



LOOK HOMEWARD



Dear Friends of Visiting Nurse –

After 11 wonderful years I am leaving Visiting Nurse Health System at the end of this year. I will continue to work in Atlanta’s healthcare community by participating in the integration of Northside Hospital and Gwinnett Medical System.

Over more than a decade, we have achieved incredible success through our talented staff, highly skilled, dedicated clinicians, and the tremendous steadfast support of community volunteers, donors and hospital partners. The organization has more than doubled in size in ten years, serving nearly 30,000 patients across greater Atlanta each year—and the demand for healthcare at home and hospice care continues to grow. Our city has one of the fastest growing senior populations in the U.S. As a result, our organization’s ability to care for patients and families in need is more important than ever. We are a unique resource, as we serve patients regardless of diagnosis, income, or insurance coverage, ensuring care is available to those most in need. We are the community safety net for Atlanta.

While we have grown and achieved much, there is more to do. Healthcare costs continue to rise while benefits for home healthcare and hospice services shrink. There are not enough beds in nursing homes across Georgia to accommodate the growing need for seniors. Home healthcare is the best lower-cost alternative, achieving the highest patient satisfaction and best clinical outcomes. Visiting Nurse sets the standard for home healthcare among providers in our community.

To meet the growing demand for our services, Visiting Nurse must hire more highly qualified nurses, invest in advanced training and cutting-edge technology for our mobile workforce of 450+ clinicians, better facilitate medical information exchange between our clinicians, physicians and hospital partners, and sustain our beloved Hospice Atlanta Center. We are well on our way. To date we have achieved almost half of our \$8 million 3-year campaign goal and will soon be even better poised to meet the changing and increasingly complex needs of our patients. Earlier this year, we launched a residential self-pay service for patients who want to receive in-patient hospice care at our renowned Hospice Atlanta Center, but their costs are not covered by insurance. We have had a steady stream of families wishing to take advantage.

As Visiting Nurse transitions to our next stage of growth, we have solid leadership to guide our experienced team. We recently welcomed past executive, Mary Arthur, as interim CEO while we complete a nationwide search for the most qualified and experienced leader to advance our work. I hope you will continue to play the vital role for Visiting Nurse that you have for so many years, and I thank you kindly for the support and dedication you have offered me during my tenure. I hope Visiting Nurse can count on your future support as we have in the past.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Oshnock". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mark Oshnock
President and CEO
Visiting Nurse Health System

10 Ways Visiting Nurse’s Hospice Program Stands Out

1 Providing Care for All

This is the reason why Visiting Nurse exists. As a community nonprofit, our mission is to improve the lives of those we serve, including caring for everyone regardless of their ability to pay. To the extent that funds are available, no patient who is eligible for hospice services will be turned away. Everyone deserves comfort and dignity in life’s final stage, with the chance to live those days as fully as possible.

In 2014, Visiting Nurse provided hospice and palliative care services for 2,365 patients, of which about 10% were uninsured or underinsured.

2 Inpatient Respite Care

“Knowing my mother was being cared for let me enjoy my family reunion that much more.”

– Daughter of Patient

Visiting Nurse extends our support beyond patients to include caregivers and family members. A caring and dependable volunteer will stay with hospice patients in their home so caregivers can run errands, visit friends or take a walk. Additionally, Medicare/Medicaid provides a five night respite for the family/caregiver in Hospice Atlanta Center to get needed rest or to attend to personal issues.



Pediatric patient Kanu turns the tables on pediatric medical director Laura W.

3 Pediatric Program

To Visiting Nurse, hospice care means helping children continue to live as normal a life as possible, surrounded by their loved ones and favorite things. Pediatric care is significantly more expensive than adult care, and the most costly care we provide is to pediatric patients during their end of life. We also provide perinatal support to families expecting a child with a genetic condition that could end his or her life.

Author Fiona Page



4 Lemonade Luncheons

Hospice care is also about being inspired during difficult times. The Lemonade Luncheon series of summertime events features authors and storytellers who have dealt with a health-related challenge and found a way to turn those lemons into lemonade. Attendees also hear from individuals served by Visiting Nurse who have a powerful story of their own to share. Attend a Lemonade Luncheon and you'll walk away with an uplifting experience and more insight into the critical work being provided by Visiting Nurse.

Volunteer Jim pins fellow Veteran and Visiting Nurse's purchasing manager Damon J.



5 We Honor Veterans

Working with the Veteran's Administration, Visiting Nurse is proud to care for our patients who have served in the military. Our interdisciplinary team integrates best practices specifically tailored for end-of-life care that meets the unique needs of our nation's Veterans and their families. We also honor the service of the Veteran by having a fellow Veteran—either an employee or volunteer—present a certificate and lapel pin.

6 Residential Program

Hospice patients with neither local family support nor a hospice-friendly home, but the means to self-pay, have the option to reside at Hospice Atlanta Center for less than the cost of private care at home. They receive exceptional support from staff and volunteers, meals, housekeeping, utilities, and all the comforts of home. Overnight accommodations for a family member or friend, and pets, are available too.



So far in 2015, more than 57 patients have chosen to reside in Hospice Atlanta Center.

Residents and their families enjoy a view of the peaceful gardens.

“Being able to have mother come here is a godsend for us. With both of us working, there is no way we could care for her at home and we were not happy with the nursing facilities we looked at before choosing Hospice Atlanta Center.”

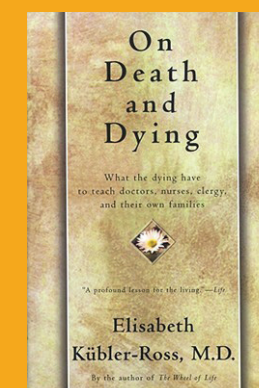
- Son of Patient

“The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not ‘get over’ the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same nor would you want to.”

- Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

7 Kübler-Ross Library

Hospice Atlanta Center has been selected as the third national location to house various books, papers and other items by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the Swiss psychiatrist who identified a series of emotional grieving stages experienced by survivors of a loved one's death. Eventually the collection will be accessible online by those seeking additional bereavement support.



On Death and Dying cover

8 Spiritual Care

Ordained and certified hospice chaplains meet the spiritual needs and concerns of patients and family members, regardless of their faith or affiliation. A beautiful chapel is available in Hospice Atlanta Center for meditation and prayers, and is the location of a twice yearly remembrance service open to families in our care.

Visiting Nurse employs 4 chaplains who work independently or with a patient's clergy to provide emotional and spiritual solace.

9 Camp STARS

Our bereavement camps provide a safe environment for families to meet others who have lost loved ones and learn how to grieve in emotionally healthy ways. The camps are held twice per year, are open to the entire Atlanta community, and are staffed by counselors, social workers, chaplains and volunteers who have experience working with the bereaved.

“Camp STARS is the best thing we have experienced in the process of healing and adapting to a new normal. It was wonderful and we are so thankful!”

- Family at Camp

Volunteer Nicole tends to a patient's four-legged friend.



10 Pet Peace of Mind Program

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 offers volunteers who provide hands-on service to dogs and cats including grooming, picking up and delivering food and supplies, transporting pets, changing litter boxes, and taking pets for walks. Although most patients have made plans for their pets after they die, if they have not, we can help them contact organizations for further assistance.

“Your people are just amazing, and it was just the best experience having the assistance. So thank you so much for making the arrangements and sending all these terrific people our way.”

- Mother of Patient

4 Ways to Make a Difference Simple Ways to Support Our Hospice Care



Make a recurring donation of \$15, \$20 or more per month throughout 2016.

Setting up a recurring monthly donation through automatic credit card deductions ensures our ability to deliver high-quality hospice care and healthcare at home, especially to patients who do not have the ability to pay. Your monthly gift will provide consistent support and ensure we can deliver care to those in need month after month.

Sign up today at
vnhs.org/DonateNow
and select the Recurring Gift option.



On your birthday, send a heartfelt letter to your friends and family suggesting why they should support Hospice Atlanta Center.

Many of our long-time supporters experienced first-hand the extraordinary compassion and dedication provided at Hospice Atlanta Center. Whether or not you personally have taken the hospice journey, sending a letter today to your closest contacts will not only ensure Hospice Atlanta Center remains our community's premier hospice facility, but it also helps them understand and appreciate hospice before they have their own personal experience.

Call the Office of Advancement at
404-215-6010 for a sample letter.



Sign up for a day of family fun at the BIG-TO-DO, and bring a group of kids along while supporting a worthy cause!

In 2016 this annual fundraiser returns to Zoo Atlanta, and all proceeds benefit our pediatric program.

For tickets and other information email
Kristen.Stanley@vnhs.org
or call her at 404-527-6542.



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Did you know a portion of every purchase you make on Amazon can directly benefit our patients? Next time you shop on Amazon, log in to smile.amazon.com instead. On your first visit to AmazonSmile, before you begin shopping, select Visiting Nurse Health System as the charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as on Amazon.com. You'll also use the same account, so your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are the same. To determine if a specific product is eligible, look for "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages.

Thank you once again for all you do to support our mission to improve the lives of those we serve! ■

Donor Spotlight: Bill Parker

Long-Time Champion of Our Hospice Care

Hospice champion Bill Parker



To Bill Parker, hospice and palliative care is the obvious choice for those facing end-of-life. “It’s better to have a life worth living than to be hooked up to machines,” Bill says in a matter-of-fact way. As the public’s perception of hospice care continues to evolve, Bill has made it his mission to make sure as many people as possible understand they have a choice. “Do people want every kind of treatment, therapy and surgery to prolong their life as they are dying, or do they want to be comfortable? The end result is the same,” Bill explains.

Bill became interested in hospice through his aunt, who used to send

him articles about the founding of the hospice movement by Dame Cicely Saunders in England. The philosophy espoused by Saunders—pain and symptom relief combined with holistic care to meet the physical, social, psychological and spiritual needs of its patients, and those of their family and friends—rang true with Bill from the outset. It wasn’t until his late wife Nancy suffered a debilitating stroke accompanied with pain that he looked deeper into hospice. “Some things the doctors were doing didn’t make sense,” said Bill as he watched doctors try to cure her paralysis and

speaking difficulties. As her condition deteriorated he called Visiting Nurse to provide in-home hospice care. “It was a wonderful experience. Everything was about her comfort,” recalls Bill.

After Nancy’s death, Bill became passionate about hospice, even working to bring together chaplains to discuss the unique needs of a hospice patient. Bill says things like a simple touch can mean so much to a patient at the end of life. The experience of going through hospice as a family member made Bill realize that there was still a great deal of work to be done around hospice awareness and patient care—and he

became committed to doing his part to help. Today, whether helping to provide mattresses to Hospice Atlanta Center or supporting the marketing and awareness efforts around the program, his support—and that of the Fraser-Parker Foundation—is making a significant difference in the lives of the patients and families served by Visiting Nurse. Support of hospice is also a family affair for the Parkers. Bill’s wife, Jean, is a devoted volunteer who can be found at Hospice Atlanta Center many Saturdays. “She gives her heart as a volunteer,” Bill says.

Now well into his eighties, Bill plans to continue to be a hospice care champion. “Talking about death is hard. If a family can talk about it, however, it’s better than someone else doing the talking. Having seen what hospice does, I feel like it is God’s answers to a prayer for many people. If more people knew then more people would feel that way.”

Visiting Nurse stands out in another way for Bill as well, “Being a nonprofit is special too: you are not bottom-line focused—you want to help people and their families. Families sometimes suffer more than the patients. I look at Visiting Nurse’s hospice program as what Dame Saunders has envisioned. Others are just not the same.”



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A Celebration of Life

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EVENTS



Moves Back to Zoo Atlanta on April 24

After four years on Snow Mountain at Stone Mountain Park, the BIG-TO-DO is heading back to Zoo Atlanta on Sunday, April 24, 2016. This day of family fun benefits the Pediatric Program at Visiting Nurse. Ticket holders will have access to private animal feedings, train rides, and kids’ activities such as a craft area and face painting. Our specialized pediatric team provides end-of-life hospice care for children, newborn to adolescence.

Family members facing pediatric hospice cherish the attention and care they receive from Visiting Nurse’s team. As noted by Dawn Hart, mother of three-year old Matthew who suffers from a rare brain tumor: “The level of care we’ve received with Visiting Nurse makes me feel like I can handle this journey. It’s pretty hard to make life easier when your baby has cancer, but Visiting Nurse has managed to. We are forever grateful to our nurse for taking the time to build a daily

relationship with our family that supports our little hero.”

Support from the BIG-TO-DO’s sponsors and ticket holders helps us provide this level of care to Matthew and his family, giving them the time and energy to savor every moment of Matthew’s life. ■

To help support the 2016 BIG-TO-DO, contact Kristin Stanley at 404-527-6542 or Kristin.Stanley@vnhs.org.

Lemonade Luncheon
Speakers Discuss Turning Life’s Lemons Into Lemonade



she has faced while living an active life after suddenly losing her sight as the result of a routine surgery. During the final luncheon, held in September, author Kate Thompson told her story of how she brought lemonade into the lives of more than 50 special needs children that she has fostered.

Each luncheon also featured a hospice family member sharing their experience with Visiting Nurse’s hospice program. During one of life’s most difficult

times, our caring staff helped turn their lemons into lemonade.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to all of these speakers, and to our generous sponsors: Pat Archer, Brookhaven Wealth Management, and National Distributing Company, Inc. ■

To learn more about 2016 Lemonade Luncheons, contact Kristin Stanley at 404-527-6542 or Kristin.Stanley@vnhs.org.

“It’s been an honor to sponsor the Lemonade Luncheons, as they’ve been a great way to re-engage and make past donors aware of the current activities of the organization. For me, as a business owner, it’s nice to contribute to an organization from my neighborhood in some way, knowing how important the work they do is to the Atlanta community.”

- Chris Cosenza, CFP
President, Brookhaven Wealth Management

MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

September 1 – November 30, 2015

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

In Honor of:

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Mr. Allen Burke
Mr. and Mrs. James Carlos
Mrs. Elizabeth Levine
Mrs. Ginna McFarling
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Mrs. Wendy Suzman

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For a complete list of the generous donors who contributed honorary and memorial gifts visit www.vnhs.org.

Engraved Pavers to Remember a Loved One



Remember the life of someone dear to you and provide much needed funding to 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 or call the Office of Advancement at 404-215-6010.



VISITING NURSE
HEALTH SYSTEM

Training and Support Center
5775 Glenridge Drive, NE, Suite E200
Atlanta, GA 30328

Address Service Requested

Look Homeward

Bill Henagan
Board Chair

We welcome your comments and suggestions.
Please address all correspondence to
Mary.Norman@vnhs.org.

404.215.6000
www.vnhs.org



SAVE-THE-DATE



Sunday, April 24, 2016
4:30pm – 8:30pm

For sponsorship information call
404-527-6542 or email Kristin.Stanley@vnhs.org

The BIG-TO-DO is heading back to Zoo Atlanta where we kicked off this day of family fun 25 years ago!

Proceeds benefit our Pediatric Program, helping us provide care for our youngest patients at home and at Hospice Atlanta Center.