even build lean muscle. Shift work can make it difficult to fit a trip to the gym, or extended walk/run, into the day. Incorporating circuit training routines into a weekly schedule presents a solution to the problem.

Below is a sample workout direct from **Nerdfitness.com**. It can be completed almost anywhere, and in a short period of time!

When is the best time to work out?

When you'll actually commit to it!

Beginner Body Weight Workout

This is a basic body weight circuit. In a circuit routine, you'll do each exercise in succession without a break in between (if you're able). Once you've finished all exercises in the circuit, you do it again. If you're still able after the 2nd run through, go for a third. Because all of these exercises come one after another, you're bound to get tired. It's better to stop and take a break than to do an exercise incorrectly. If you can't do all three circuits without stopping, that gives you something to build towards.

Before you start, WARM UP – Never ever ever ever forget to warm up. Make sure to get your heart rate pumping and get your muscles warm or you're just asking for injury. If you're strapped for time, cut short your workout, not your warm up. You can run in place, jump rope, do a few push ups, pedal on a stationary bike, jog up and down your stairs, etc. Don't wear yourself out completely, but get your heart rate elevated and a little bit of sweat never hurt anybody.

Workout

- ♦ 20 body weight squats
- ♦ 10 push ups
- ♦ 20 walking lunges
- ♦ 10 dumbbell rows
- ♦ 15 second plank
- ♦ 30 Jumping Jacks



After you've completed your workout, make sure you stretch. All of your muscles have been contracted from lifting and need to be stretched back out and rebuilt.

For either the body weight squats or lunges, if you can't do them properly yet, it's okay to put your hand on a support to keep your balance.

For the body weight squats, think of it like sitting back into a chair. If you can sit down onto a chair, and then stand immediately right back up *without* having to lean forward, you are in balance.

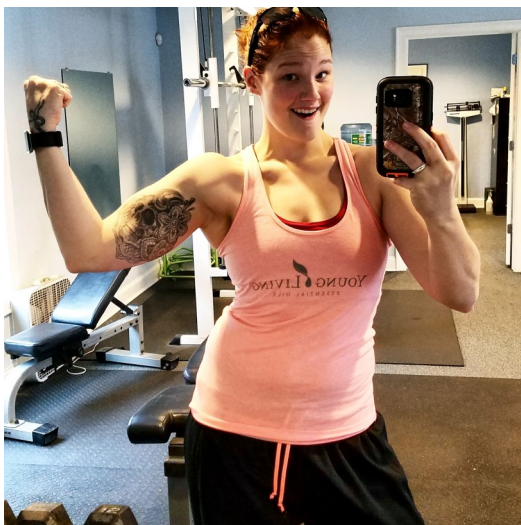
For the lunges, keep your eyes ahead and your upper body completely vertical. I had a slight bend at times in the video due to trying to exercise and explain at the same time.

I used a milk jug for my dumbbell, but you can use whatever is heavy enough for you. Find something that is challenging to lift 10 times in a row.

Medical Disclaimer: You should consult with a healthcare professional before starting any diet, exercise, supplementation or medication program.

MAKING IT COUNT!

Q&A Session with Kat Stewart



Q Do you find it difficult to be health conscious and fit in weekly workouts with all your other work obligations and home life?

A "I think we all have struggles in life that increase the temptations of laziness and eating junk food. I still struggle to make healthy choices on a daily basis. I have to keep reminding myself of goals and how much potential I have."

Q What are some of the most important aspects of your exercise routine?

A "Switching it UP! When it comes to fitness and being active, I'm all over the board. I go to the gym daily, but my gym workout routines change every two months. This keeps the body guessing and helps decrease the chance of hitting a plateau. I also enjoy rock climbing, yoga, hiking, and fly fishing. Staying active is the key."

Q Shift work makes eating right even more challenging. What do you do to combat this?

A "This is a definite challenge, especially in our line of work. It makes having a timed eating schedule very hard. I think the most important thing is to bring your own food to work. It is so easy to just go buy fast food while at work. By bringing your own food, not only do you know what is going into your body (no hidden calories, or weird chemicals), but you can control the quantity as well."

Q Water, Soda, and coffee... What are your thoughts?

A "Lots and lots and lots of water. I don't drink soda, and if I do, it's very rare. I actually hate the flavor of coffee. Caffeine is a different beast. I have an on-again, off-again relationship with caffeine. I try not to consume caffeine but some days the need is inevitable."

Q How often do you exercise?

A "I'm physically in the gym five days a week, but I'm active every day. By changing it up, I never get bored."

Q Can you provide us with a sample daily meal plan for a 12-hour shift?

A "I've always had a hard time eating breakfast, and it's even harder now waking up at 330am for work, but I always try to eat something. Because I work an early shift, around 9am, I have a serving of protein. This is normally a protein shake or chicken. Then around 1230pm, I'll have my lunch, which consists of a protein, a veggie and a carb. Then around 3pm or 4pm, I'll do another serving of protein and a veggie. After work, I go to the gym. Once I get home, I'll have dinner. I find it difficult to not just grab a bag of chips from the gas station when I want a snack. Don't get me wrong, I'm no robot, I have my bad days (sometimes bad weeks) of choosing the wrong foods. But I always make an effort to fix my habits as soon as possible."





Connecticut EMS EXPO

Where

Mohegan Sun Convention Hall

Dates

May 31, 2017 - June 3, 2017

Lodging

Mohegan Sun Resort (Rate: \$199.⁹⁹ per night)

Golf Tournament

June 1, 2017 8:00am-5:00pm

Keynote Speaker

Steven Berry, BA, NREMT-P

Welcome to the Dark Side: Finding Humor in the Crazy World of EMS

Pre-Conference

- ◇ Homemade Explosives: Awareness, Recognition, and Response (HME)
- ◇ The EMS Command School
- ◇ Rapid STEMI Recognition: From the Bunny Slope to Black Diamond
- ◇ IRTB - Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings
- ◇ Special Events Management & Planning
- ◇ Slap the Cap! Teal Use for Capnography
- ◇ Grant Writing 101: Write Grants to fund Programs

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AHA Training Site

In January 2017, ASM was officially recognized as an American Heart Association Training Site. In order to obtain this acknowledgment, ASM needed to demonstrate its ability to fulfill strict requirements set by the AHA. Melissa Osborne will act as the Site Coordinator. Working in conjunction with New Haven Sponsor Hospital, Melissa will oversee training operations and ensure training site compliance. Employees now have the opportunity to attend several AHA courses at 10-1 throughout the year free of charge. In addition, certification cards for CPR, ACLS, and PALS can now be produced and distributed in-house.



American Heart Classes

- PALS Refresher - June 20, 2017

1:00pm-9:00pm

All classes held at ASM Training Site

No fee for ASM/Aetna employees

Individuals that are not associated with ASM/Aetna are welcome. Contact Melissa Osborn for fee information.

Aetna Attacks Opiate Epidemic

Operations Supervisor, TJ Wain, represented Aetna Ambulance on two separate occasions earlier this month in an effort to provide the public with an understanding of the opiate crisis from a first responder's perspective. In preparation for the April 6th event, *Addressing Opioid Abuse: Local Stakeholder Forum*, hosted by Central Connecticut Health District, TJ worked with IT Manager, Adis Kuljancic, to develop a "Heat Map" tracking frequent "Overdose" dispatch locations within Aetna's service area. Additionally, through the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, TJ offered forum participants specific data depicting the growing number of Narcan administrations in Hartford, Wethersfield, and Rocky Hill over the course of the last three years. TJ's presentation, and discussion during the forum "breakout sessions" served as an eye opener to other public service and health care agencies. As a result, TJ was invited to sit on a community forum panel at Wethersfield High School on April 10th hosted by State Representatives Russell Morin and Tony Guerrero. This prestigious invitation demonstrates the true value pre-hospital providers continuously deliver to the greater healthcare continuum.



Below is a brief interview with TJ depicting a few key take aways from his involvement thus far:

Other than what is mentioned above, what additional research and data did you provide during your initial presentation?

"During the initial presentation, I pointed out the patterns and consistency of our responses in the "Heat Map." It portrayed a pattern of response locations, and I was able to provide an explanation detailing how they related to each other. Further data and research was obtained through the Generally Assembly and legislation pertaining to *An Act Concerning Opioids and Substance Use Disorders*. Documentation from the *Opioid Overdose Prevention Initiative*, from the OEMS website, as well as discussions with physicians at Hartford Hospital were also included in the presentation. There was also a very interesting documentary on Netflix called, *Dr. Feelgood*, that provided an interesting perspective, that I touched on briefly."

Were the other services present (hospitals, mental health agencies, etc.) surprised by the information and detail you provided?

"The other services represented the Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery facets of the epidemic. I believe the capabilities and methods of assessment impressed the attendees. To some extent, their understanding was that Narcan was the solution to the problem for us as responders. I was able to elaborate on the potential for poly-substance abuse, and the possibility of a completely separate medical emergency that may mimic an opiate overdose. I explained the methodical approach of our evaluations, and the difference between an intuitive vs. analytical assessment."

What were some of the major concerns and or contributing factors to the current opiate situation according to other agencies and community members?

The main issue seems to be the lack of prevention, but the perception of the epidemic by the public is also a problem. Opiate abuse often carries a stigma. Something a lot of people don't want to talk about or admit to having in their family. There's a lot of misunderstanding and poor resources for these patients. Furthermore, the wide age range affected, and how quickly patients become addicted, is also a concern.

What advice can you provide to crew members who routinely respond to overdoses?

Stay objective and methodical with your assessment and interventions. Always remember to utilize the BVM and adjuncts prior to Narcan administration. Narcan can be appropriately titrated to increase respiratory drive. Don't feel obligated to use full doses to wake the pa-

Work & Life Employee Assistance Program

Hello Everyone,

Several weeks ago I sent out information on the Lifebalance.net website. That is the Employee Assistance Program website. Even if you do not think you need to "talk" to someone, there is a lot of great information on the site, however, I will admit there is so much it can be a little overwhelming.

These short articles have suggestions that can assist employees in all departments.

Here are a few highlights from the article,

"Getting Through Hectic Times at Work"

When you feel stretched to your limit, it's vital to take care of yourself.

Try to stick to a healthy diet.

- Avoid too much caffeine
- Limit alcohol consumption
- Build in time for exercise

Reevaluate your other commitments.

- Focus on the activities that mean the most to you
- Cut back on less rewarding activities.
- Try to limit demands on your time.

It can be hard to say no, but it's also liberating when you save precious time for other activities.

Set priorities.

The more pressured you feel, the more important it is to stay on top of your workload. Have set times during the day when you check and respond to email, texts, and phone messages so you aren't continually taking your

focus off important projects.

Make a to-do list of what you want to accomplish the next day at the end of each day.

That way you won't be distracted by nonessential tasks. Try to keep the list short. Sometimes having just three or four items increases the chance you'll actually accomplish them and feel good about your progress. Consider downloading a good to-do list app, such as Evernote or Todoist, if you'd like to keep your list on a phone or computer. There are many to-do list apps; some are free and some have paid versions with more features. Pen and paper can work, too.

Stay positive with co-workers.

Teams that take their work seriously while also finding ways to have fun together keep their morale up. And they are often the most productive in challenging times. Whether you expect the crunch to be short term or long term, the more your team can support and appreciate each other's efforts, the more positive the work environment will be.

And a few ideas from,



"Quick Tips for Getting Along with Co-workers"

Use basic good manners.

Say "please" and "thank you," whether you're communicating face-to-face, on the phone, or in email or text messages.

A simple smile can go a long way. These are the easiest to do but sometimes quickest to forget.

Be careful not to send emails when you are upset.

Take a pause and let some time pass. If you do write an email when angry, leave the email address blank. This will prevent you from accidentally sending emails you may regret.

Offer to help.

Check in with co-workers and offer your help when you have some extra time or when someone is having a bad day or seems overloaded or stressed.

Be generous with praise.

Everyone likes to be appreciated and noticed for good work as long as you're sincere.

To read the full text of either of these articles, check out the **Lifebalance.net** website. The user name and password is lifebalance.

If you are looking for specific information and are not sure where to find it, please feel free to give contact me via e-mail or phone. I may be able to direct you to the location on the website.

Kathy Roche



Work & Life Employee Assistance Program

1-800-854-1446

Toll-Free, 24 Hour access

www.lifebalance.net

User ID/Pass: lifebalance

With each publication, our newsletter will honor an employee who has demonstrated a commitment to patients and co-workers alike via a positive attitude, work ethic, and overall inspiring demeanor. This issue's selection is EMT Bethany Sullivan.



Beth graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Connecticut in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science, Pathobiology and Veterinary Science, and a Minor in Molecular and Cell Biology. Despite her demanding academic schedule, Beth was heavily involved with UConn's Pre-Vet Club, Equestrian team, and competed on the intramural volleyball and soccer teams.

In addition to her academic responsibilities, Beth managed to find time to volunteer with Bolton Fire Department, serve as a student researcher for UConn's Animal Science Department, act as an Animal Science Ambassador, and assist fellow students as an undergraduate teaching assistant.

Beth was hired at Aetna a few months after graduation with the long-term goal of attending medical school and becoming a cardio-thoracic surgeon. She was accepted at the University of Connecticut's School of Medicine, and will

commence the program this coming August.

Beth portrays her appreciation for the experiences Aetna has provided with the following words:

"I am grateful for my time at Aetna because of the variety of experiences I've had and the diversity of people I have met. I have grown as a person as well as a medical provider due to my many hours spent working in the field with my co-workers and our patients. Aetna Ambulance is dedicated to the highest level of patient care and I will always be appreciative for having been able to be part of and to learn from Aetna's exceptional pre-hospital care professionals."

A few of Beth's main interests:

- ◆ Indoor Soccer
- ◆ Equestrian
- ◆ Hiking, Kayaking
- ◆ Travel (anywhere)

