

Arthritis education materials available

The Eau Claire County Department on Aging & Resource Center has been developing a patient education project we would like to share with physicians around the state. The program is designed to provide education to the largest segment (58.8%) of the approximately 42.7 million Americans affected by arthritis and has been well accepted in the senior apartment complexes in Eau Claire County. The program consists of:

- a PowerPoint presentation
- an adaptive equipment demonstration
- a fall prevention component
- a nutrition component

The patient education project is also suitable for caregiving professionals to take into senior centers, meal sites, churches, community organizations, or patient homes for presentation and discussion.

An evaluation survey was designed to provide feedback on the program's impact. Of the 99 individuals who completed and returned the survey, 72% felt it was an excellent program.

The PowerPoint presentation outlines the roles adaptive equipment and nutrition play to slow the progression of arthritis and prevent falls. An educational brochure, which highlights practical ways seniors can achieve their nutritional goals and provides facts about the benefits of adaptive equipment and safety tips to prevent falls in the home, accompanies the presentation.

The adaptive equipment component explains the importance of adaptive equipment, the variety of devices available, strategies on how to use the equipment and resources on where and how to locate what is needed. Several different devices are available for individuals to view and try out for themselves.

Handouts on adapting the home

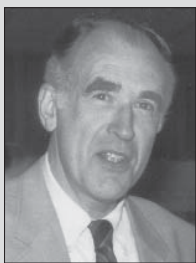
environment to reduce falls are also available, as well as a home safety checklist.

In the presentation, the food guide pyramid is discussed, emphasizing a well-balanced diet, sources of vitamins C and D and omega-3 fatty acids. Weight loss is encouraged to help reduce stress on the joints.

The presentation and handouts have been shared with Aging Offices throughout Wisconsin and can be made available to health professionals caring for patients with arthritis who may wish to review them and possibly use them in local communities. The materials are available via e-mail at no charge. They can also be found at www.co.eau-claire.wi.us/agingdepartment. For more information, please contact Lisa Wells at 715.839.4750 or lisa.wells@co.eau-claire.wi.us.

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In Remembrance: John Charles LaBissoniere, 1921-2006



John C. LaBissoniere

John LaBissoniere devoted more than five decades of his life to the Wisconsin Medical Society, where he employed his talents in a great variety of ways. His primary responsibilities over the years focused on mediation services, physician peer review and promoting physician health.

"John LaBissoniere was the heart and soul of the physician health movement in the state of Wisconsin," said David Benzer, DO, medical director of the statewide Physician Health Program. "I heard many people refer to John as Dr. LaBissoniere. This was an honest mistake because it was hard to believe that anyone who cared so much about the well-being of physicians was not a physician himself," said Dr. Benzer.

LaBissoniere grew up near Milwaukee, attending

Marquette University and the University of Notre Dame, until serving in the Navy during World War II. After graduating in 1947, he worked in product promotion and pharmaceutical sales before joining the Wisconsin Medical Society. He also served as Executive Assistant to the Dane County Medical Society.

"John was a man of character," said Michael Miller, MD, an addiction medicine specialist who worked closely with him over the years. "His 'job' for over 50 years with the Society was a calling, which he approached as a mission."

Earl Thayer, a Society executive from 1947-1987, says LaBissoniere likely had a positive effect on more physicians than any other staff member. "John had infinite patience to listen to the physician's problems, separate the truth from the chaff, and then, with love and compassion, encourage and support their need."

John passed away at age 84 on July 14, 2006. His wife, Mary Lou, four sons and three grandchildren, survive him.