Chapter Members at Edwards Lifesciences

Your editor and his wife (Jim and Ginny) were contacted by Edwards Lifesciences with an invitation to attend an event in mid-April at their headquarters in Irvine, California. Edwards is a global leader in the development and manufacture of heart valves.

We were invited to visit because Jim had an Edwards Peri- mount Aortic Valve implanted in his heart by open-heart surgery 12 years ago. The event we attended was called a “Patient Experience,” and was intended as an opportunity for us to meet their staff, as well as for them to talk with us about our experiences both before and after valve replacement. It was an extraordinary 1½-day encounter with these superb patient-focused people.

They had invited 50 heart valve recipients to tour their eight-building campus, where their research and product development, manufacturing, and corporate functions are located. Highlights included meeting with and talking to the actual people who made the valve now beating in Jim’s chest. They were quite excited to meet him and know that the intricate work they performed had kept him alive for so long. It takes 5 days or more for a 5-person team to construct the valve – including 1,000 stitches – woven by hand (under a microscope) to attach leaflets to the structure. We also talked one-on-one for several hours with a group of 10 other employees who work in engineering or other support roles. At one point, we walked across a stage in front of hundreds of employees who were wildly clapping and cheering. We felt like rock stars!

Below is a photo of the team that prepared Jim’s valve. In the other photo (to the left) is an Edwards employee who accompanied us the entire time we were there. If you’re ever invited to attend a function like this at Edwards Lifesciences, we encourage you to do it. This company is very proud of what they do, and their credo is “Helping patients is our life’s work; life is now.”

Visiting Report – Feb/Mar 2019

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Assistant Webmaster (Vacant)

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"It’s great to be alive – and to help others!"

To express interest in assisting Mended Hearts, clip out this form and mail to:

Mended Hearts
9190 Southmont Cove #103
Fort Myers, FL 33908

I am interested in these areas of service:

- [ ] Hospital Visitor
- [ ] Phone or Internet Visitor
- [ ] Assistant Webmaster
- [ ] Assistant Newsletter Editor

Name________________________
Phone_______________________
March Guest Speaker — Mikaela Smith, Shipley Cardiothoracic Center

Mikaela Smith is not only a Certified Operating Room Nurse, but is also serving Lee Health as Structural Heart Program & Outreach Coordinator for the Shipley Cardiothoracic Center at HealthPark Medical Center.

The newly expanded Cardiothoracic Center officially opened its doors in January, after many years of planning and fundraising. Those of us who’ve visited the center have seen that it’s a large, modern, and welcoming facility designed to fill a serious mission. Mikaela told us that the 11,800 sq. ft. center is intended to “transform lives through innovation, education, and research.” Contained within the Shipley Center are offices and examining rooms for Lee Health’s four cardiothoracic surgeons, a large conference room, space and facilities for a research staff, a 35-seat auditorium, interactive displays on the walls, and a small surgical procedures room. Most importantly, it is the center of excellence for cardiothoracic surgical care in our community.

Mikaela described many of the surgical services managed by the Shipley Center. These include Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG) surgery, valve repair and replacement, aorta surgery, adult congenital heart surgery, surgical treatment of atrial fibrillation, minimally invasive heart surgery, trans-catheter therapies (TAVR, MitraClip®, TMVR, TEVR), robotic heart and lung surgery using the DaVinci robot, as well as surgical treatment of thoracic diseases.

Patients visiting the Shipley Center must be referred by a cardiologist or their primary care physician. In calendar year 2018, the surgical teams performed 1,450 surgical cases (approximately 70% cardiac and 30% thoracic). Noteworthy activities at the Shipley Center include innovation in minimally invasive surgery, robotic thoracic surgery, the trans-catheter program, and inclusion of consultations in Shipley Center to encourage post-operative cardiac rehab.

In December 2011, Shipley Center surgeons at HealthPark were the first in Florida, and second nationally, to perform the Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) procedure. Since then, there have been 875 TAVR procedures done at HealthPark. TAVR means the patient’s chest is not surgically separated (opened) for the procedure, and it is performed under general anesthesia while the heart is beating and therefore does not require use of the heart-lung machine. Mikaela told us that 90% of TAVRs at HealthPark are now performed under moderate sedation, avoiding an ICU admission. Transcatheter valve-in-valve replacements and transcatheter mitral valve replacements are also being performed at HealthPark.

Recently, Shipley Center was selected to participate in seven national research programs that are underway – Low-Risk TAVR (out of 81 national centers, we finished in the top 10 implanting sites), Leaflet Sub-Study, HYBRID (Combining PCI and CABG: the Role of Hybrid Revascularization), Early TAVR, Low-Risk Bicuspid Trial, Apollo TMVR Trial.

On the education side, Shipley Center staff are working with the Engineering and Math Departments at FGCU on instrument development, perfusion equipment design, acute lung injury research, peanut sponge development, and biostatistical analysis. There are educational initiatives within Lee Health itself to train staff in identifying and quickly transferring cardiac patients.

In November 2018, IBM Watson Health named HealthPark Medical Center one of the Top 50 hospitals in the country for cardiovascular care. Additionally, the Society of Thoracic Surgeons designated the Shipley Center a 3-star program – the highest possible ranking – placing it in the
top 10 percent in the nation. There’s a strong team in place at HealthPark, and opening of the expanded Shipley Cardiothoracic Center will lead to an even brighter future.

❖ April Guest Speaker — Mary Briggs

We were happy to welcome Mary Briggs to our April meeting. Mary is the Lee Health System Director, Strategic Communications & Public Relations. She began her presentation with some background on Lee Health – founded in 1916; governed by a publicly elected, 10-member Board of Directors; four acute care hospitals (Cape Coral, Gulf Coast, Health Park, Lee Memorial) and two specialty hospitals (Golisano Children’s Hospital and the Rehabilitation Hospital). In all, there are 1,617 beds with 12,567 employees, 1,478 physicians, and 3,459 volunteers. She said that in 2017 there were roughly 1.5 million physician visits recorded, including 286,000 visits to emergency departments. Lee Health provided more than $63 million in charity care in 2017.

Mary briefly covered the mission statement for Lee Health: “To be a trusted partner, empowering healthier lives through care and compassion,” the vision: “To inspire hope and be a national leader for the advancement of health and healing.” The system’s values include respect, excellence, compassion, and education.

Times are changing, Lee County population is booming, and Lee Health is expanding and investing in new facilities and services to meet needs. Once construction is complete, the expansion of Gulf Coast Medical Center will add 268 new inpatient beds for a total of 624, making it the biggest hospital between Sarasota and Miami. The recently completed 31-acre campus in Estero/Coconut Point is a cutting-edge medical facility and a health and wellness village. The addition of an 82-bed hospital tower at this location has been approved by the state and Lee Health is ready to begin construction when legal issues are resolved.

To bring services closer to patients’ homes, Lee Health has built four Urgent Care locations – Metro Parkway, Cleveland Ave (near Page Field), Summerlin Road (near HealthPark), and Pine Island Rd (in Cape Coral). These centers are open 364 days per year, no appointments are necessary, and physicians/nurses can provide care for unplanned accidents and illnesses. Additionally, Lee Health has opened four Healthy Life Centers (Coconut Point, Cape Coral, Babcock Ranch, and Cleveland Ave), to promote wellness through lifestyle changes and education, classes, health screenings, and some social activities.

Next was a most interesting discussion of Lee Health strategic priorities – Exceptional Patient Experiences, Excellent Health Outcomes, Coordinated Care Model, and Strong Financial Results. These are areas for all employees, including medical staff, to focus on. Goals have been set, activities are tracked and a scorecard is presented to the Board of Directors. A large part of this is the exceptional experience for every patient. Dr. Antonucci, Lee Health President and CEO has coined the term Exceptional LEE, along with the following promise to patients: We promise to listen and communicate effectively, embrace empathy, act with compassion and continually improve care – creating a safe, comforting and healing environment for our patients, their families and each other.

Mary ended by showing a 10-minute video, titled “Josephine’s Story” that effectively describes the Exceptional Lee initiative. We recommend viewing this story -- https://vimeo.com/286035198
ACC/AHA Guideline on Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease

On March 17, 2019, an American College of Cardiology/American Heart Association task force published a document, intended for both physicians and patients, with recommendations for preventing the initial onset of cardiovascular disease (CVD). The Executive Summary itself is more than 70 pages long, so the following is a summary of take-home messages in the document.

− The most important way to prevent cardiovascular disease is to adopt heart-healthy habits and to do so throughout one’s life.

− The guideline emphasizes patient-physician shared decisions with a multidisciplinary team-based approach. Physicians should be sensitive to social determinants that may include barriers to care, such as financial distress or other cultural influences when recommending treatment.

− For individuals aged 40 to 75 years of age, a thorough assessment of risk for heart attack or stroke should include the American Heart Association’s risk calculator to estimate 10-year risk. Use that calculated result and other individual risk factors before starting a drug therapy, such as statins, blood pressure medications, or aspirin.

− All adults should eat a healthy diet rich in vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains, lean meat, and fish, while minimizing trans fats, processed meats, fried foods, and sweetened beverages. Overweight and obese adults should be counseled on achieving and maintaining healthy weight.

− Adults should engage in at least 150 minutes per week of accumulated moderate-intensity physical activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity physical activity.

− For adults with type 2 diabetes, lifestyle changes, such as improving dietary habits and achieving exercise recommendations, are crucial. If medication is indicated, metformin is first-line therapy, followed by consideration of two new classes of diabetes medications that work to lower blood sugar levels.

− All adults should be assessed at every healthcare visit for tobacco use, and those who use tobacco should be assisted and strongly advised to quit.

− Aspirin should be used infrequently in prevention of CVD for those who have no identified heart disease, because of lack of net benefit. For those who have had a heart attack or coronary stent, aspirin is still recommended.

− Statin therapy is first-line treatment for prevention of CVD in patients with elevated LDL cholesterol levels (≥190 mg/dL), those with diabetes who are 40 to 75 years of age, and those determined to be at sufficient CVD risk after a doctor–patient risk discussion.

− Nonpharmacological interventions are recommended for all adults with elevated blood pressure. For those requiring medications, the target blood pressure should generally be <130/80 mm Hg.

Ref – https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/suppl/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000677
Words from Members – Controlling Diabetes – by Joe Cramer

The American Heart Association states that adults with diabetes are two to four times more likely to die from heart disease than adults without diabetes. I’ve been a Type 2 diabetic for 28 years. During the past few years, I have made a lot of positive changes in monitoring and controlling my blood sugar and thought many of you living with diabetes might be interested in what I’ve learned.

With all the prescription and over-the-counter meds I was taking, I developed gastrointestinal problems. I went gluten free for a while. That helped a little, but it wasn’t the answer. A friend, who is a retired doctor with diabetes, gave me a book called Blood Sugar 101, authored by Ms. Jenny Ruhl (She also has a website www.bloodsugar101.com). The book includes a rundown of diabetic medications and known problems. It took some convincing of my doctor to take me off the meds for a couple of weeks. Yes, things cleared up. Now the challenge was to get my blood sugar under control.

I realized that I have all my father’s medical problems, including diabetes and heart disease. I remember watching the way he injected insulin and didn’t look forward to doing that. I’ve had coronary artery bypass graft (CABG) surgery, and I have a pacemaker/defibrillator implanted. That makes taking medications more complicated, so I eventually agreed to try insulin. I found that the many daily insulin shots are easy to do. The needles are so small I don’t even feel them.

Taking four shots of insulin a day, I now have much better control of my blood sugar. My eyes aren’t foggy, and my feet feel better. There are times I think it might have been better to have gone on insulin sooner. But I still hated those blasted finger sticks to get blood sugar readings. The goal is to keep my blood sugar as close to normal or between 70 and 120 before meals and less than 160 two hours after a meal. To check blood sugar, a diabetic person could be doing as many as eight finger sticks per day.

That brings me to why I bought one of the newest blood testing meters on the market, a Freestyle Libre 10-day continuous glucose monitoring system. Now there’s no need to stick my fingers! I wear a small device — about the size of a quarter — on the back of my upper arm, with a very small needle penetrating the skin. I can read my blood sugar instantly, as often as I want to, with a “reader” that resembles a small cell phone. The reader stores three months of blood sugar readings and does some interesting things, like daily graph plots and all kind of statistics. It reads and saves data every few minutes without any urging from me. When I do ask for a reading, it displays the current reading and also all blood sugar figures for the past 8 hours. This helps understand how specific foods, insulin, and other factors affect blood sugar. Although it is a continuous monitor, it doesn’t have any alarms for high or low blood sugar.
I’ve been using the device since November and it’s definitely helping me to better control my blood sugar. I keep the reader on my night table. When I wake up, it’s easy to see what my blood sugar is doing while I’m sleeping. I relate this device to the speedometer in a car, guiding me to make better decisions on what foods to eat and how much insulin to take.

The **Free Style Libre** is just one of several new Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGMs) that are available. Medco makes one called **Dexcom**, and a new company called Senseonics has a sensor called **Eversense**, the size of a fish oil capsule, that is implanted in the upper arm and it lasts for up to 3-months, transmitting blood glucose readings to your own cellphone. There are third-party apps that not only read your blood sugar on your cellphone but can help you make decisions on insulin injections.

If you are on insulin, you should talk to your doctor about one of these devices. A valid prescription is required. Insurance covers a large portion of my **Libre** sensors, and they cost a little over $6 for 10 days. I will soon start using a new sensor that lasts 14 days, and the cost is about the same. When you add up all of the finger sticks that I would normally use, the sensor cost is about the same. My Endocrinologist feels it gives a truer picture of what is going on with the blood sugar than the gold standard of the A1C blood test.


❖ **Warnings on E-Cigarette Use**

The National Heart Association, American College of Cardiology, Surgeon General, CDC, and FDA have issued statements of alarm recently; all are concerned about the huge growth in use of e-cigarettes, especially among America’s youth.

E-cigarettes are battery-operated, handheld devices that mimic the experience of smoking a cigarette. They work by heating a liquid, which may contain various levels of nicotine plus any number of flavors and other chemicals, to create a vapor that is inhaled and exhaled.

American Heart Association published results from the largest study on e-cigarettes. Researchers found that, compared to non-users, e-cigarette users had 71 percent higher risk of stroke; 59 percent higher risk of heart attack or angina; and 40 percent higher risk of heart disease.

Of major concern is that e-cigarettes are now commonly used among U.S. youth. In 2018, according to the Surgeon General, more than 3.6 million young people were using e-cigarettes; 1.5 million more than in 2017. All the agencies shown above state that e-cigarettes are unsafe for kids, teens, and young adults. Nicotine has been shown to harm the developing young brain, especially the parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse controls.

The American Heart Association cautions against the use of e-cigarettes, stating that they are tobacco products that should be subject to all laws that apply to these products. They also call for strong new regulations to prevent access, sales and marketing of e-cigarettes to youth and for more research into the product's health impact.
\[ \text{Across} \]
1. The newest Cardiothoracic Surgeon at LeeHealth is Dr. Michael _______.  
5. Insomnia means 'insufficient _____ patterns.'  
7. Mended Hearts national office moved to this state.  
9. What words follow this poem? 'Passing school zone; Take it slow; Let our little shavers grow' (2 words)  
11. Start point for the Lee County Heart Walk ____ Park  
12. Adults with this blood glucose disease are 2 to 4 times more likely to have CVD than those without it.  
13. New U.S. Physical Activity Guideline includes, “Move more and sit ______.”  
14. To dispose of unneeded pills, use the _____ in a Lee County Sheriff Office (2 words)  
17. Lee Health President & CEO is Dr. Larry ______.  
21. _____ is the largest public health system in Florida not receiving direct public tax support (2 words)  
22. Location of our chapter’s summer luncheon (2 words)  
23. Immediate CPR can double or triple chance of survival after ______.  
24. The fundamental function for our Mended Hearts chapter is our hospital _____ program.

\[ \text{Down} \]
2. FDA approved Apple’s _____ feature for their new Series 4 watch.  
3. Another word for heart attack is Myocardial ______.  
4. Within Lee County. LeeFlight is based at _____ (2 words)  
6. An _____ checks the heart’s electrical activity.  
8. The newest Lee Health Medical Facility is located in this town.  
10. According to Dolly Parton, “If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the _____.”  
15. Dr. Seuss quote, “Don’t cry because it’s over. Smile because it______.”  
16. Adults need 150 _____ per week of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise.  
18. Contact _____ Jansen if you would like a complimentary meal before the next chapter meeting.  
19. Three additional floors are being built on top of the existing _____ Medical Center. (2 words)  
20. _____ Diet named as the 'best overall diet' for eight consecutive years.
LET'S SCAN THE JOURNALS

❖ New Recommendations on Use of Aspirin to Prevent First Heart Attack

Aspirin is a blood thinner and is frequently prescribed for patients who have experienced a heart attack, stroke, or coronary stent to prevent recurrence. However, the new ACC/ AHA Guideline (summarized on p. 7 of this newsletter), states that aspirin should be used infrequently in prevention of CVD for those persons who have no identified heart disease.

The new guidance is based on two research studies published in the New England Journal of Medicine in October 2018. In the ASCEND study of 15,480 patients with diabetes, but no evident cardiovascular disease, daily aspirin resulted in a 12% reduction in cardiovascular events during a mean follow-up of 7.4 years, but a 29% increase in major internal bleeding. In the ASPREE study of 19,114 relatively healthy people aged 70 and older, the death rate after 4.7 years was higher among those taking aspirin, compared to those taking placebo. In a third study (called ARRIVE) of 13,000 patients at moderate cardiovascular risk, daily aspirin had no effect on rates of death or heart attack, but increased the risk of cardiovascular bleeding.

If you are on an aspirin regimen now, do NOT stop taking it after reading this report until talking with your physician or cardiologist. Specific therapy must be tailored to each individual; there may be circumstances, in your case, where benefits of aspirin outweigh the risks of bleeding. Aspirin therapy is still recommended if you have already suffered heart attack, stroke, bypass surgery, stent, or many other cardiac events.


❖ Sleeping Less Than Six Hours a Night May Be a Cardiovascular Risk

Many of us live busy or stressful lives that can lead to sleep deprivation. A new study, published January 2019 in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology, may shed some light on the importance of sleep for cardiovascular health. Poor quality sleep was shown in this study to increase the risk of atherosclerosis -- a buildup of plaque in the arteries throughout the body, commonly called “hardening of the arteries.”

The study included 3,974 individuals who were without known heart disease. All participants wore an actigraph, a device that continuously measures activity or movement, for seven days to measure their sleep. Four groups were then defined: very short duration -- those who slept less than six hours; short duration -- those who slept six to seven hours; the reference group -- those who slept seven to eight hours; and long sleep duration -- those who slept more than eight hours.

The participants underwent 3D heart ultrasound and cardiac CT scans to look for heart disease. The study found that participants who slept less than six hours were 27 percent more likely to have atherosclerosis throughout the body compared with those who slept seven to eight hours. Similarly, those who had a poor quality of sleep were 34 percent more likely to have atherosclerosis compared with those who had a good quality of sleep. The study’s authors concluded that healthy sleep habits are important for the prevention of cardiovascular disease. Ref: http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/73/2/134.
Meet a Member – Tom Winford

Tom is a very busy person, but he always has time for Mended Hearts meetings, and he volunteers with newsletter folding whenever he has a chance. Tom arrived in Southwest Florida more than 40 years ago and settled in Cape Coral. He and his wife Diane partner as fulltime real estate professionals with the RE/MAX Realty Team, working all of Lee County north of Estero.

Their happy life was suddenly interrupted in May 2017, when Tom suffered Sudden Cardiac Arrest at home. Diane performed CPR until EMS arrived within minutes. After repeated defibrillation, his heart started beating; but Tom remained in a coma for three days. At HealthPark Medical Center it was determined that he also needed open heart surgery due to clogged coronary arteries, and Dr. Hummel performed a triple bypass. Tom and Diane are very thankful for the medical staff at HealthPark, for the Mended Hearts visitor they met in the hospital who gave them great encouragement, and the Cardiac Rehab staff. He’s back at work now, but mindful of the need for a healthy lifestyle. Here’s what we learned by talking further with Tom:

Where were you born? “Waynesboro, a town of less than 2,000 people, nearby the historic Natchez Trace in south central Tennessee. My grandfather was a doctor, and he delivered me in his hospital.”

What was the first job you ever had? “Working in a lumber mill in North Carolina.”

How would you describe yourself in two words? “Laid back”

What brought you to SW Florida? “My grandparents moved to Bonita Beach in the 1960’s, and my parents followed. I came here full-time in 1976.

How many places have you lived? Lots – all of them below the Mason-Dixon Line. I’ve never shoveled snow in my life.”

What is the most important life lesson you have learned? “Take one day at a time and enjoy it, because you never know what’s going to happen the next day.”

What is your favorite food? I enjoy wood grilling -- not with a gas grill. Steak was always my favorite, but I don’t get to eat it that much anymore. Now we prepare chicken and vegetables on the grill and smoker.

What is one thing that makes you smile? “Seeing my granddaughters.”

What is the best part about being a Mended Hearts member? “The educational presentations and hearing other members’ stories, as well as the camaraderie.”
U.S. Travel Quiz

Here’s a quiz in a British newspaper asking how well people know the U.S. How would you do on their quiz?

1. Which is the largest state in the US? Alaska, Texas, Utah California
2. What is the longest river in the US? Missouri, Ohio, Rio Grande, Mississippi
3. What’s the highest mountain in the US? Mount Elbert, Capitol Peak, Mount McKinley, Mount Rainier
4. The film Jaws was set in a fictional beach resort in which part of America? New England, Florida, California, Hawaii
5. In which city was Starbucks founded? Portland, New York, San Francisco, Seattle
6. Where would you be most likely to tuck into a bowl of Gumbo? Utah, Louisiana, Texas, North Carolina
7. The Pabst Brewing Company, now based in LA, was originally established in …? Idaho, Nebraska, Maine, Milwaukee
8. Which four US states have the word commonwealth in their official title?
   a. New England, New York, Virginia, Georgia
   b. Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia
   c. Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona
   d. Kentucky, Massachusetts, Virginia, New England

Words of Wisdom from Dave Barry

• The one thing that unites all human beings, regardless of age, gender, religion, economic status, or ethnic background, is that, deep down inside, we all believe that we are above-average drivers.
• You should not confuse your career with your life.
• Nobody is normal.
• The most powerful force in the universe is gossip.
• Nobody cares if you can't dance well. Just get up and dance.

Paraprosdokians

A paraprosdokian is a figure of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected

- We never really grow up; we only learn how to act in public.
- Always borrow money from a pessimist; he won't expect it back.
- Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.
- Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
- I've had a perfectly wonderful evening; but this wasn't it.
- Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the very edge of the pool and throw them fish.
❖ **Upcoming Meeting Schedule and Guest Speakers**

![Meeting Schedule]

❖ **Welcome our New Members**

Mended Hearts of Fort Myers is happy to welcome the following new members:

**Jeanette and David Pierson**  
Fort Myers 33919  

**Dottie and Marvin Rappaport**  
Fort Myers 33919  

**Ron Saberton**  
Fort Myers 33907  

**Robert and Carol Scher**  
Fort Myers 33908  

**Alvin and Carol Wagner**  
Fort Myers 33919  

❖ **Important Procedure for Monthly Meetings**

Lee Health prepares complimentary heart-healthy meals for our meetings, available beginning at **5:45 p.m.** (45 minutes before the meeting). If you plan to join us for the meal, notify Joe Jansen at 461-0980 or jfjansen@aol.com at least five days in advance.

You are always invited to attend the **6:30** meeting without advance notice.

Visit our chapter’s website:  
[www.mendedheartsftmyers.org](http://www.mendedheartsftmyers.org)
ABOUT MENDED HEARTS

We are an international volunteer organization dedicated to helping heart patients and their families. Our trained volunteers visit patients, with doctor’s approval, while you are hospitalized. We provide literature on heart disease and your recovery from surgery.

OUR MISSION is dedicated to Inspiring hope and improving the quality of life for heart patients and their families through ongoing peer-to-peer support.

OUR PURPOSE is to offer help, support and encouragement to heart patients and their families.

OUR METHOD is to partner with medical and hospital staff to help the patient have a positive experience. Everyone who has had a heart procedure and their families are welcome at our meetings. You don’t have to join Mended Hearts to hear our speakers, but we would love it if you do join. We will send you the next three issues of our chapter newsletter following your surgery.