



**For Immediate Release**  
**Contact: Lisa French**  
**UMRC & Porter Hills**  
**Phone: 734-433-1000 ext. 7426**

## **Huron Valley PACE Demonstrates Innovation in Face of COVID-19 Challenges**

### ***Serving Vulnerable Older Adults Via Home Visits, Telehealth, and Respite Care***

**Ypsilanti, MI, June 4, 2020** – Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Huron Valley PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly), a service of United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC), has created a variety of innovative ways to care for the nearly 200 low-income, nursing home-eligible older adults it serves.

One of fourteen PACE programs in the State of Michigan, Huron Valley PACE is the only Day Health Center that has remained open for participants. This has been especially important for participants living with dementia and their families, according to Huron Valley PACE Executive Director, Sonja Love Felton. “Dementia doesn’t take a break during COVID,” said Felton. “It’s very hard for families, even in the best of times, to care for their loved ones with dementia who may roam or become agitated. Huron Valley PACE has remained open to provide care and respite for our participants as well as families. Many simply don’t have any other options for care for their loved ones.”

To provide further support for families, Huron Valley PACE has worked to offer overnight respite stays for 11 PACE participants so far. Tamara Kopins, a family member of a PACE participant, said, “The Respite weekend my dad attended at Huron Valley PACE meant so much to us. He needed desperately to get out of the house and get some activity as well as social interaction, and it gave me a break I desperately needed. He loved his weekend! Thank you so much!”

The Huron Valley PACE team has also greatly increased its efforts to provide care and services in participants’ homes. Since March 16, Huron Valley PACE team members have logged 845 home wellness visits, providing 5,340 hours of home care. “We are bringing services to our participants that would have normally been provided at the Day Health Center,” said Lindsay

Mann-Shanahan, Marketing Director for Huron Valley PACE. “These include a variety of Activities of Daily Living from bathing and dressing, to help with household chores.”

The team has also delivered 3,161 meals and nutritional supplements to approximately 170 of its participants, with farm fresh meals prepared by Zilke Farms and frozen for delivery. “Our participants are so appreciative of our visits and meal deliveries,” said Mann-Shanahan. “We are doing all we can to ensure the health and safety of the wonderful older adults we serve.” Over 5,300 medications have also been delivered to participants.

In addition to in-home visits, Huron Valley PACE has also ramped up its telehealth capabilities, thanks to grants from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and United Way of Washtenaw County. “Utilizing iPads and video conferencing technology, PACE participants, family members, and caregivers have the ability to connect virtually with PACE clinical team members, allowing participants to receive care, while reducing the exposure for both team members and participants to COVID-19,” explained Felton. “PACE social workers will also host virtual caregiver support groups to reduce feelings of isolation, stress, and burnout.”

Over the past ten weeks, Huron Valley PACE team members nearly 200 behavioral health encounters; over 1,000 occupational, physical, and speech therapy encounters; and 3,047 encounters with RNs and primary care physicians. Some Huron Valley PACE team members were also redeployed during this time to serve at UMRC’s Kresge Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center on its Chelsea campus to assist with skilled nursing residents there.

Donations from local businesses and organizations have helped the Huron Valley PACE clinical and in-home teams maintain their safety and that of their participants, including face shields, masks, gowns, gloves, shoe coverings, and hand sanitizer. (These donors will be listed in Huron Valley PACE’s upcoming Spring/Summer Newsletter). In addition, approximately 150 of Huron Valley PACE’s 200 participants have received COVID-19 testing, thanks to test kits provided from MLabs. “We are grateful for these donors who have made our work possible and eased our ability to safely serve and care for our participants.”

PACE serves the social, medical, and supportive needs of low-income, older adults, ages 55 and up, who live within the PACE service area. Huron Valley PACE serves Washtenaw and Monroe counties, as well as parts of Oakland, Wayne and Livingston counties. PACE participants must be certified as meeting the State of Michigan criteria for nursing facility level of care, but be able to live safely in their homes and communities, thanks to PACE support. PACE offers a cost-effective alternative to nursing home care, providing overall savings of 40% to the State.

To learn more, visit: Huron Valley PACE at <https://www.huronvalleypace.org> or call 734-572-5777.

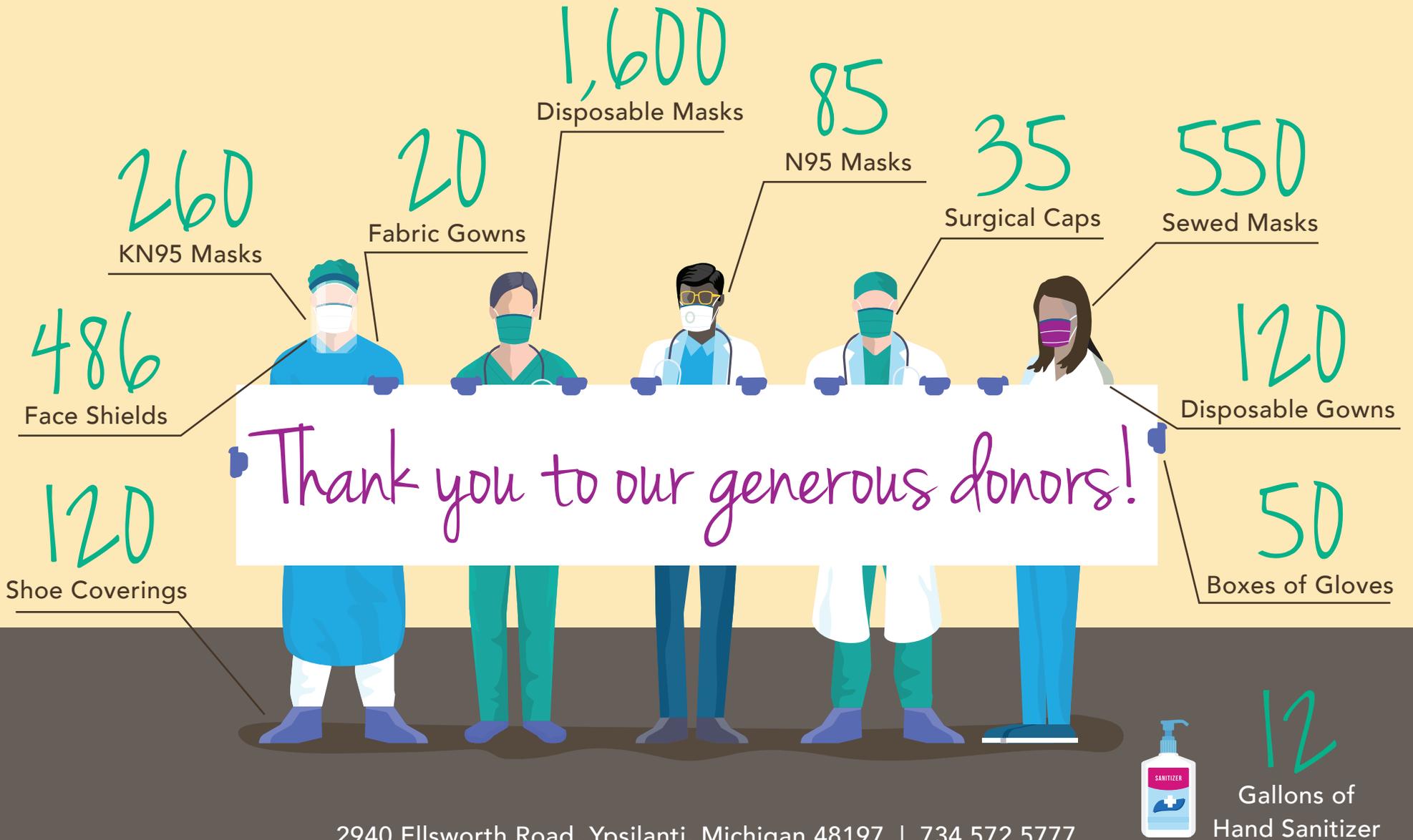
#####

*The mission of **Huron Valley PACE** is to enhance the lives and independence of our participants by providing state-of-the-art geriatric health and community-based services. Its vision is to serve as a local, regional and national resource in the provision of state-of-the-art geriatric health and community-based services that recognize the dignity, independence and quality of life for older adults wishing to remain in their homes. [huronvalleypace.org/734.572.577](https://www.huronvalleypace.org/734.572.577)*

*Building on a foundation of 114 years of service, **United Methodist Retirement Communities (UMRC)** is a faith-based, nonprofit organization that promotes the wellness, dignity and independence of older adults, by providing high quality, innovative and compassionate senior residential and supportive services. Celebrating 50 years, the mission of **Porter Hills** is to be trusted experts serving seniors with grace. Its vision is to be nationally recognized as an unparalleled leader and partner in senior services. In March 2019, UMRC & Porter Hills affiliated, under shared governance and leadership. Together, UMRC & Porter Hills represent the second largest nonprofit senior living organization in Michigan. With a tradition of exceptional quality and a commitment to cutting-edge care, these faith-based organizations and their affiliates combine to serve more than 6,700 older adults each year, from 24 locations and service lines, across 22 counties in Michigan's lower peninsula. [umrc.com](http://umrc.com)|734.433.1000 and [porterhills.org](http://porterhills.org)|616.949.4975*



# Huron Valley PACE<sup>®</sup>



2940 Ellsworth Road, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197 | 734.572.5777



12 Gallons of Hand Sanitizer



# Huron Valley PACE<sup>®</sup>

Data collected March 16, 2020 through May 15, 2020



845 Home Wellness Visits



1,096 Therapy Encounters: Occupational, Physical & Speech Therapy



199 Behavioral Health Encounters



3,161 Meals & 5,301 Medications DELIVERED TO PARTICIPANTS



11 Participants Overnight Respite



3,047 RN/Primary Care Physician Encounters



33 Participants Average Weekly Attendance At Day Center



150 of 200 Participants Covid-19 Testing Completed

5,340 Home Care Hours Provided

