

THE UNION

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Western Sierra Medical Center to offer series

People living with chronic health conditions face challenges every day, from dealing with anger and depression to handling simple tasks others often take for granted.

Now a free, six-week class is designed to help people learn to cope with their chronic conditions such as arthritis, asthma, diabetes, emphysema, heart disease, high-blood pressure and many others. The Healthier Living with Chronic Disease class begins 6 p.m. March 5 in the community room at Western Sierra Medical Center, 844 Old Tunnel Road in Grass Valley.

The 2 1/2-hour class meets every Thursday through April 9. People with chronic health conditions will learn how to manage symptoms, reduce pain, stay active and improve their health during the interactive workshop.

“Chronic health conditions are a serious issue for so many people in our region,” said Chris Grace, a medical assistant at Western Sierra and the lead coordinator for the six-week course.

“We want to help those with a chronic illness learn how to enjoy and live a productive life.”

The class is originally based on a five-year study conducted at Stanford University and has expanded to include input from medical professionals and those living – and dealing – with chronic health conditions. The class will address numerous issues, from exercise and healthy eating to finding resources and support.

“Living with a chronic illness is about education and learning how to self-manage your condition,” said Grace, who adds all of the presenters for the six classes had four days of training in order to become certified by Stanford University to teach the course. “The class is not disease-specific, but provides general tips and very helpful information.”

People attending the six-week class will also receive a free copy of Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions and an accompanying CD.

“This class was life-changing for me,” said Barbara M, who attended a previous class offered by Western Sierra. “I learned so many things.”

The free class and materials are made available thanks to a generous grant from the California Arthritis Foundation.

The class is open to the community, and those attending do not need to be Western Sierra patients. If interested in attending the class, please call Chris Grace at 530-274-9762 ext. 140 or email chrisg@wsmcmed.org as soon as possible. Space is limited.