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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



May Aging Insights TV program, “Special Edition: Doctors Share Advice on COVID-19”

TRENTON, NJ (May 1, 2020) – The COVID-19 pandemic is causing upheaval in everyday living and taking the lives of people young and old. Learn more about the crisis directly from two NJ Foundation for Aging-affiliated physicians on the May Aging Insights TV show, “Special Edition: Doctors Share Advice on COVID-19” (Episode #104). Guests Dr. Joshua Raymond (pictured, left) and Dr. Vikranta Sharma are Board members of the nonprofit NJFA, which produces this program. Host Melissa Chalker, NJFA’s Executive Director, who has been working from home during this pandemic, interviewed Drs. Raymond and Sharma in their offices via video conferencing.

Launched in 2011, Aging Insights is an award-winning, half-hour monthly show that promotes dialogue and provides resources on critical issues for older adults and caregivers. The May “Special Edition: Doctors Share Advice on COVID-19” episode can be viewed on NJFA’s YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/wec08Lgy1t4>, website at <https://www.njfoundationforaging.org/aging-insights/> and more than 70 public-access stations across NJ (check local listings for channels and times).

Dr. Joshua Raymond is Associate Professor of Medicine and Geriatric Fellowship Director at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School/Rutgers University/CentraState Medical Center. He is board certified in Family Medicine and holds a Certificate of Added Qualification in Geriatric Medicine as well as a Certificate of Added Qualification in Palliative Care Hospice Care. He is also Medical Director at The Manor nursing facility of the CentraState Medical Center in Freehold, NJ.

Dr. Raymond advises that family members should “stay connected to loved ones” and if someone is in a nursing home, “reach out to staff at the facility.” He also recommends consulting reliable resources such as cdc.gov or designated help lines for accurate information on COVID-19. Additionally, Dr. Raymond confirms the importance of making your personal medical care requests known to others.

Dr. Vikranta Sharma is the Medical Director of Hospice and Palliative Care at the [Visiting Nurse Association Health Group](#) (VNAHG) and Palliative Care at CentraState Healthcare System. The VNAHG is NJ’s largest not-for-profit provider of home health, visiting physicians, hospice and community-based care. Dr. Sharma diagnoses and treats patients suitable for hospice and palliative care in the service areas of the agency, within private residences, extended-care facilities, hospitals and other facilities. She also develops and provides educational programs for community physicians and medical/agency staff regarding palliative and hospice care.

Dr. Sharma believes that people who feel they may be sick or have been exposed to COVID-19 should “behave as if you have the disease and not over-expose others.” She recommends “the basics,” such as “quarantine/staying in one room and opening the windows,” but also “going outside into the sunshine.” She says people need to have a general care plan and that it’s “crucial to address your healthcare proxy.”

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The New Jersey Foundation for Aging (www.njfoundationforaging.org) is the only statewide nonprofit organization focused solely on providing leadership in public policy and education to enable older adults to live with independence and dignity in their communities. In addition to its policy leadership role, the NJFA produces the award-winning **Aging Insights**, a monthly half-hour TV program promoting dialogue on critical issues for older adults and caregivers. The show can be seen on more than 70 public-access stations, www.njfoundationforaging.org/aging-insights and www.youtube.com/njfoundationforaging. The NJFA also presents an annual conference offering development opportunities and best practices for professionals entrusted with caring for seniors.