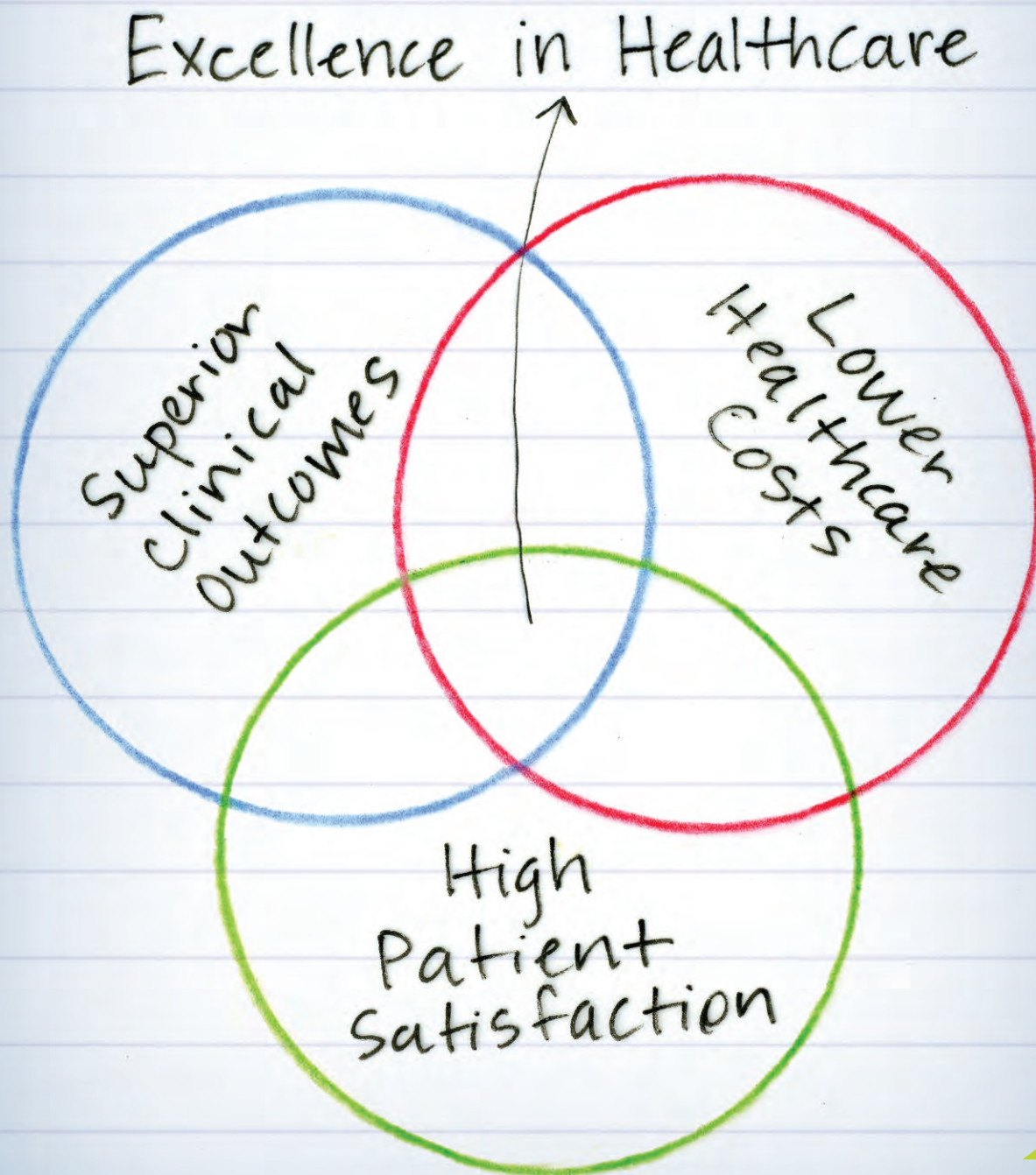


# LOOK HOMEWARD

*A publication for the supporters of  
Visiting Nurse Health System*



# ACTION NEEDED to Roll Back Proposed Medicare Home Health Payment Reductions

## Cuts Will Devastate Nonprofit Home Health Providers and Vulnerable Patients

On July 3, 2013, Congress proposed a 14 percent Medicare cut to home health payments over four years, at a rate of 3.5 percent per year. The Visiting Nurse Associations of America (VNAA) strongly urged its members to alert their Congressional representatives to the dramatic impact the proposed payment reductions will have on vulnerable patients' access to essential, low-cost, high-quality home health services.

Additionally, the VNAA asserts, "Initial analysis indicates that the proposed payment reductions would have a grave impact on nonprofit providers of home health services," especially as "hospitals and physicians are using the Medicare home health benefit as a core element of their restructured care delivery and coordination" in the wake of national healthcare reform. "A devastating cut to home health is contrary to health care reform efforts that seek to provide high quality care at home to reduce institutional costs."

The reductions will have a devastating impact on patients' access to care. In 2010, more than 3.4 million Medicare beneficiaries used home health services, and almost 60 percent of them are more than 75 years old. The sickest Medicare beneficiaries will be harmed the most, as more than 85 percent of Medicare home health beneficiaries have three or more chronic conditions, including diabetes, chronic heart disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Furthermore, home healthcare is key for recovery from major joint replacement surgery.

From a financial standpoint, the proposed 14 percent cuts are far from acceptable. They do not take into account: the impact of the April 2013 two percent sequestration cuts, the non-reimbursed costs of health information technology used for Medicare beneficiaries, and

additional costs associated with new requirements for enhanced patient and service documentation.

If these cuts are enacted, Visiting Nurse will feel the impact through a reduction in our ability to provide care to approximately 9,000 Medicare beneficiaries per year, while we simultaneously expect a growing demand for our services from the most vulnerable patients.

Visiting Nurse stands with the VNAA in opposition to this proposed regulation. Furthermore, we are communicating with members of Georgia's Congressional delegation who are currently engaged in these policy discussions at the committee level. We urge our stakeholders to contact their Congressmen to express disapproval of these cuts as well. Information on how to contact them can be found at: [www.congressweb.com/vnaa/legislators](http://www.congressweb.com/vnaa/legislators). ■



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Visiting Nurse Health System has always focused on delivering excellence in the form of world-class care to our patients. This has resulted in the highest patient satisfaction in greater Atlanta for overall quality of care and likelihood of recommending our care to others. Still, there is always room for improvement.

Although we rarely receive clinical complaints, we continue to train our clinicians to keep their skills sharp and up-to-date. We find the more confidence a clinician has in their skills, the better their attitude is in their daily practice, thus further increasing patient satisfaction.

To strive for even higher patient satisfaction, we also focus on providing our clinicians with people skills, from how to empathize with upset family members or ways to be a team player, to simply interacting with patients with a smile and a positive nature. To augment this skill set, we have created a scholarship program to help our nurses obtain advanced education. This investment will not only help advance our workforce, but will result in clinicians with better problem-solving skills who are more responsive to the needs of patients and their caregivers, and who can act as mentors to other Visiting Nurse clinicians.

We realize our hospital and physician partners and patients have a choice of healthcare providers. To fulfill their needs and expectations, we believe investing in excellence—whether in people skills, advanced education, technology upgrades, or enhanced programs—and practicing excellence in all we do will keep us top-of-mind as the provider most capable of improving the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Oshnock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

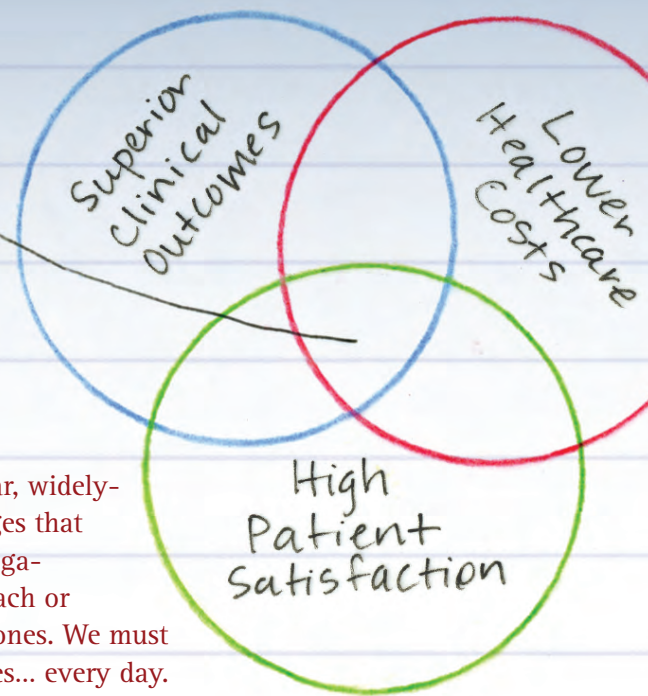
Mark Oshnock  
President and CEO  
Visiting Nurse Health System



# Redefining Excellence in the Face of Change

## New World of Healthcare Requires Nonprofit Care More Than Ever

In 1982, Tom Peters published his book *In Search of Excellence*, a popular, widely-read international business bestseller. Since that time, Peters acknowledges that the world has changed drastically, culminating in his current 23-part mega-“presentation” titled “Excellence. Now.” Peters asserts that, in order to reach or maintain excellence, “we all must live... full-time... out of our comfort zones. We must rudely and bluntly challenge our own thinking and that of our colleagues... every day. This is excruciatingly difficult—especially if you or your organization is successful.”



### Accountable Care Organizations Require Healthcare Excellence

Changes in the healthcare environment dictate that we “challenge our own thinking and that of our colleagues” in order to remain an excellent resource for helping people recover their health, live with chronic conditions, or die with dignity. The Affordable Care Act sets up new models of care such as Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)—which in Atlanta will most likely be managed by our hospital partners—through which Medicare will pay healthcare providers based on the quality, not solely the quantity, of the care they deliver. The goal of the ACO model is to coordinate and improve patient care and alleviate some of the financial strain the aging of our nation has placed on the Medicare system.

### Three Pillars of Healthcare Excellence

The demands of the Affordable Care Act require excellence, as the ACOs will be paying for quality outcomes from their healthcare provider partners. The Affordable Care Act will reward care coordination that decreases healthcare spending by reducing hospitalization. One of the catalysts for improved financial efficiency is the growing population of senior citizens and the rising costs of healthcare they require, particularly since seniors have the highest rate of hospitalization. Accordingly, services designed to keep patients from returning to the hospital—such as those delivered by Visiting Nurse—are becoming increasingly valuable as a preferred model of care. Visiting Nurse consistently delivers lower cost care as compared to alternatives in the Atlanta market. For example, each readmission to the hospital costs an average of \$7,500; in

contrast, a week of home healthcare costs an average of only \$450. Delivering **lower cost healthcare** that benefits patients, our hospital partners and the Medicare system, is the first of three pillars of healthcare excellence.

The second pillar of healthcare excellence is **high patient satisfaction**, measured by patients’ and caregivers’ experience. For instance, patients evaluate if they were cared for in a professional manner, if their care team communicated well with them, and if their clinician respected their time and home environment. Patient satisfaction surveys show Visiting Nurse scoring highest in greater Atlanta for overall quality of care and likelihood of recommending our care to others. However, not all aspects of personal satisfaction can be measured. When receiving care from a nonprofit provider, patients may sense the guiding force behind the care they receive is a genuine concern for their well-being, more so than other factors such as profit or shareholder influence.

The third pillar of healthcare excellence, measured by superior clinical outcomes, is **high quality care**. While all providers are capable of delivering quality care, Medicare reports that our patients needed urgent, unplanned care in the emergency room 18 percent less than other Atlanta providers. Our patients also had to be admitted to the hospital 13 percent less when compared to other Atlanta providers. These differences in outcomes are significant to the people whose lives have been impacted and improved. We attribute these differences to our ability to step outside of our “comfort zone” and look at the whole patient picture, funding innovative projects, and offering unique services and programs.



### A Vision to Meet New Challenges

Our vision statement was written years before Medicare ACOs were created, yet it speaks directly to the challenges of the current healthcare environment and its need for excellence:

*To continue to invest in our strong community partnerships, coordinated care solutions, top-performing workforce and innovative technologies to improve affordability throughout the healthcare continuum.*

Our history as a pioneer in the delivery of healthcare at home, our current successful delivery of healthcare excellence, and our vision for the future of the new healthcare environment, combined with our resolve to apply solutions born outside of the comfort zone, make it imperative that we remain an indispensable, preferred partner of area ACOs.

For the benefit of our patients and the community, we have been strategically planning in anticipation of major changes in the healthcare system, while simultaneously remaining flexible to react to unforeseeable consequences of the Affordable Care Act. It is our vision that guides our planning, allowing us to continue to deliver healthcare excellence.

### Unique Models of Healthcare

Beyond planning to meet the challenges arising from changes in the healthcare arena, Visiting Nurse is continuing to step out of the comfort zone by exploring alternative care options in search of excellence.

For example, caregivers attending to a loved one with Alzheimer's may benefit from the help of a Certified Nursing Assistant, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Specialist, to bathe the patient or assist with similar duties of daily living, giving the caregiver time to attend to their own lives. Patients near the end of life who have lived alone and are without family members or others to provide appropriate care, find comfort as longer-term residents in the Hospice Atlanta Center.

These are only two instances where Visiting Nurse is able to remain flexible and deliver unique services that other providers might dismiss as not profitable. It also illustrates how we can offer support, home healthcare and end-of-life services to all those in need, not only for patients requesting financial assistance but for those who have the ability to pay for a portion of their care, while simultaneously providing Visiting Nurse additional streams of revenue.

### The Results of Excellence

Patients' family members are often the ones who appreciate healthcare excellence and alternative care options, especially when their loved one suffers from multiple conditions and recovery demands complex care coordination. Caretaker Jeannie wrote a letter of gratitude to Visiting Nurse for keeping her husband, Constantinos, at home following a long hospital stay:



"My husband was hospitalized in July 2012 in many different facilities and did not return to his home permanently until December 2012. Constantinos entered the hospital in critical condition. He has Parkinson's and with every infection, surgery, and change of medication he lost his base and we did not know where to start to bring him back to a somewhat stable condition. We were advised to place him in a skilled nursing facility with continuous care. We refused and brought him home.

Visiting Nurse was there to help us in a very difficult situation to get my husband out of bed and moving. He had 24 hour care, a serious bed sore, and was fed through a feeding tube.

Both my husband and I have witnessed our health care system and the difficulty maneuvering through it as a result of a very long journey being hospitalized. We are so aware of its shortcomings and the uncertainty. But if it is of any consolation we are forever thankful to Visiting Nurse for all the services you provided for us."

Jeannie closes by recognizing the excellence we bring to the community and to her family:

"Your mission to serve and improve the life of an individual goes above and beyond what anyone could expect. Your staff working as a team brought great results. Excellence is a term that is hard to live up to. Your staff understands that term well! Everyone was so compassionate to Constantinos and it was so welcomed after his long journey home." ■

CARING VOICES

# Bedbound Patient Re-Enters the Larger World

“I felt something inside stir that I’d almost forgotten... hope.”

In the previous issue of *Look Homeward* we printed a grateful testimonial from our patient Charles Smith. In the following letter Mr. Smith provides an update on his progress and the renewed hope he has for his life thanks to his Visiting Nurse caregivers.

Dear Mr. Oshnock,

As a follow up to my memo of February 19th, I wanted to tell you how my Physical and Occupational Therapy team have worked a miracle in my life.

As I mentioned before, I have been bedbound since 2009, and after a previous physical therapy effort was a complete failure, I had largely given up hope of ever seeing anything but the four walls of my bedroom (a particularly depressing thought as I hate the wallpaper) other than a few times a year riding on a stretcher. I considered any thoughts of walking again to be an impossible dream.

My Visiting Nurse team changed all that!

Nancy Nurnburg wondered why I was not making use of a wheelchair. My caregivers and I explained the problems we had encountered with the lift and chair we had been given; Nancy determined



□ Nancy Nurnburg

the chair I had was a very poor fit, and that the space we had to maneuver in was not conducive to using a Hoyer lift. When I heard that, my expectations were really nothing would change (the previous company blew me a lot of sunshine but never delivered), but Nancy didn’t stop there; she promised that they would get me mobile. And that’s **exactly** what she and my team did.

Nancy brought in a wheelchair expert, who examined and measured me, and then made recommendations for an electric wheelchair, custom fitted, with a feature that would allow the chair

to lean back which made transfers to and from my bed MUCH simpler. The justifications were written, the approvals obtained, and the chair was ordered. It was simply amazing how simple they

□ Will Boatwright



made this process for me. Nancy’s knowledge of the Medicare system is awesome; she has been an incredible advocate for me. While the paperwork was being pushed, Lori and William tailored

their work with me to prepare for the chair, focusing on building up strength and techniques to better utilize this marvelous new tool.

Finally, the wheelchair arrived. I was more than a bit nervous about transferring to it, but William Boatwright made the process simple, fast, and pain-free, and taught my caregivers his techniques. And then, the miracle: I re-entered the larger world, under my own power, for the first time in over four years. I rolled from my bedroom into my den; something that almost anyone else would take for granted, but for me, it was so much more: it was freedom to live again in a larger world. I cannot sing the praises of my team enough.

Lori Palatchi



Nancy Nurnburg is a true master of the processes and paperwork needed to deliver excellent and effective care, as well as expert in physical therapy. She saw the need, imagined what was possible, and made it a reality. Lori

Palatchi used her OT skills to help me prepare for the chair by focusing on building upper body strength. She is a gentle, kind and compassionate soul who demonstrates both her position is more than just a job and that she cares a great deal for her patients.

William Boatwright has had the most profound impact on me. I was afraid, really, to start another physical therapy program after the one I had been placed in a few years ago turned out to be a bust. My expectations were that it would be boring and accomplish little. I certainly was dead wrong.

William, from that very first day, was different. We connected that day on many levels, not just as patient and therapist, but as player and coach. Listening to him, I felt something inside stir that I'd almost forgotten... hope that maybe I would not be stuck in this bed forever. It was William who instilled hope in me. Afterwards, all members of my team contributed in many and varied ways to boost this long forgotten emotion, but it was William who managed somehow to kindle a fire in a cold and dead place.

I found myself not dreading physical therapy, but actually looking forward to my sessions with William. I left every meeting with him exhausted,

encouraged, motivated, and determined to make progress. I found myself going above and beyond on the exercises he assigned to ensure I would be able to show improvement. William

challenged me and pushed me hard, like any good coach should. I liked the way I felt after every session.

What my Visiting Nurse team has done is give me freedom to go out into the world. They have given me a level of autonomy I thought I would never

goal. My legs bore weight for the first time since 2009. I was able to rise to a partial stand. My legs were no longer just useless appendages; they have suddenly become a working part of me again. If I had been asked when Visiting Nurse began with me, back in January of this year, I would have sworn this was impossible; yet now, standing and walking are within my grasp.

I understand that there may now be other options, based on the progress William has made with me, developing for my physical therapy. While having access to parallel bars and other special

equipment would be useful, I do not feel I am ready for that just yet. I know the most important part of my progress has been my incredible coach, and I want to do the next steps he has suggested with his guidance and encouragement. As I said in my first memo, I said I wanted no one other than Visiting Nurse delivering my home health care services, and today, I want no one other than William Boatright directing my Physical Therapy for as long as he feels there is progress that we can make together. I have learned the most important part of any medical services is the people providing it, and I have complete and

absolute confidence in Visiting Nurse, Nancy Nurnburg, Lori Palatchi, and especially William Boatwright to guide my recovery in every aspect: physical, mental, and spiritual.

Mere words are not adequate, but I thank you, sir, from the bottom of my heart, for you, for the company you lead, and all of the care team members who have touched my life. ■

*"I considered any thoughts of walking again to be an impossible dream. My Visiting Nurse team changed all that!"*

*"I have learned the most important part of any medical services is the people providing it, and I have complete and absolute confidence in Visiting Nurse."*

*"I wanted no one other than Visiting Nurse delivering my home health care services."*

*Charles Smith, patient*

experience again. Because of their efforts, I now have the ability to go to my doctors other than on a stretcher, and also go other places, such as an optometrist or a fraternity alumni meeting.

After bringing me this new freedom, William was not content to stop here. He had not yet brought me all of his magic. In my most recent physical therapy session, on Thursday May 16th, I achieved another incredible



PROGRAMS

# Private Duty Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program

## In-home Care Available to Patients of All Income Levels

As many as five million Americans have Alzheimer's disease or other dementia, including an estimated one in ten people age 65 or over. According to the Alzheimer's Association, nearly 60 percent of nursing home residents are affected. As we've learned more about these diseases, it becomes clear our models of care must evolve to include non-medical care for patients who wish to remain in their own home, which, by extension, equates to respite care for their caregivers. At the present time these new models are funded privately by the patient's family and supplemented by donor support.

The Visiting Nurse Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program is the only program of its kind in Georgia. The program was established in 1990 and has been primarily funded by the generous, on-going support from two important donors whose motivation for giving is based on personal experiences of having cared for loved ones with these diseases: Lou Brown Jewell, and Bill and Eleanor Cheney. This one-of-

□ Sarah Wood, Alzheimer's Program Manager, cares for patient Zara Sprayberry



a-kind, low-cost support program has served patients and their caregivers, 30 percent of whom have received more than ten years of care.

The goal of the program is to improve overall quality of life for the patient and their caregiver as an alternative to hospital and institutional care. A registered nurse performs an initial in-home assessment of the patient and establishes the plan of care, which is then implemented by a Certified Nursing Assistant, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Specialist. The number of hours of service is based on patient and caregiver needs. Patients are given assistance with tasks of daily living and provided mental and physical stimulation and support. Caregivers are given education about the various stages of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, as well as strategies for managing the diseases, skills for dealing with difficult caregiving situations,

*"Our ability to build a sustainable Alzheimer's and Parkinson's care model will depend on income sources beyond donations, and our ability to sustain a healthy business model means we will be able to touch a greater number of patients and their caregivers."*

*Mark Oshnock  
President and CEO of Visiting Nurse Health System*



## Pet Peace of Mind

### New Service Keeps Home Hospice Patients and Pets Together

resources for a strong support network, and respite care to afford them time to attend to their own needs. A clinical advice phone line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Visiting Nurse recognizes the growing need for this service and is making efforts to offer the program to a wider audience of patients from all economic backgrounds.

“Our ability to build a sustainable Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s care model will depend on income sources beyond donations,” says Mark Oshnock, president and CEO of Visiting Nurse, who adds “And our ability to sustain a healthy business model means we will be able to touch a greater number of patients and their caregivers.”

To be eligible to receive services, the client must have Alzheimer’s, Dementia, or Parkinson’s Disease, be given an assessment by a registered nurse to ensure the patient is appropriate for services, live in one of ten metro-Atlanta counties (Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, or Rockdale), and agree to a sliding scale payment schedule.

Hourly costs range from \$5 to \$20 based on an initial financial assessment establishing available financial resources. ■

To learn more about the program, contact:  
Dorothy Davis

Executive Director, Long-Term Care  
404-222-2414 or [dorothy.davis@vnhs.org](mailto:dorothy.davis@vnhs.org)



□ Hospice patient Earl Moon and volunteer Jim Anderson with Brewster

Ann Serrie, Volunteer Coordinator with the hospice service at Visiting Nurse, leads this program and is assisted by Jim Anderson, a two-year hospice volunteer. Ann and Jim have established a core team of trained volunteers who deliver these services and related administrative duties. “We already have 30

The unconditional love and companionship a pet offers is invaluable to patients in all stages of care. For home hospice patients who are unable to care for their pets, Visiting Nurse Health System recently partnered with Banfield Charitable Trust’s *Pet Peace of Mind* program, offering volunteers who provide hands-on assistance as well as financial assistance when needed.

The program’s goal is to keep these patients and their pets together for as long as possible. Patients benefit emotionally by having their four-legged companions around when friends and family have to attend to other obligations. Patients are also given guidance on how to find a new home for their pet after their lifetime, relieving them of concern about their pet’s future.

volunteers, including a consulting veterinarian, Dr. Lance Hirsch, who has been very helpful to us,” says Jim. “The volunteers provide services to dogs and cats such as pet sitting and grooming, picking up and delivering food and supplies, transporting pets, changing litter boxes, and taking pets for walks.” Banfield provided initial planning and guidance for the program, as well as a grant for routine veterinary care, some medications, and shopping assistance for pet food and cat litter.

By supporting their pets, Visiting Nurse lets our hospice patients enjoy their company in their final days without worrying about their furry friends’ current or future needs. As Jim sees it, “This program rounds out our hospice services. By taking care of our patients’ pet family we truly are ‘full service.’” ■

## CURRENT EVENTS

# Marilyn Miller, RN

## Honored with Dot Cares Award



Each year the Dot Cares Award is presented to a clinician who has demonstrated exceptional performance, lives the mission of Visiting Nurse Health System, and has a reputation among patients and peers as a caregiver who shows uncompromising care and compassion. This award, created in 2007, honors the legacy of long-time Board member and Visiting Nurse supporter Dot Cohen. Dot, who died August 29, 2009 at the Hospice Atlanta Center, was a cherished part of our organization for more than 30 years.

This year the Dot Cares Award was presented to Marilyn Miller, RN. Marilyn just celebrated her 30-year anniversary with Visiting Nurse working in several

different capacities. She is quick to point out that she is “surrounded by a GREAT support team of other nurses, supervisors, and office staff.”

Marilyn sums up her experience this way: “I have always felt that Visiting Nurse has encouraged me to change and grow as a nurse as I wanted. For example, Visiting Nurse paid for my wound care certification. Most importantly though, I have the opportunity to enter a person’s home and provide them with services and assistance to keep them where they want to be—in their home. I make a difference.”

We want to thank Marilyn for her outstanding dedication and service. ■

### This Year’s Excellence Award Winners

In addition to the Dot Cares Award, we present annual Excellence Awards to recognize employees who consistently display professionalism, commitment to best practices, and high standards of excellence while carrying out our mission on a daily basis.

#### Home Health

Lynn Adams, RN  
Lakeside branch

Beth Barber, LPN  
Kennesaw branch

Thelma Gabb, RN  
Kennesaw branch

Christy Ingle, PT  
Lakeside branch

Erica James, PT  
Fayetteville branch

Starlene McGuire  
Sugarloaf branch

#### Hospice

Tim Hunt, LPN  
Hospice Atlanta Center

Adama Tarawally, LPN  
Hospice Atlanta Center

Carla Winnubst, LCSW  
Home Hospice

Kathy Heller, RN  
Home Hospice

#### Long-Term Care

Faye Fretz, RN  
Care Coordinator Coach

Karen Davis  
Data Entry Specialist

#### Business Development

Jenny Buckley, RN  
Hospice Transition Liaison

#### Corporate Support

Corey McDaniel  
Manager, Financial Analyst

Annie Wingate, RN  
Clinical Informatics Specialist



## Lou Brown Jewell 2013 Philanthropist of the Year

**L**ou Brown Jewell, nominated by Visiting Nurse and Berry College, was selected as the 2013 Philanthropist of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), Greater Atlanta Chapter. Lou will receive her award during the National Philanthropy Day Luncheon to be held November 5, 2013 at the Georgia Aquarium, when nearly 1,000 Atlantans will celebrate philanthropy and the vital role it plays in our community.

Lou embodies the joy of giving and has positively impacted thousands of lives and more than 100 nonprofit organizations in Atlanta. A supporter of Visiting Nurse for more than 20 years, Lou has donated more than five million dollars which has reopened a wing of the Hospice Atlanta Center and purchased cutting edge technology to improve patient care. Following her husband Worley's long illness and death from

Parkinson's and Lewy body dementia in 1997, Lou began providing major support for our Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Support program, thus expanding a much needed and rarely available form of caregiver support to families in Atlanta. In addition, Lou has demonstrated leadership and dedication as a member of our Board of Directors for the past 15 years, and has been a loyal volunteer at the Hospice Atlanta Center.

It is with extreme gratitude that we thank Lou Brown Jewell for her compassion and unwavering support. We are delighted to see her get the recognition she deserves for her enduring commitments to the causes and organizations she cares about. ■

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For more information about the AFP luncheon honoring Lou, please contact the AFP Administrator at 877-845-0704 or [smolnar@asginfo.net](mailto:smolnar@asginfo.net).



## Happy Hour Becomes Helping Hour Volunteers from PricewaterhouseCoopers Create Care Packages



■ The PricewaterhouseCoopers Team

**V**isiting Nurse extends a big thank you to a group of compassionate associates from the professional services firm PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP, who assembled care packages for our patients receiving long term care. The group of approximately 70 typically go to happy hour after their sales meeting, but decided to invest in a more meaningful team-building experience by assembling uniquely decorated bags stuffed with essentials like Depend undergarments, Ensure liquid nutritional

supplements and basic toiletry items, adding a list of what was included and a personal "thinking of you" note to each bag. The bags were delivered to the Visiting Nurse office in Sandy Springs where they were distributed by our social workers to grateful patients. ■

.....  
To learn about various ways individuals or groups can volunteer to support our patients and their families, please visit [vnhs.org/support-us/volunteer](http://vnhs.org/support-us/volunteer), email [advancement@vnhs.org](mailto:advancement@vnhs.org) or call 404-215-6010.

## CURRENT EVENTS

# Fall Benefit to Support Patients Who Need Our Care Long-Time Supporters of Alzheimer's Program Bill and Eleanor Cheney to be Honored

This year, the *In the Moment – A Celebration of Life* fall benefit will honor Bill and Eleanor Cheney for their long-time support of our Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program. The annual event celebrates the work of Visiting Nurse Health System and honors the volunteers and donors who enable our organization to serve the community. This elegant evening will include a cocktail reception and dinner, a video presentation, and a live and silent auction of items and experiences that embrace living in the moment.

Bill and Eleanor annually support the Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program, which was established more than 23 years ago by Eleanor's father, John McCarty. Mr. McCarty experienced first-hand the challenges of caring for his wife, Margaret, who suffered from Alzheimer's for eight years. The McCartys were fortunate they could afford care for Mrs. McCarty in the privacy of their home. This inspired Mr. McCarty to start a foundation honoring his wife to ensure other families coping with the devastating effects of these diseases would have the same respite care his family received. The foundation provided seed capital to fund the program which educates caregivers, delivers skilled nursing services, and



allows caregivers time to attend to their own needs. Ongoing support from the McCarty Foundation has been crucial to the program's success, as traditional payment models provide no reimbursement for these services.

Eleanor recalls the stress placed upon her family as she witnessed her mother's decline. "As a caregiver, to see her suffer like that was just awful. You just can't

do it by yourself. Alzheimer's takes a toll on the whole family. I want other people to get the kind of care my mother had. Visiting Nurse gives the kind of care the patient needs and that the caregiver needs."

Bill and Eleanor currently reside in tranquil Highlands, North Carolina, and keep a home in the Atlanta area to stay close to family. They encourage family philanthropy and want their grandchildren and great-grandchildren to carry on this work. "We have made a policy in our family that we know a lot about the organization that we give to," adds Bill. "Visiting Nurse offers a great deal of relief to the family. I would encourage anyone to give deep consideration to donate money to this organization."

By sponsoring and attending this benefit you help Visiting Nurse deliver healthcare and end-of-life services at home for underinsured patients, which includes providing

care for patients with Alzheimer's and respite care for their families. In 2012, more than 80 percent of the \$4.9 million in services we provided to low-income patients was made possible from donor support. Our one-of-a-kind offerings such as the Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program and our primary care program will allow us to keep more patients in their homes where they want to be, which ultimately reduces healthcare costs.



## Renowned Architect Adds Visiting Nurse Dedication in His Book Julie Fowler Recognized for Care and Comfort

We hope you will join us in supporting all who need our care and will celebrate with us as we honor Bill and Eleanor Cheney.

### Host Committee:

Jerome and Sue Lienhard

### Chairs

Pat Archer  
Marilyn Booker  
Helen S. Carlos  
Tasha Carr  
Pamela Chawkin  
Carol Curran  
Nancy Davis  
Dee Lane Eades  
Linda Frassrand  
Al Harris  
Alfreda Mayes  
Starr Moore  
Brian Ranck  
Jennifer Rogers  
Amy Ruda  
Kurt Schwan  
Ted Schweers  
Bonnie Sharp  
Timothy Sheehan  
Betty Van Gerpen  
Jeremy Wilson  
Lauren Zgutowicz ■

.....  
Visit vnhs.org to:

- Become a patron or corporate sponsor  
Sponsors are invited to attend the Patron Party Thursday, September 12 at 6pm
- Donate live and/or silent auction packages
- View auction items
- Join us on facebook to receive up-to-date information
- View photos and learn about last year's event



**R**enowned Atlanta architect, civil rights leader, urban visionary and World War II hero Cecil Alexander recently completed his memoir, *Crossing the Line: The Awakening of a Good Ol' Boy*, adding a dedication to his home hospice nurse Julie Fowler for the comfort she provided him in his final days. Julie, who was his nurse since late 2012 until his death in late July, said "Cecil was an incredible person and one of my most entertaining patients. He would recite poetry and tell amazing stories recounted from his past—from war stories to rubbing shoulders with Martin Luther King, Jr."

If Cecil's name escapes you, just look at the Atlanta skyline. He was responsible for such landmarks as AT&T Midtown Center (formerly Southern Bell headquarters), Coca-Cola headquarters, Georgia Power headquarters, Peachtree-Seventh Building (later the Atlanta Federal Building and then Peachtree Lofts), Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium, and the State of Georgia Building (the former First National Bank

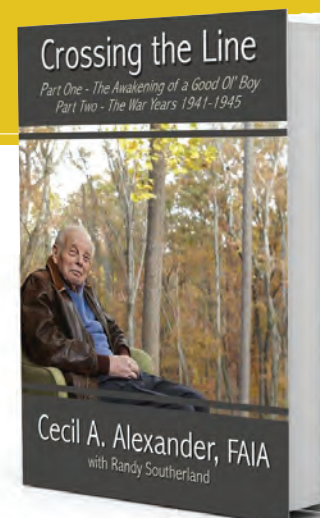
headquarters). He designed eight houses, including his own, the Cecil and Hermione Alexander House, which was listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in March 2010. He retired in 1985 but still collaborated on several projects, including one for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta.

Cecil studied at Georgia Institute of Technology, Yale University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and later at Harvard University where he studied with Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus movement in modern architecture.

Kudos to Julie for providing comfort worthy of praise to such a distinguished American icon. ■

*"Julie Fowler of Visiting Nurse Health System has been a source of great comfort, gentle care and just enough toughness... (she) inspires me to keep moving."*

*Cecil Alexander*



CURRENT EVENTS

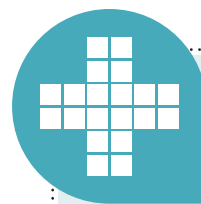
# Visiting Nurse Health System Welcomes New Board Members Bringing Diverse Talent and Backgrounds



**Michael E. Kiepura**, President of Consumer Packaging and Recycling at RockTenn Company, joined our Board of Directors in June. His responsibilities at RockTenn include overseeing their coated paperboard mills and folding carton plants, Merchandising Displays and Specialty Paperboard Products groups, and recycling operations. Mike has held leadership positions at RockTenn since the late 1990's. He currently chairs the Recycled Paperboard Alliance, an industry trade association, and is a Director of the Georgia Association of Manufacturers. "Visiting Nurse is fortunate to be the benefactor of Mike's experience as a leader at one of Atlanta's hometown corporations," said Mark Oshnock, president and CEO of Visiting Nurse Health System. "He brings us high-level strategic thinking and a solid business acumen that will be valuable to our organization as we continue to expand." Mike holds a master's of business administration from the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management at Northwestern University and a bachelor's degree in engineering and applied physics from Harvard University.



**Dabney Mann Hollis** joined our Board of Directors in July, bringing a history of leadership and consulting experience supporting a range of corporate, nonprofit, and political clients. Dabney is currently Business Manager, Public Policy at the international law firm McKenna Long & Aldridge LLP, and concurrently is principal of her consulting practice, managing operations, finance, and marketing projects for a diverse array of clients. She has a long history of community involvement, including currently serving as a Trustee at The Lovett School and Board Chair of Breakthrough Atlanta. "Dabney has been an effective fundraiser for other organizations as a board volunteer," said Oshnock. "She is well connected and will help us tell our story and find new corporate supporters." ■



## A Health Tip from Visiting Nurse

### Weekend Warrior Wounds

We all know staying active is one component of a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, even with proper stretching and attention to good form physical activity sometimes results in sprains or strains. These two terms are used often by physicians, but sometimes we don't always know what they mean or how we can manage these conditions.

Professionals define a *sprain* as a stretch or tear of a ligament. Physicians grade these injuries with a grade I, II or III, with III being the most severe injury. A *strain* is an injury to either a muscle or a tendon. It may be a simple overstretching, or it can result from a tear in the tissue.

You should always follow your physician's orders after an injury, but there are first-aid measures you can take. The quicker you treat the injury the less tissue damage will occur.

**RICE** is the acronym used to remember this first-aid:

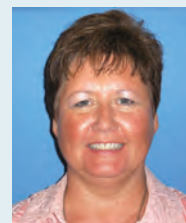
**R** = Rest

**I** = Ice  
20 minutes every 2-4 hours

**C** = Compression  
An Ace wrap or elastic sleeve

**E** = Elevation  
Elevate the injured joint above the level of the heart

Usually it is recommended to use ice for the first 72 hours after an injury, for 20 minutes at a time, to numb the pain and to reduce blood flow and swelling in the injured tissue. You may then use moist heat or ice, whichever feels better, for 20 minutes every 2-4 hours as needed on the affected area using a thin layer of protection on the skin such as a pillow case or dish towel to prevent frostbite or a burn. Never leave a heating pad on an injury overnight. Heat might also cause stiffness in the joint whenever it is applied because it allows fluid to leak into the tissues, which creates swelling.



Remember to be careful and stretch before any activity.

This health tip is provided by Jane McWhorter-Eubanks, PT, Rehabilitation Manager with Visiting Nurse.



## MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

# April 1 – June 30, 2013

The following people were thoughtfully remembered with a gift in their name:

### In Honor of:

Ms. Jillian Burns  
Ms. Linda Hagen  
Mr. Philip W. Millians  
Mr. Weyman Perry

### In Memory of:

Mr. Horace L. Aikens  
Ms. Helen M. Bainsford  
Mrs. Linda H. Banks  
Mr. Lawrence L. Bechler  
Mr. Howard Bowie  
Mrs. Christine G. Bowling  
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For a complete list of the generous donors who  
contributed honorary and memorial gifts visit  
[www.vnhs.org](http://www.vnhs.org).

## Engraved Pavers to Remember a Loved One



Remember the life of someone dear to you and provide much needed funding to the Hospice Atlanta Center by placing a memorial paver in the Center's garden.

A memorial paver is a lasting tribute to a friend who loved nature, a favorite relative whose personality brought light to your life, or someone with whom you shared special memories. Pavers may be placed with a gift of \$1,000 or more to Visiting Nurse Health System.

Additional memorial opportunities are available and range from teak furniture for patient patios to naming patient rooms or public spaces in the Center. All larger memorials include a plaque engraved with text honoring your loved one.

.....  
**For more information or to make a memorial gift,  
please visit [www.vnhs.org/pavers](http://www.vnhs.org/pavers) or call the  
Office of Advancement at 404-215-6010.**



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Caroline E. Moise  
Board Chair

Mark Oshnock  
President

We welcome your comments and suggestions.  
Please address all correspondence to  
[david.greenberg@vnhs.org](mailto:david.greenberg@vnhs.org).

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*presents*



**IN THE MOMENT**

*A Celebration of Life*

**Saturday, September 28, 2013**

The Ritz-Carlton, Atlanta (Downtown)

Honoring  
Bill and Eleanor Cheney

For their generous, long-time support of our Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Respite Program

Jerome and Sue Lienhard, Chairs

The annual fundraiser benefits patients who need our care.  
For reservations visit [vnhs.org](http://vnhs.org) or call 404-215-6010