

# NewsUPDATE

July 2007

A Quarterly Publication for VNS of Connecticut Providers

## Geriatric Care A VNS Specialty

As Visiting Nurse Services of Connecticut closes in on its 100th birthday in 2009, never has its focus on geriatric home care been stronger. VNS staff have a long and storied history of providing excellent home health care for the region's senior citizens. Agency staff have constantly reviewed procedures and practices to ensure that their elder care services were effective and consistent with state of the art practices. Evidence of this has been the fact that VNS has been named a national Home Care Elite provider in 2006 and 2007, the first two years of the national rating system, which is based on patient outcomes, commitment to service improvement and overall financial performance.

Agency staff also participate in a Disease Management Task Force, which reviews procedures for care management with an eye toward improving service. The task force's work in the area of Heart Failure Management, the most common diagnosis for elderly patients, has resulted in a new treatment regimen that incorporates telemonitoring for all patients. The first year of the new program showed significant decreases in patient re-hospitalization and VNS staff have been invited to present their results at national

and international conferences this year. VNS staff have also done presentations on the new treatment process for several agency referrers, hospital staff and physician office staff. With the Heart Failure Management program fully underway, the task force has begun to take a closer look at treatment practices for patients with diabetes.

As our population ages, VNS continues to proactively develop new and more effective ways to provide home care treatment services for our geriatric patients.

If you would like more information about the new VNS Heart Failure Management program, please contact Customer Relations Director Lou Carpino at 203.330.5507.

*"What a pleasure to get a live voice and make the referral in five minutes!"*

RECENT EMAIL COMMENT FROM WEEKEND STAFF AT YALE NEW HAVEN HOSPITAL



Members of our team include, seated left to right, Nurse Liaison Cathy McNeiece, Customer Relations Liaison Kerry Larsen and Administrative Assistant Joanne Medalis. Standing, left to right are Customer Relations Director Lou Carpino and Communications and Marketing Director Mark Chudwick.

## Building Provider Partnerships

The key to success in home health care is establishing strong working relationships with referring providers. At VNS of Connecticut, our point people in this effort are the staff from our Customer Relations and Marketing departments who spend most of their time in the field meeting with providers and their staff and cultivating important community relationships. Our message is clear: VNS wants to be your home care provider of choice and we will work hard to deliver the finest in home health services for your patients, with a special emphasis on geriatric care.



## Did You Know...

**Physicians are eligible to receive compensation** for certification and re-certification of home health plans of care? It's true. A series of "G" codes provide Medicare compensation for physician oversight and supervision of home health care plans. For more detailed information, contact our Administrative Assistant Joanne Medalis at 203.330.5474.



**VNS of Connecticut has retained its elite provider status** according to healthcare industry software company OCS and the National Association for Health Care. The agency has been named a *2007 Home Care Elite* provider. VNS qualified for the designation for the second consecutive year as the result of placing in the top 25% of all home care providers nationally in Medicare quality and patient satisfaction data.



**The United Way of Northwestern Connecticut** will feature VNS staff in its 2007 campaign? Tammy Royer was so impressed with the care provided her father by VNS Hospice at Home staff several years ago, that she decided to work toward joining our care team. She is now working as a Certified Nurses Aide in our Torrington branch while she completes her nursing studies at Saint Joseph's College. Tammy's commitment and the path she is taking will be featured by the United Way during its fall campaign.

## Central Intake: Your VNS Home Health Connection

Ensuring a smooth transition from hospital treatment to home care is the number one goal of the professional nurses who staff our Central Intake Unit. This seven member team:

- Accepts referrals 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week for patients residing in Fairfield, New Haven and Litchfield counties via
  - **Our toll free phone number, 1.800.551.8671**
  - **FAX at 1.800.720.8671;**
- Is led by Manager Karen Giustino, a Registered Nurse with more than 15 years of health care experience;
- Is ready to answer any provider questions about VNS' referral process or home health treatments.

### *What Our Patients Are Saying*

Some patient testimonials from our most recent collection of patient satisfaction surveys...

*"Everyone was wonderful. They are all an asset to your company, Emily Bietsch, Joann the aide and Medjina Narcisse."*

-Trumbull area patient

*"We hope that Donna Ross (RN) will remain with the agency as we would like to have her care for my mom in the future if care was needed again. She has an excellent personality and was very helpful."*

-Torrington area patient

*"All the efforts were appreciated and extremely helpful. Cathy Behuniak made a huge difference. She is a treasure."*

-Oxford area patient

*"Thanks Nancy Schaffer, you were great!"*

-Norwalk area patient

**Questions? Don't hesitate to call Lou Carpino at 203.330.5507 or Mark Chudwick at 203.330.5538.**

# Bringing *Heart* to Home Care

*The preferred home care provider  
of Bridgeport Hospital and  
St. Vincent's Hospital.*

**1.800.551.8671**

**www.vnsct.org**

**A**t VNS of Connecticut, we know how hard it can be to reach out and find the help you need. You want skills you can trust, but you also want kindness and compassion to make a difficult time easier and less stressful. That's why we are proud of our *HEART* values. Our values set the standard for the staff we hire and the care we provide. We deliver expert home care — straight from the *HEART*.

#### **Core Services**

Skilled Nursing  
Physical Therapy  
Occupational Therapy  
Speech Therapy  
Medical Social Work  
Home Health Aides

#### **Value-Added Technology**

Home Health  
Telemonitoring

#### **Hospice & Palliative Care**

End-of-Life Care  
Pain & Symptom  
Management  
Grief Counseling  
Support Groups

#### **Our Specialty Services**

Hi-Tech Home IV Therapy  
Wound Care/Wound Vac/  
Ostomy Care  
Psychiatric Nursing  
Nutritionists  
Elder Care Planning &  
Coordination  
Care for the Caregiver  
Pain Management Services  
Free Needs Assessment

#### **Personal Care & Quality of Life Services**

Bathing and Personal  
Assistance  
Live-Ins, Sleep-Ins  
Companion/Homemaker



*Bringing HEART to Home Care*

## Making Referrals:

With expanded services and territories, the goal of VNS of Connecticut is to meet all of your home care needs with the same commitment to high quality, professional services you've experienced.

Call us to make a referral and we will take care of the rest. Our intake motto is, **"One call, problem solved."**



**1.800.551.8671**

**[www.vnsct.org](http://www.vnsct.org)**

## Towns served by VNS of Connecticut

Ansonia	Greenwich	North Haven	Trumbull
Barkhamsted	Hamden	Norwalk	Watertown
Beacon Falls	Harwinton	Orange	West Haven
Bethany	Litchfield	Oxford	Weston
Bethel	Middlebury	Roxbury	Westport
Bethlehem	Milford	Seymour	Wilton
Bridgeport	Monroe	Shelton	Winchester
Darien	Morris	Southbury	Winsted
Derby	Naugatuck	Southport	Woodbridge
East Haven	New Canaan	Stamford	Woodbury
Easton	New Hartford	Stratford	
Fairfield	New Haven	Thomaston	
Goshen	Newtown	Torrington	



*Bringing HEART to Home Care*

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*Serving Fairfield, Litchfield  
and New Haven Counties*