



HCQU Northwest

Happy Retirement



So hard to believe it's just a couple months shy of 15 years.

I have sure enjoyed the journey and now it's time to step away.

Being Office Manager and Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Youth & Adult Instructor for years has been a high-

light. I leave you with this thought, if you have not been trained in MHFA get trained. You could be the one to make a difference!

Working with and meeting so many individuals over the years has been a blessing at our annual events. What great memories that I will forever cherish. Who would have thought that a part time job would end up fulltime and this many years down the road? Not me!! Well that comes to say, when you enjoy what you do it shines through. Thanks for the memories.

This girl is hooked on cruising, I have two booked and so many more to come! I look forward to spending more time with my family and friends. It's all about making memories and enjoying the journey!



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New at the HCQU

Alyssa Raimondo-Swanson Pediatric Coach



I joined Milestone in January 2025 as one of the new Pediatric Coaches at Milestone HCQU North West, part of the new Pediatric Resource Center program. I work with families in our area who have children with complex medical needs, and assist them in coordinating care, support, and training so that they can best support their children at home.

I am from Jamestown, NY. I have my M.S. Ed. in Social Studies Education from SUNY University at Buffalo (UB). My former career was as a Social Studies Teacher in NY for six years, teaching many students with disabilities in my role, before I moved on to different professional opportunities. For about two years I was the Administrator at YMCA Camp Onyahsa in Dewittville, NY, a summer overnight and day camp that is part of the Jamestown Area YMCA, which runs several special programs for campers with disabilities in addition to their traditional programs .

I enjoy traveling, reading, art, the outdoors, and spending time with my family and cats and dog. My older brother, Aaron, had complex medical needs and multiple disabilities, and I am happy to have joined such a wonderful organization to help families who have children with similar needs.

Lisa Eckman RN—HCQU Nurse

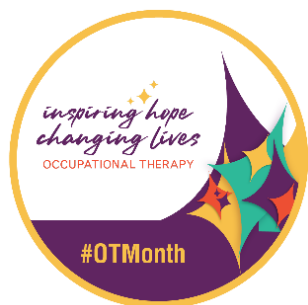
I joined Milestone HCQU Northwest in March 2025 as a HCQU nurse. I studied at Jamestown Community College (JCC) in New York. I have over twenty years experience as an RN. Most of those years I worked in the surgical field but I have a deep understanding for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). My son had a closed TBI requiring many different medical needs.



I am excited to join the HCQU to work with and get to know the individuals and communities that we serve.

I am originally from the Sugar Grove area. I am married with two grown children. I enjoy traveling, hunting, fishing and spending time with my dog Ellie Mae, who is a little chilizon.

April is National Occupational Therapy Month



National Occupational Therapy Month has been celebrated each April since 1980. The American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) has set this year's theme as "Inspiring hope, changing lives."

Occupational Therapy can benefit people of all ages who are experiencing difficulties due to physical, social, emotional, or developmental problems. This includes:

- work / sports injuries
- serious illnesses (such as Multiple Sclerosis)
- stroke victims
- accident victims
- people with developmental disabilities
- people with sensory problems

An Occupational Therapist can be a significant addition to a person's health care team. They can provide some practical insights and suggestions to better support someone struggling with issues related to how they may experience the world and how their bodies may work differently. They use activities of everyday life (occupations) to improve a person's ability to participate in activities that are important to them, as well as promoting overall health and well-being.

Some of the services that Occupational Therapists and Occupational Therapy Assistants perform include:

- evaluations of the person's environment and needs/wants, leading to customized interventions to address identified concerns
 - suggestions for adaptive equipment and training on how to use it
 - strategies for safety (ex. fall prevention, home safety)
 - strategies to aid in memory, concentration, planning, prioritization, etc.
- training for family / support personnel to assist them in caring for the individual.

An Occupational Therapy evaluation can be accessed via a prescription from an individual's physician. You can then contact an OT clinic (check your yellow pages or local hospital) to set up an appointment. It is recommended that you ask about the therapist's experience, as there are different areas of specialization within Occupational Therapy. You may also need to check with the individual's insurance, as some companies do not cover OT services.

Check out <https://www.aota.org/> for more info.

Welcome to Spring at the HCQU!

The birds are out, the flowers are blooming and the snow is gone! We have been getting a lot of calls and emails regarding two specific topics in the LMS. Be sure to read below and take note of the ways to fix these issues.



LOCKED OUT: You can click on *Forgot Password* when logging in, or call/email me.

TEST RESET: You can send me a message through the LMS, call or email as well.

I'd also love to hear from you, so be sure to email me with any training requests for in person or virtually.

kfitzsimmons@milestonepa.org or 814-728-9400.

WEBINAR
Schedule

APRIL 3	Unusual Seizures
MAY 1	Anxiety
JUNE 5	Visual Strategies (2Hours)

11:00AM

SEE NEXT PAGE
FOR
**HCQU
EVENT
DETAILS**

NEW LOCATION
NEW STAFF
NEW SURPRISES



BEACH DAY

WITH THE HCQU

Dancing with Molly Dies Dance Express

Petting Zoo

Crafts

Games

Lunch will be provided
and so much more!!!!

FRIDAY JUNE 20TH

10AM-2PM

HOLY REDEEMER
211 RUSSELL ST WARREN PA

Please register by email
kfitzsimmons@MilestonePA.org
or phone 814-728-9400

**Wear your
favorite
Beach Shirt
or outfit!**

**Registration Form
Beach Day with the HCQU
June 20th, 2025**

Agency Name _____
Address _____
Phone # _____

RSVP by June 13th, 2025

Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual
Name _____	Staff	Individual

Lunch will be provided. If you are on a special diet, please
provide your own lunch.

Please be prepared for ANY weather conditions.

Registration forms may be copied.

Please send Registration forms to:

Kfitzsimmons@MilestonePA.Org

Milestone HCQU Northwest

247 Hospital Drive

Warren, PA 16365

Hiking

Now that good weather is upon us, most of us want to get outside and enjoy the air. There are so many activities that allow us to do this. One thing you may want to consider is hiking. Hiking can be a way to not only get exercise but take in the beautiful sights around us, especially living in or around the Allegheny National Forest. Hiking can be done by anyone, at any level, but there are some things we need to know when hiking. Before hiking, be sure to know where the best place to hike is according to your skill level. Know that each trail has a degree of difficulty. Don't start out above your skill level. You may not realize the elevation of the trail, distance or potential hazards. Bad weather can make a hiking trip dangerous. Make sure you check out the local forecast and prepare for the conditions. Your phone may not work in the forest so making sure you pack (and know how to use) a map, a compass, and a GPS. Nobody wants to get lost but sometimes it could happen. Make sure you let someone else know where you are hiking and take supplies like water and snacks. One additional thing to consider taking with you is a first aid kit. While hiking, it is important to stay hydrated, especially if it is hot. You do not want to overheat during a hike so while you drink, take breaks and stay cool. Make sure you are mindful of your surroundings paying attention to signs, potential hazards, and any wildlife. Don't feed the wildlife. If the animals become dependent on human food, it could put them at a disadvantage for survival and they may become dangerous to other hikers. Please take caution when out hiking and upon your return check for ticks.



If you are in Allegheny National Forest (Forest, Elk, McKean or Warren counties) or nearby consider checking out some of the trails it has to offer. Not only will the hike provide exercise, it will help to clear your mind and can improve your mental health. If interested check out some of these great trails with great views.

Rim Rock	Jake's Rocks
Minister Creek Scenic Overlook	Hearts Content Recreation Site
Bent Run Waterfalls	Wildcat Park
Hectors Falls	Hickory Creek Wilderness Trail
North Country Trail Heat Cherry Run	Brokenstraw Creek bike hike trail
Rocky Gap Trailhead	Tionesta Scenic Area

Knox & Kane Rail Trailhead (Kinzua Bridge)

No matter what your skill level, if you like to hike and get the opportunity, check out these trails. If you live too far away, just google your local trails and research what you need to know in order to prepare yourself for your hike.

Chronic Pain? Maybe It's a Trigger Point!

Have you ever had pain in a certain part of the body that doesn't go away, or goes away briefly, only to return? Did you have imaging studies and other diagnostic tests (such as blood draws) that failed to identify where that pain was coming from? Did your doctor give up, or refer you to someone else (who couldn't figure out what the source of the pain was, either), or, worse yet, tell you that you should see a psychiatrist because it's all in your head? Hang on for a minute. There may be more to it!

Microscopic injuries in muscles called *myofascial trigger points* don't show up on X-rays, CT scans, or MRIs, as do many other sources of pain (broken bones, disc herniations, torn ligaments, etc.). They can be a result of sudden overload (for example, attempting to lift something too heavy) or overuse (performing the same repetitive motion day after day, as in working on an assembly line). Trigger points sometimes cause pain in the area near them, but more often than not, refer pain to a place far away from them, which makes identifying them tricky.

One such example would be a trigger point in the soleus muscle (part of the calf in the back of the lower leg), which can refer pain into the heel, the sacroiliac joint, or even the jaw! No wonder so many healthcare professionals would not be able to identify the source of the person's pain. Who would ever consider the calf muscle as a source of back pain?

The good news is that there is hope for people suffering from painful trigger points. A Myofascial Trigger Point Therapist is trained to know where trigger points in the body refer pain, to know how to palpate muscles for those trigger points and identify any limitations in the muscle's range of motion, and, best of all, apply hands-on pressure and/or use stretching techniques to release the trigger point. Following treatment, home stretching exercises will be given to the patient in order to re-educate the muscle(s) and prevent recurrence of the injury. Rarely is only one muscle ever involved in a myofascial pain syndrome, as muscles rarely work in isolation. Often, several muscles will need to have trigger points released to provide complete relief.

If you have been searching for pain relief and tried everything you can think of without success, you might want to give Trigger Point Myofascial Therapy a try. For more information, or to locate a practitioner of myofascial trigger point therapy, do a web search, visit <https://www.myofascialtherapy.org/>, or contact Tim at the HCQU, tjuliano@milestonepa.org.

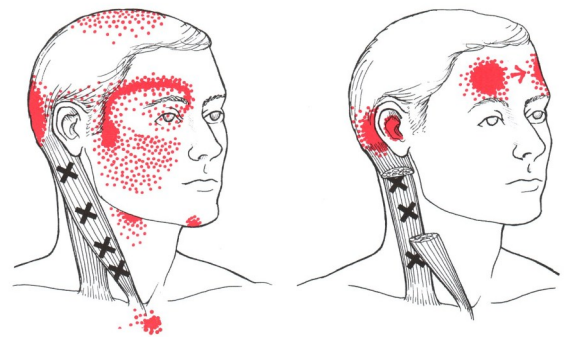


Illustration source: Travell, Janet, MD, and David Simons, MD, *Myofascial Pain and Dysfunction, The Trigger Point Manual*, Volume 1, Williams and Wilkins, copyright 1992.

Timothy A. Juliano, RN

Letter from the Director

Spring has arrived and the snow has left us (mostly), so I am wanting to be outside more than ever. Many of you have probably already read about Move Your Way so think about ways to move more - both at work and when at home. Physical activity provides many health benefits including lowering the risk of many ailments like heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Other benefits include improved sleep, reduced symptoms of depression, and reduced stress. Among the many trainings that we provide are Get Up and Move, Hydration and Dehydration, Sun and Skin, and Lyme Disease which are all about ways to stay safe while being active. If you or the individuals that you support would like these or other trainings just email Krista at kfitzsimmons@milestonepa.org to submit a request. We can do trainings virtually, in-person, or you can take classes online via our LMS at <https://northwesthcqu.learnupon.com/>, so keep your request coming to us.

Look for a governor's proclamation about Move Your Way in April, and the National Physical Fitness and Sports month is May. As always, I encourage you to get outside whenever possible to enjoy the fresh air, but if not outside, try to find something indoors to keep you moving and to be healthier. If there is a way that the HCQU can help you now or anytime during the year feel free to call us to schedule a training or request other assistance. Stay safe, drink water, eat fruit and vegetables (especially when they are fresh from a local farm or your own garden), and keep on moving.

Darryl



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