

**PARKINSON'S DISEASE COMMUNICATION AND SWALLOWING WELLNESS GROUP-NOW VIRTUAL!**

**Time:** Wednesdays and Fridays 4:00-5:30

**Dates:** Sept. 22, 2021 to Oct. 22, 2021 (2 days per week x 5 weeks; 10 sessions total)

**Cost:** \$150 per person with PD for 10 sessions (no charge for caregiver attendance, which is welcomed and encouraged); full scholarship funds available if needed\*

**Location:** In your own home via Zoom! This group is open to all people with PD who reside in Massachusetts!!

Come join Lisa Sommers, M.A., CCC-SLP, Michael Starr, M.A., CCC-SLP, and graduate students from the Department of Communication Disorders at UMass Amherst for 10 sessions of techniques and education focusing on learning about and strengthening your communication, cognitive, and swallowing skills.

Our emphasis will be on wellness and prevention in a virtual group setting as well as in 1:1 interactions with the graduate students. Group will be run with 10 participants maximum; 5 minimum. This group is appropriate for all severity levels of PD; even those who are newly diagnosed and are not exhibiting any symptomatic changes in communication or swallowing. Family members/significant others are welcome as well!

10 virtual group sessions will be organized around the following modules:

- Voice (Lisa and Michael are LSVT LOUD®-certified and will incorporate education and training related to these techniques, as well as give you recommendations regarding whether the LSVT LOUD® program is appropriate for you)
- Articulation
- Facial expression/Affect
- Understanding how we swallow and what can go wrong in PD
- Swallowing exercises and strategies
- Diet consistency and general nutrition recommendations and suggestions
- Posture and respiratory support for speech
- Importance of identification and treatment of hearing impairments
- Cognitive challenges associated with PD and fun cognitive stimulation activities that you can do at home.

A program of education and basic communication and swallowing exercises will be completed over the course of the 5 weeks and will be provided to you at the end of 10 sessions. Communication Disorders graduate students will work with you to teach you the exercises so that you can continue them on your own. You will leave the group with recommendations about whether skilled speech-language pathology services are needed. AND, to top it all off, we will have fun—even over ZOOM!!!! Please call 413-545-4010 and leave a message if you are interested in the group. Lisa will return your call.

*Please note that it is mandatory that you sign up for our patient portal so that we can securely share our educational materials and activities with you via email. We know portal registration can be daunting; we can offer assistance with this over the phone. Please contact Marcie Whitman at 413-545-2565 once you have confirmed attendance with Lisa.*

***\*This program is supported by a grant from the American Parkinson's Disease Association MA Chapter, which provides funds to help defray the costs of the group.***

