Compassion. Innovation. Trust.
WOODY HUNGARTER, PRESIDENT & CEO

Innovation is at the heart of what we do every day. The VNA Philadelphia Difference is delivering the highest quality home health, palliative, and end-of-life care possible with an unparalleled compassion for the whole person and not just an illness.

Using the most modern technology available, we provide our patients with a full spectrum of the care they need. In past issues of this newsletter, you’ve read about our very successful telehealth program, HELM (Health Education and Lifestyle Monitoring) for Home Health program patients. That program continues to grow and it is getting great results for patients, their families, and the doctors who prescribe it for their patients. In fact, our patients with heart failure have a very low hospital readmission rate within 30 days...just 7.41%. For comparison, the national 30 day hospital readmission rate for patients with heart failure is 19.85%. What we’re doing is working.

I’m pleased to tell you that we are expanding our telehealth program to patients in our Hospice program. Hospice Caring Connections…it’s not identical, but it’s similar. The same underlying principles of meeting the comfort needs of the patient, improved responsiveness, and always being there for the family members, guide this program as well.

An additional major technology innovation is also underway. We’re completely modernizing our Electronic Medical Record (EMR) system. It’s a revolutionary change in the way we keep track of our patients’ care. It’s called Homecare Homebase (HCHB) and as of this writing, our entire team, clinical and nonclinical, is receiving training on its implementation and use.

Using HCHB will optimize data, standardize processes and boost efficiency and performance in our agency. It will also be easier for our clinicians to navigate the system and that’s important to us...to make a clinician's job easier at the same time we’re improving our patient records. We looked at a number of other software providers but none could match the quality of HCHB.

Change is admittedly not easy and I really want to thank everyone here for the role they are playing during this transition period. A special word of gratitude to our IT department led by its SVP, Brian Sharkoski for implementing the software. At the end of the day, every day, our priority is our care for our patients and leading with these advanced technologies will help us do exactly that.

His name was Cade when our social worker, Debra, first saw his handsome, yet sad, face online on February 18th. He had an end date of February 20th at which point he was to be euthanized. He had been abandoned by his previous owners and likely abused and neglected prior to their abandoning him. He was very timid upon our first meeting, but Charlie got a good bath that day to go along with his new name and new life. Charlie is so loved and adored by his big family, human and canine. With time, consistency with command work, routine and an enormous amount of love he went from being timid and shy to the world’s biggest lovebug!

This is Joy Murphy. She belongs to our colleague Maureen. Joy got off to a rough start in life like Charlie did. She spent her first six months of life running frightened in the streets in South Carolina. She had been abused (she only has one eye) was sick, hungry, and was terrified of people. She was captured and put on a rescue truck and brought to PA. That was five years ago...look at this girl's smile now! The power of love!
We’ve Been Featured on TV News with Team Super Hero Dogs

We received TV news coverage from Channel 6abc and Channel nbc10 this month!

Our community partner Mercy Career & Technical High School (Mercy CTE), located right around the corner at Allegheny and Hunting Park Avenues, provides an immersive, project-based education to prepare students for what’s next, whether it be entering the workforce to start a career or continuing their education after graduation. Nurturing and empowering the whole individual, Mercy CTE opens doors and creates opportunities, providing contemporary job options and a non-traditional path to higher education.

Each year, the school conducts an IMPACT Philly program. It’s an opportunity for the students to select a charity and create a project to raise money for that charity. This year, Mercy CTE’s “Team Super Hero Dogs” selected VNA Philadelphia. These Mercy CTE Sophomores are designing, sewing, and selling dog bandanas with advice from Jefferson University Fashion Design students to raise funds for our pet therapy program.

Recently, members of Team Super Hero Dogs came here to meet our very own Real Life Super Hero, Olivia, the Certified Therapy Dog! The results were newsworthy! The students and their teacher learned about the important and impressive work that therapy dogs do for patients, families, and even staff members. Each student also had the opportunity to hold Olivia and experience her love.

After the initial meeting, the students and their teacher accompanied our Lead Chaplain, the Rev. Donna Geiger (and Olivia’s pet human) upstairs for a visit to our Hospice Inpatient Unit where Olivia does much of her work.

Bandanas are selling for $5 a piece or $7 for a personalized (with your dog’s name). All proceeds benefit VNA Philadelphia. To order: email mruskey@mercycte.org
Welcome to Our Intern from Temple University

We are pleased to introduce you to Vince Lacey, a student at Temple University. Vince majors in Media Studies and Production and is in his second year.

When Vince first applied for this (unpaid) internship, along with his resume he included a cover letter that read (in part):

“I saw your posting of an internship at VNA Philadelphia and was excited to see an [agency] willing to create social media with the intent to make a difference. As an aspiring media filmmaker, it is my goal to be part of projects that are both impactful and informative. With the experience I have as a production assistant and editor in documentary and short film making, I am confident that I would be an excellent asset to promote your [agency]. I am certain that I would make a great addition to your team with my positivity and passion to learn more. I am driven by my will to create content that inspires people to think and take action. Thank you very much for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.”

With that kind of passion and enthusiasm, how could we say no? And as it turns out, Vince’s family has their own personal story about VNA Philadelphia. Vince’s grandfather had been taken care of by one of our very own Home Health and then Hospice nurses!

Watch for Vince’s pictures and videos on our website and social media!

We wish Vince the brightest and most wonderful future after his graduation next month and invite him to return for a visit any time!

---

Like us on Facebook! Follow us on Twitter and Instagram!

How does using social media help us? Lots of ways! Mostly it helps people make decisions about choosing to use our agency for their health-care needs for their loved one. The better they get to know us, the more they understand that it’s our compassionate care that makes the VNA Philadelphia Difference! We want everyone to receive our care when they need it. Social media also gives people the opportunity to see all the things we are doing as an agency. Because we’re a nonprofit charity, we rely on donations from individuals, companies, and foundations. Our social-media presence is a real-time way to keep people informed about our activities and it's a way to promote our agency's events.

Our website (www.vnaphilly.org) is also a tool people can use to learn about our agency, our people, and our events.

Check us out!
An Eisenhower Fellow Visits VNA Philadelphia for Information Exchange

Eisenhower Fellowships is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization created in 1953 by a group of prominent American citizens to honor President Dwight D. Eisenhower for his contribution to humanity as a soldier, statesman, and world leader. The organization identifies, empowers and connects innovative leaders through a transformative fellowship experience and lifelong engagement in a global network of dynamic change agents committed to creating a world more peaceful, prosperous and just.

Each Fellow receives an individualized five to seven week program of consultations with experts and senior officials in government, industry, academia, the arts and the not-for profit sector. The Global Program brings 20 – 25 Fellows from countries around the world in all sectors to the U.S. each spring.

Earlier this year, we were selected to be a host for one of the 2019 Fellows, Carson Chen. Chen oversees technology development, competitive strategy and corporate culture at a mobile health tech startup in Chinese Taipei. Chen was trained in optics and signal processing at MIT and Caltech. His company uses smartphone camera technology to enable ordinary people to conduct instant health checkups on their mobile devices. Their first product, the PixoTest Blood Glucose monitor, was developed to help treat diabetes, a chronic disease that affects 30 million Americans at an annual cost of $176 billion. On fellowship he plans to investigate the U.S. healthcare ecosystem with the higher goal of introducing the world to healthcare innovations originating in Chinese Taipei, one of Asia’s leading health tech pioneers.

He met with our SVP for Information Technology, Brian Sharkoski and our SVP for Home Health, Dawn King RN BSN, to learn about our very successful telehealth program, HELM (Health Education and Lifestyle Monitoring). Heart Failure patients on our HELM program have just a 7.41% rate of hospital readmission compared to an average 25% rate for patients not on telehealth monitoring.
Taking Care of Our Patients

At VNA Philadelphia, taking care of people means more to us than just treating an illness. It means taking care of a whole person and their family. That’s the VNA Philadelphia Difference.

Since January, we’ve been partnering with Philabundance, the area’s largest hunger-relief organization. Since that time we have distributed 592 grocery bags of food to our patients and the community in need.

One nurse, who did not want to be named, has personally delivered 101 bags to her patients. She knows who she is and we thank her!

Food items that our clinicians have delivered include cantaloupes, onions, oranges, wax beans, potatoes, and apples. Bringing fresh, delicious, nutritious produce to people unable to access it otherwise is a very rewarding experience. It ties us even more deeply to our community and that’s another VNA Philadelphia Difference!
Congratulations to Our Diabetes Specialty Program Team!

We are delighted to announce that VNA Philadelphia's Diabetes Specialty Program has just received its official accreditation from the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE)! A rigorous application process completed by our team members has been evaluated and approved by the AADE.

Our team is led by Dawn King, RN, BSN and SVP of Home Health. Mary Beth Hardiman, RN, CDE, Tinika Stubbs, RN, Stephanie Louis, RN, and Loretta Flowers, RN are specialty nurses who have received specific training for taking care of people with diabetes.

The AADE is an interdisciplinary professional membership organization dedicated to improving prediabetes, diabetes and cardiometabolic care through innovative education, management, and support. With more than 14,000 professional members including nurses, dietitians, pharmacists, exercise specialists, and others, AADE has a vast network of practitioners working with people who have, are affected by, or are, at risk for diabetes.

The total number of people that our Home Health team takes care of daily runs between 1,800 and 2,000. Approximately 41% of our patients have diabetes and that high number is still on the rise here in Philadelphia. Diabetes is frequently not the only diagnosis our patients are living with (co-morbidities).

Home Health services are provided at key times during transitions from acute care for patients with new diagnoses, or exacerbations of uncontrolled blood sugars, or who have had complications with their co-morbidities.

Our goal was to develop this certified program to provide a way to coordinate with physicians and enhance the care needs of our diabetic population and better manage our population's health-care needs. Our program enables us to engage our communities with an inter-professional, holistic program that ensures our patients feel supported. Our team will advocate for patients to self-identify goals, uncover barriers, and gain behaviors to independently manage their symptoms.

Diabetes self-management education and support (DSME/S) provides the foundation for people with diabetes to navigate decisions and activities and has been shown to improve health outcomes. DSME is the process of transferring knowledge from a clinician to a patient or a family member. Having such a comprehensive and consistent approach to education services will ensure that we are able to help our patients gain access to their diabetic health-care needs for a better quality of life!
Understanding and Getting Ready for PDGM

Maybe you’re not familiar with it or maybe it’s the most time-consuming project you’re working on right now. Either way, changes to PDGM (Patient-Driven Groupings Model) are on the horizon and we’re getting ready for them.

Essentially, it’s the biggest change in recent memory to the way home-health care providers will be reimbursed by CMS (the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services). Announced in 2018, the new regulations are scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2020.

VNA Philadelphia has begun preparations for the new reimbursement practices that are in store. There will be no effect on our patients or their families...they won’t even know changes are being implemented. Our referral sources won’t have to do anything differently either...it’s just a change in the financial model of insurance reimbursement for the agency.

Are You a Military Veteran?

Would you like to make an impact on another veteran's life? Consider becoming a volunteer for our Veteran to Veteran program in Hospice.

No one can understand a veteran the way another veteran can. You speak the same language, have similar experiences, and can communicate in a special way with each other. Volunteers just need to spend time with a patient. Maybe reminiscing, maybe reading a book, or just being a quiet companion. Special training is provided at no cost and you’d be making a difference in a patient’s life.

VNA Philadelphia’s Hospice program is part of We Honor Veterans, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), invites hospices, state hospice organizations, Hospice-Veteran Partnerships and VA facilities to join a pioneering program focused on respectful inquiry, compassionate listening and grateful acknowledgment. By recognizing the unique needs of America’s veterans and their families, community providers, in partnership with VA staff, will learn how to accompany and guide them through their life stories toward a more peaceful ending.

For more information on becoming a volunteer (for military members or any other type of volunteer work) call Terry Scott at 215-581-2360 or email her at tscott@vnaphilly.org

Are You a Military Veteran?
Did You Know That Infusion Therapy Is Now Available from VNA Philadelphia

Not very many home health care providers will make the investment in their clinicians to receive specialty training in providing IV infusions at home. But more and more patients are being discharged from hospital stays with IVs. We think it’s important that our patients can receive IV medications in the comfort of their own home. That we can take care of people who need IV medication at home can help reduce the length of the hospital stay for the patient. We’re seeing that need more and more and we’re filling it.

We’re always working on meeting the needs of our patients, we’re always going to make it happen. It’s the VNA Philadelphia Difference.

Offering infusions at home is the newest one of our Specialty Programs, joining Diabetes, Mental Health, Cardiac, and Wound Care.

VNA Hospice Benefit Concert
featuring
Dave Nachmanoff
& Liz Bligan

VNA Philadelphia presents our Hospice Benefit Concert starring award winning singer, Dave Nachmanoff and our very own Chairman of the Trustees Board, Liz Bligan! You are cordially invited to join us and enjoy a night of folk rock music. Proceeds will go towards our Hospice Inpatient Unit, the only freestanding nonprofit inpatient unit in Philadelphia & surrounding counties.
Congratulations to Our Palliative Care Team at Temple University Hospital as They Celebrate Ten Years of Care and Service

What is palliative care? Palliative care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv) is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment.

Our Palliative Care Team at Temple University Hospital is comprised of medical doctors, nurse practitioners, social workers, a nurse, and a chaplain. Stan Savanese, DO, (a Philadelphia Magazine Top Doc!) leads the team of Temple’s Mary Kraemer, MD, (another Philadelphia Magazine Top Doc!) and our Beth Reimet, MD, Sandy Turner, CRNP, Steve Clark, CRNP, Katie Eaddy, LSW, MSW, Emily Browning, LSW, MSW, Chaplain The Rev. Jim Ingalls, and Audrey Dixon, LPN.

A typical day for the team can include consultations with Temple’s medical team, training Residents, family meetings to make decisions about care for their loved one, spiritual care, and providing emotional support. A lot has changed in the past 10 years. In our first year there were about 450 consultations a year provided by a two-person team. Today, our team provides 1,450 consultations a year.

What makes this interdisciplinary team so very successful? Chaplain Jim Ingalls says it's “Because each member of the team is incredibly gifted in their specialty. At the same time, we lay all ego aside. We respect each other’s professionalism and we really listen to each other. We’ve built a lot of trust on this team and with our colleagues in the hospital.”

Congratulations and Happy 10th Anniversary!
A Most Worthwhile Cause
We’ve been taking care of people for more than 130 years. Our mission is to provide comprehensive home health, palliative, and end-of-life care of the highest quality to all people regardless of their ability to pay. Your support will help us carry out this compassionate care. We visit between 1,100 and 1,200 Home Health patients every day. We also take care of 200 Hospice patients in their own homes as well as providing care in our Inpatient Hospice Unit, the only freestanding, nonprofit, hospice unit of its kind. All proceeds from this event benefit our patients and their families, and on their behalf, thank you.

Stay and Play golf with us at the Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort on May 6th!

A Day of Remembrance and Celebrating the Lives of Our Beloved Hospice Patients

NINTH ANNUAL BUTTERFLY RELEASE & COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Saturday, June 8, 2019
11am-1pm
VNA Philadelphia Falls Center
3300 Henry Avenue
Philadelphia PA 19129

Thank you for supporting!

For sponsorships and event ticket purchases, please visit:
www.vnaphilly.org
Congratulations to Our Staff in the Hospice Inpatient Unit as They Celebrate Ten Years of Care and Service

Every day, patients and families make the decision to turn to VNA Philadelphia for end-of-life care. They choose us because they know we will provide the best care, the most compassionate care, and the most comforting care.

It’s never an easy decision, but we have an entire team of doctors, nurses, aides, social workers, bereavement counselors, and chaplains who are a network of support every step of the way. Whatever is needed, we make sure we provide.

This Spring, we commemorate the Unit’s tenth anniversary. Since we opened our doors in April 2009, nearly 6,000 have received our care. And it’s your generosity that has made this happen. It’s your donations that create the homelike environment of our Unit. The family room, the kitchen, the quiet and private room that each patient deserves. Your gifts make the hospice experience at VNA Philadelphia different from any other hospice.

We’ve witnessed the joy of weddings taking place in our Unit—complete with cake and flowers. We’ve seen families who had been long-estranged reunite in our Unit. We’ve seen family dogs brought in our Unit for one more night in bed with their owner. We have taken care of Navy SEALs, we have found Buddhist monks to chant, we have had volunteers sing, and play guitar, we have celebrated holidays as a community with our kitchen staff preparing dinners for patients, families and staff members alike. We have had family members Uber a patient’s cats here for a visit. There was a patient who was being sung to by a choir and he said, “that’s so beautiful...will you sing at my funeral?” There was a patient who no longer was able to communicate with words, but as soon as our therapy dog Olivia sat on her lap, she was able to lovingly pet her. This is the VNA Philadelphia Difference and you make it all happen.

On behalf of all our patients and families, THANK YOU!
### Included in this Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Message from our President &amp; CEO</td>
<td>Cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy CTE High School’s “Team Superhero Dogs”</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome to Our Intern from Temple University</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Eisenhower Fellow Visits VNA Philadelphia for Information Exchange</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s Official, We Have a New Electronic Medical Record (EMR) System</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking Care of Our Patients</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congratulations to Our Diabetes Specialty Program Team!</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are You a Military Veteran?</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding and Getting Ready for PDGM</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did You Know That Infusion Therapy Is Now Available from VNA Philadelphia</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNA Hospice Benefit Concert</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congratulations to Our Palliative Care Team at Temple University Hospital As They Celebrate Ten Years of Care and Service</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay and Play Golf with us at the Shawnee Inn &amp; Golf Resort on May 6th!</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Annual Butterfly Release &amp; Community Celebration of Life</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congratulations to Our Staff in the Hospice Inpatient Unit as They Celebrate Ten Years of Care and Service</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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:
- Maureen Murphy
  - Sr. VP for Development and Communication
  - 215-581-2006
  - mmurphy@vnaphilly.org

or www.vnaphilly.org to make a donation online. Click Donate Now.

---

*A publication of VNA Philadelphia*

_Elwood Hungarter, RN, BSN, MS, President and CEO/ Maureen Murphy, Writer/ Dominique Scott, Editor*