A Message from the President

Greetings,

Welcome to our new format! By now, you probably have had a chance to read our Annual Report. That report highlights our many programs and celebrates our mission. It was intended as an annual update on our many programs.

We decided that a quarterly newsletter format would enable us to keep you better informed on the many initiatives that we have underway. As you know today's healthcare environment is very dynamic and new opportunities arise every day. By adopting a quarterly format, we can keep you well informed.

This year, 2016, marks our 130th anniversary of service to the Philadelphia community. As the oldest VNA in America, we are truly the pioneers in public health nursing.

As part of this tradition, we are happy to announce new and enhanced partnerships with the Schools of Nursing at both LaSalle University and the University of Pennsylvania.

These partnerships will allow us to explore new ways to improve our services to even higher levels of quality and effectiveness in order to meet the needs of the Philadelphia community. In addition, we intend to offer these services to the health systems of the area as they develop their own plans to address population health needs.

It is truly an exciting time at the VNA! This newsletter will focus on some of our program highlights and developments.

In closing I want to thank our donors, our Board and our wonderful staff for all that they do in supporting our mission and allowing us to serve the entire person in addition to their healthcare needs.

Sincerely,

Walter W. Borginis III

2016 marks our 130th anniversary of service to the Philadelphia Community. As the oldest VNA in America, we are truly the pioneers in public health nursing. Watch for information about a celebration this fall.

A special thanks to Nancy Lotz, MSW, VNA social worker, whose entry was chosen for naming this publication in a staff contest.

Included in This Issue

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- IPU renovations begin
- Women's Initiative launches to benefit Hospice
- VNA executive receives prestigious award
- Save the Date—2016 Caring Award Dinner
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- Staff Activities
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- March Is Social Workers' Month
- National Volunteer Week
- Benefits of Pet Therapy
- Palliative Care
- Hospice CNA receives award
- ROCK for Free Care Fundraiser
The IPU Family Room is being renovated thanks to the Green Family Foundation

In 2009, our Inpatient Hospice Unit was constructed. After seven years and 4,000 families later, we need some renovations. A generous grant from the Green Family Foundation is giving the IPU’s Family Room quite a makeover. New furniture including a sofa, chairs, dining-room furniture, kitchen appliances are all on the way to being installed. New flooring and refurbishment of the cabinets and woodwork will be completed. We are very grateful to the Green Family Foundation for their support! All of these things will add to the comfort of our patients and their families.

A fundraising campaign is now underway to renovate the individual patients’ rooms and all other spaces. To make a donation, please call Maureen Murphy at 215-581-2006, email at mmurphy@vnaphilly.org or via the web at www.vnaphilly.org.

VNA Hospice of Philadelphia Launches a Women’s Initiative

Join us for our inaugural meeting on April 8th, 2016 for a luncheon featuring speaker Jane Hamilton Meier, founder of Partners on the Path and author of the “Caregivers Guide to Self Care for Your Caregiving Journey.”

Jane will speak on achieving balance in work and home life for women (men are invited, too). We are grateful to our host, Fox Rothschild for sponsoring this event. This hands-on workshop will provide practical advice takeaways as well as provide personal and professional networking opportunities. For more information or to make a reservation, contact Maureen Murphy by phone at 215-581-2006 or via email at mmurphy@vnaphilly.org. The event is complimentary, but reservations are requested. The meeting will be held at the law offices of Fox Rothschild LLP, 2000 Market St, Philadelphia, PA 19103.
VNA Executive Vice President and Chief Nursing Officer receives prestigious award

Karen Alston, MBA, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, recently received the Nursing Leadership Award from Kappa Delta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing. The award was presented during the annual induction ceremony at LaSalle University where Karen spoke about scholarship, leadership and service in the health care environment when she delivered the keynote address.

Karen is the Executive Vice President of Home Health and Chief Nurse Officer at the Visiting Nurse Association of Greater Philadelphia. She is certified as a Nurse Executive. As the Executive Vice President in a large, historically significant home health agency, she has had the opportunity to represent the VNA at the state and national level including serving as a committee vice chair for the World Meeting of Families and Papal Visit in 2015.

As a nurse leader for the past 10 years, Karen has extensive knowledge in home health operations and quality. She has focused on program development and is responsible for a variety of specialty programs such as Chronic Care, Psychiatric Nursing, WOCN (Wound Ostomy and Continence Nurse) services and most recently, a Community Health Worker Program. Under her leadership, the VNA was certified as a Chronic Care Professional Agency and recently earned 4.0 of 5.0 stars in the CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) Quality Outcomes Star Rating System.

Making A Difference

Dear VNA Hospice,

Thanks to the knowledge and efforts of VNA hospice staff, my wife had the best care possible in her final days. Everyone we encountered at home or talked to over the phone was simply the best. My family and I want to thank you all and wish you all the very best.

With deep appreciation,
W.J. and family

Everyone,

Words cannot express all of my gratitude for each and every one... thanks for your calls, thoughts and prayers! I love you all.
M.

I wanted to thank the VNA for your contact with me over the past year. Your words have helped facilitate healing over the past year and I greatly appreciate the thoughtfulness of that effort.
J.J.

Dear Hospice Staff,

I sincerely want to express my gratitude for everything everyone did from medication to supplies... for my mother. I really felt the sincere love and care from the staff, especially those who worked closely with her. May God bless you for your kindness and loving care! It will never be forgotten.

DC and family

Everyone at the VNA made this time so much easier. We truly appreciate all your help, caring and kindliness.
S.G.
2016 Caring Award Dinner

We are delighted to announce our Caring Award Dinner on Thursday, May 19, 2016. We are honoring Susan Sherman, MA, RN, FAAN, President and CEO of the Independence Foundation. The event is being held at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

The Independence Foundation is a private, not-for-profit philanthropic organization serving Philadelphia and its surrounding Pennsylvania counties. The Foundation's mission is to support organizations that provide services to people who do not ordinarily have access to them. With a strong focus on health, the Foundation invests in people and programs that enrich the life experiences of the residents of the Philadelphia area. In addition to health care, the Foundation extends its funding to human services, legal aid and arts & culture, building on the belief that a region that promotes physical well-being, provides equal access to services, values justice, and appreciates the arts will thrive for generations to come.

Susan and the Independence Foundation have been wonderful supporters of the VNA for many years and we are very grateful.

Tickets are $250 and all proceeds benefit the VNA Hospice of Philadelphia. Thank you for supporting our wonderful mission. Call Maureen Murphy at 215-581-2006 or email her at mmurphy@vnaphilly.org for tickets.
Neither sleet, nor snow, nor rain will keep the VNA clinicians from their patients...

The Blizzard of 2016 covered the Delaware Valley with almost two feet of snow (officially) but some areas experienced more! The entire mid-Atlantic was affected and was under snowfall totals of 1 to 3 feet. Philadelphia received a typical entire season's worth of snowfall, from the blizzard.

The governors of eleven states and the mayor of Washington, DC declared a state of emergency in anticipation of significant snowfall and weather conditions. Approximately 103 million people were affected by the storm, with 33 million people under blizzard warnings. More than 13,000 flights were cancelled in relation to the storm, with effects rippling internationally. Thousands of National Guardsmen were placed on standby and states deployed millions of gallons of brine and thousands of tons of road salt to lessen the storm's effect on roadways.

In preparation here at the VNA, as some employees were leaving to go home on Friday night, some were coming in with a suitcase! And what happened after the storm was over? Our clinicians went out and took care of our patients in their homes and in our Inpatient Unit! Driving and parking were not easy tasks but our team had people they had to take care of, so off they went. Thank you, everyone!

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Staff Activities

Patient and Caregiver Assistance Fund

This fund is made up of contributions from VNA staff members. With the money from this account, we can buy items needed by our patients but not covered by insurance. When clinicians go into our patients' homes they sometimes can see what the patient could use. The clinician fills out a request form, gets it approved by management and funds are released from the account to pay for the goods. Examples of items that are requested include shower chairs, grab bars, dressing sticks, scales, etc. During the holiday season, the money from this fund goes toward food baskets that are delivered by the patient's clinician. Staff-member volunteers do the shopping. A steady income for the fund comes from the weekly $2 "fee" that staff members pay on Fridays to be able to wear jeans.
Baked Mac and Cheese

1 16 oz. box of rigatoni (cooked)

Sauce
4 oz. Smoked gouda
4 oz. Gruyere
12 oz. Cheddar
1 beaten egg
1/2 tsp of salt
1/2 minced yellow onion or a whole minced shallot
1/4 stick of salted butter
1/8 tsp. nutmeg
2 cups milk
1 tsp. dry mustard
Light paprika

Mix well. Top with 1/2 cup of mixed blend cheese, and panko bread crumbs
Bake in greased 9x13 pan at 350 degrees until top cheese is golden brown.

The VNA Difference...Our Compassionate Guidance

Our first priority is you, our patients and families not our stockholders...because we don't have any. We are a nonprofit, charitable, 501c3 home-healthcare and hospice agency. We're not a franchise, we're not a corporate subsidiary. We're a charity that has been trusted to serve the Philadelphia community for the past 130 years. Throughout our rich history, we've focused solely on patients' health. We're the true pioneer of public-health nursing. We're your trusted resource for helping you navigate difficult healthcare decisions.

- Selecting the right nursing care for yourself or a family member is one of the most important decisions you'll ever make. You have a lot of choices. How do you know that you're making the right one? Start by asking yourself what you are looking for in nursing care. Skill, yes, experience and knowledge, of course. But do you want more than that? Are you looking for a home-nursing agency that will care for the whole person, the whole family, and the whole community? We're your partner.
- When patients require care for chronic or acute illnesses, we have many options to help them stay at home. Our clinicians see between 1100 and 1200 patients every day in the five county Philadelphia metro area. Nurses, physical, occupational, and speech therapists; social workers and home-health aides promote recovery, maximize independence in daily living activities, and teach patients and families how to manage chronic illness. Healthcare decisions involve many tough choices. We're here as a longstanding member of the community to offer options and help you respect your loved one's wishes.
- Our physician-led palliative-care program provides expert symptom management as well as compassionate nurse practitioners, social workers, and chaplains. They are experts in discussing and selecting the right care plan for you.
- If the time comes for hospice care, the VNA Hospice of Philadelphia empowers patients and families to make informed choices about fulfilling their remaining days. A coordinated program of services enables patients to live fully and comfortably wherever they call home, including nursing homes and assisted-living facilities. We understand that family members may feel overwhelmed when caring for a terminally ill loved one. We provide care that addresses the patient's and the family's physical, spiritual, and emotional needs.
- The VNA Hospice of Philadelphia also supports the bereaved and helps them cherish the memory of their loved one. Everyone has access to our support services. We hold special services throughout the year—a tree lighting in the winter and a butterfly release in the spring—to honor those who have passed.
- Our difference, what sets us apart, what makes us the best, is the compassionate care of our people. We'll respond to you quickly when you need us. We'll be your partner day or night. We'll take good care of your loved one and we'll take care of you, too.
Please Join us for our Butterfly Release

VNA Hospice of Philadelphia will hold its 6th Annual Butterfly Release Memorial Service on Thursday, June 30, 2016 at 3pm here at the Falls Center at 3300 Henry Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19129.

The Butterfly Release is a meaningful and beautiful way to reflect on the memories of our loved ones who have passed and to celebrate the present. Hundreds of butterflies will be released simultaneously as memories are shared between families and friends.

Please join us in sharing this special event where we all may have an opportunity to support each other. A $30 donation is accepted for each butterfly released and an acknowledgement will be sent to the designated recipient. This is an ideal way to remember family and friends.

For more information or to make your donation, please contact Karen Zielinski at 215-581-2080 or via email at kzielinski@vnaphilly.org.

Cardiocom comes to the VNA

The Benefits of Tele-Health

Tele-Health is reshaping the health care system by leveraging innovation to successfully manage complex conditions, decrease avoidable acute hospitalizations and provide better outcomes for patients. Cardiocom is focused on helping redesign disease management care models by bringing proactive solutions into the healthcare system that are predictive, preventive, personalized and participatory.

Tele-health is the delivery of health-related services and information via telecommunications technologies. Tele-health could be as simple as two health professionals discussing a case over the telephone or as sophisticated as doing robotic surgery between facilities at different ends of the globe.

Tele-health is an expansion of telemedicine, and unlike telemedicine (which more narrowly focuses on the curative aspect) it encompasses preventative, promotive and curative aspects.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in medicine has developed over the years. Modern medicine incorporates email, electronic drug prescriptions, and home monitoring of conditions by patients.
March Is National Social Workers’ Month

I am a

basic agent for positive change, a client advocating, injustice fighting, therapy providing, systems testing, family preserving, social conscious raising, data collecting, rights protecting, child defending, staff developing, human assisting, strengths focused, social rights championing, ego lending, crisis intervening teacher, facilitator, listener, encourager, supporter, leader with professionalism, integrity, concern, empathy, values, love, trust, honesty, and warmth

Social Worker

(Thanks to the Arkansas NASW Chapter for this affirmation)

Our nation’s more than 600,000 social workers have amazing tenacity and talent.

They confront some of the most challenging issues facing individuals, families, communities and society and forge solutions that help people reach their full potential and make our nation a better place to live.

The VNA employs some of the very best:

Craig Hindman  Melissa Hecht  Susan Chace  Tally Malik  Joanna Vanore  Andy Stuart  Coraly Herrera  Liz Manlin  Alison Megill  Diana Landistratis  JoBeth Kendall  Elizabeth Walmsley  Kelly Kampf  Elisabeth McIntee  Katherine Eaddy  Emily Browning  Molly Freiberg  Nancy Lotz
Therapy Dogs

A therapy dog is a dog trained to provide affection and comfort to people in hospitals, retirement homes, nursing homes, schools, hospices, disaster areas, children testifying in court, and to people with autism.

The systematic use of therapy dogs is attributed to a woman named Elaine Smith, RN. She noticed how well her patients responded to visits by a chaplain and his Golden Retriever. In 1976, Smith started a program for training dogs to visit institutions and the demand for therapy dogs continued to grow. In recent years, therapy dogs have been enlisted to help children overcome speech and emotional disorders.

Many organizations provide evaluation and registration for therapy dogs. In the United States, some organizations require that a dog pass the equivalent of the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen test and then add further requirements specific to the environments in which the dogs will be working. Other organizations have their own testing requirements. Typical tests might ensure that a dog can handle sudden loud or strange noises; can walk on assorted unfamiliar surfaces comfortably; are not frightened by people with canes, wheelchairs, or unusual styles of walking or moving; get along well with children and with the elderly; and so on.

Some colleges and universities bring therapy dogs to campus to help students de-stress. These campus events are often referred to as "Therapy Fluffies," a term coined by Torrey Trust, the original founder of the UC San Diego therapy dog de-stress event. In 2014, Concordia University in Wisconsin became the first university in the U.S. to adopt a full-time therapy dog to its campus in Mequon, WI. The Golden Retriever, Zoey, is trained to interact with people at churches, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, events, and in disaster response situations.

Rex (pictured at left) is the family member of Debra Mondoil, Director of Rehabilitation at the VNA. Rex is a Mi-ki. Mi-kis are bred to be intelligent, calm, sweet-natured, affectionate with a low to moderate activity level. Friendly and alert, they make excellent companions.
What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is a type of medical care that focuses on helping seriously ill patients and their families improve quality of life by alleviating symptoms, pain, and stress. Palliative care is a medical specialty, just like cardiology, oncology, or pediatrics.

An interdisciplinary team provides individualized services and puts you and your loved ones at the center of all treatment decisions. The palliative care team addresses all aspects of a serious illness, recognizing that a patient is not just a disease, but a person with unique physical, emotional, and social needs.

Who is on the Palliative Care Team?

Palliative care is provided by a team of professionals that primarily include palliative care physicians, palliative care nurses, and social workers. The team may also include pharmacists, massage therapists, and other health-care professionals.

What Can Be Expected from Palliative Care?

Depending on the care options chosen by the patient, improvement may be experienced in the following ways:

- Relief from pain and symptoms that may be interfering with daily life
- Unique solutions and a fresh approach to each individual medical situation
- Relaxation and reduced stress
- Support and minimized stress for the family
- Greater understanding of the illness and options for treatment and care
- Help with decision-making with regard to treatment options
- Peace of mind

The palliative care team will consult with a patient’s physician to evaluate a specific set of symptoms or to recommend solutions for improved pain management. At times, the palliative care team will act as a manager of the patient’s care, in consultation with the patient’s primary physician.

Which Patients Need Palliative Care?

Any person who is experiencing a serious illness of any kind is appropriate for palliative care. Therefore, there are no age or disease restrictions. A few examples of illnesses treated by palliative care include, but are not limited to:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Congestive Heart Failure (CHF)
- Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Alzheimer’s Disease

Which Patients Need Palliative Care?

- Kidney Failure
- Stroke
What is Palliative Care? (cont’d from opposite page)

- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS

Is Palliative Care the Same as Hospice?

No. There is confusion about whether or not "hospice care" and "palliative care" are interchangeable phrases. They are not. All hospice care is palliative, but not all palliative care is hospice care.

Palliative care and hospice care share the same goals of comfort through management of pain and symptoms. In addition, both care systems embrace the concept of an interdisciplinary team. There are distinct differences, however:

- Palliative care is available to ALL patients and their families, and is provided at any stage of a serious illness. Palliative care can also be provided alongside curative treatment.
- Hospice care is for patients who have a limited life expectancy, usually of six months or less. It is provided after all curative treatment has been attempted.

VNA/Hospice of Philadelphia Palliative Care Partnerships

In 2009, the VNA/Hospice of Philadelphia partnered with Temple University Hospital to provide a comprehensive Palliative Care program for inpatients at the hospital. Our program has grown from 400 consults the first year to over 1200 this year. We have achieved our Joint Commission certification for the second time earning a perfect score.

In December of 2015, we began our partnership with Hahnemann University Hospital providing palliative care consults to inpatients at the hospital.

Our palliative care teams consist of a Board Certified palliative care physician, nurse practitioner, medical social worker and a chaplain.

Palliative care is a medical specialty that assists the medical team in pain and symptom management and providing counseling and support to patients and their families during a serious illness. The team can also assist patients and families in making difficult medical decisions.

Hospice CNA (Certified Nurse Assistant) receives Spirit of Hospice and Palliative Care Award

Congratulations to Charmaine Lee, one of our CNAs in the Hospice Department, who has won the prestigious Spirit of Hospice and Palliative Care award from the Pennsylvania Hospice and Palliative Care Network. The award recognizes a "hospice/home health aide" who has demonstrated outstanding performance, sensitivity, respect and continuous excellence in service of hospice and palliative care." Charmaine is also Hospice and Palliative Care Certified. The award will be presented at the upcoming Pennsylvania Hospice and Palliative Care Network Annual Conference in Harrisburg. Charmaine has worked here for eight years. Her manager, Terry Fortune, describes Charmaine as "dedicated, reliable, and worthy of the praises that the patients and the families sing on her behalf. Most of all she is like an angel."

Charmaine Lee (pictured left) and Executive Vice President Jane Feinman, MSN, RN (pictured right) celebrate news of the award.
ROCK for Free Care Fundraiser!

Join us on Thursday, April 14th from 6:00—10:00PM at a benefit concert for The VNA of Greater Philadelphia. The event will be held at Franklin's at 3521 Bowman St., Philadelphia, PA 19129. Music will be provided by the Lower Level Band, featuring none other than our own Brian Sharkoski, Director of MIS. Tickets will be $35.00 per ticket. Included with your admission will be 2 drink tickets and light appetizers.

Guest Band (tentative) Vintage Stew.

Headlining Guest Singers from the VNA and Hospice of Philadelphia will be:

Karen Alston, Liza Dioso, Pat Hunt
Dawn Michelizzi and Maureen Murphy

All of the money raised from this event will provide free homecare and the comforts of end-of-life care to individuals who have inadequate amounts of health insurance, or no health insurance at all. For further information, please call Brian Sharkoski at 215-581-2097, or visit us via the web at www.vnaphilly.org.

Contact Us

For more information on our services please call:

215-473-7600
215-473-0772

Or visit us on the web at www.vnaphilly.org.

To make a donation, please contact:

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or www.vnaphilly.org to make a donation online.

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Walter W. Borgenis, III President and CEO/Karen Zielinski, Editor

VNA of Greater Philadelphia, your provider of choice.....

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