

Meeting Healthcare Challenges with
New Ideas and Open Hearts



Dear friends of Visiting Nurse,



Mary Arthur
President & CEO (Interim)

You're most likely familiar with the countless strains on our healthcare system: the rising population of aging patients with acute, complex health conditions; increased incentives to reduce hospital readmissions after discharge; a shortage of experienced nurses; and, an ongoing reduction in funding for home healthcare, hospice care, and long-term care at home.

The list of challenges we faced in 2015 is familiar and may seem unchanging, but the magnitude of these issues dramatically increases each year and that trend will inevitably continue.

We harbor no illusions about the realities of what lies ahead. However, we remain optimistic. Visiting Nurse has been addressing these challenges long before the "aging tsunami" was first predicted. We're practiced at delivering a high level of personalized care to the most vulnerable in our community—those with chronic, complex illnesses—regardless of their ability to pay. As a nonprofit organization, we're also adept at applying innovative strategies to address complicated issues with limited resources.

As the proven leader of home health and hospice care services since 1948, Visiting Nurse continues to roll out progressive programs no other provider in Atlanta offers. In the following pages, you'll see examples of this person-centered care—individualized, specialized and compassionate.

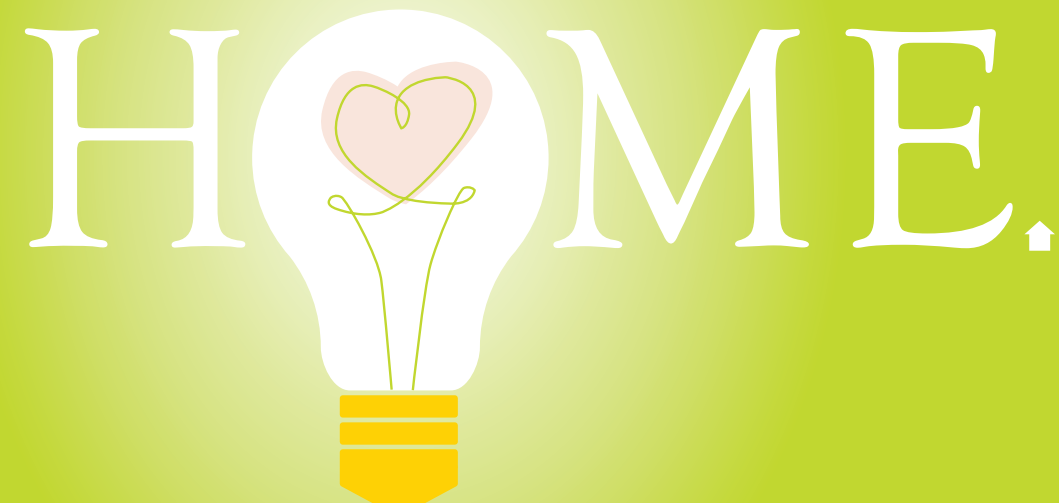
We've strengthened our commitment to support the Atlanta community by meeting challenges head on—and with heart. Our approach relies on promoting **innovation**, increasing **education and training**, leveraging **technology** and enhancing **communication**.

As we move forward in 2016 and beyond, we gratefully acknowledge the support from donors, Board members, staff and volunteers, so many of whom are passionately dedicated to supporting our mission—to improve the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,

Mary Arthur
President & CEO (Interim)

Bill Henagan
Chair, Board of Directors



What does "Home" mean to you? Defining this term depends on a lot of variables—background, experience, preferences—all of them personal. Recognizing that every individual has a different perception of home is paramount to the work we do.

As we continue to face a landscape of expanding challenges in healthcare, our efforts at Visiting Nurse Health System remain focused on enhancing the most cost-effective way to promote positive patient outcomes—the delivery of quality healthcare at home.

Our work revolves around a "person-centered approach." Based on respecting an individual's right to self-determination, this approach goes beyond physical considerations.

Recognizing variables like emotional, social and spiritual needs of a patient enables us to get an accurate picture of what works best to treat that individual. By empowering the patient in their healthcare decisions, we encourage positive outcomes.

Whether home means being alone in an apartment or assisted-living facility, with family in a residence or in our community at Hospice Atlanta Center, our work revolves around building a trusting relationship with patients to successfully sustain them within the place they call home.



Building relationships through person-centered care at home

Meeting the Challenges of Chronic Disease Management Long Before the Aging Tsunami Emerged

The senior population is the fastest growing segment in our country, but urban areas where populations are more concentrated are hit hardest, and Atlanta is near the top of this list. As the aging tsunami gains momentum, we're seeing a shift from patients with acute conditions to those with chronic and far more complex illnesses. This expands the burden on an already strained healthcare system.

Visiting Nurse has been a leader in delivering chronic disease management long before this trend emerged.

In 2015 we served more than 6,000 patients at home with chronic diseases each day.

Because 80% of our referrals come from hospitals, the acuity level of patients we're treating is significant. Added to this situation is an increase of patients with dementia, which further complicates treatment. Meeting the demand to maintain the health of patients in their homes requires advanced training.

In 2015, we continued to invest in making sure everyone on our team is equipped to assess conditions from their unique perspective. This provides a rich evaluation to determine the most appropriate plan of care for each individual.

This person-centered care is focused on the individual's right to dignity, choice and ultimately, their quality of life—all of which promote positive healthcare outcomes. This is at the core of our commitment to treating and maintaining patient health at home.



Ongoing Training

Outcome Assessment and Information Set

In 2015, we invested in training more than 100 nurses and therapists for OASIS certification. This nationally certified training program is designed to teach clinicians how to effectively use this dataset to assess a patient's needs and ensure positive health outcomes. Using this tool accurately is also critical to determining the amount of reimbursement Visiting Nurse receives from Medicare.

Hospice and Palliative Care Training

Our hospice nurses undergo an intensive six-month course that involves classroom orientation and ongoing supervision. Coursework covers issues from emotional (how to discuss death and dying with patients and family) and clinical (medication management and documentation) to technology-focused (computer training).



Advanced training ensures positive health outcomes for our aging population

Empowering Patients Reduces Hospital Readmission Rates

Educating patients and caregivers reduces hospital readmissions



Innovation + Education

Healthy Transitions Program

This progressive program was designed to serve low income, HUD senior living communities with absolutely no healthcare services available. Visiting Nurse employs two health coaches who are registered nurses to coordinate patient care with 15 senior living communities. The coaches give high-risk patients guidance for a healthy transition from hospital to home, including nutritional considerations, medication reminders and "danger zone" symptoms to be aware of. Visiting Nurse has preferred provider agreements with these senior living communities and is the only source for such services in Atlanta.

Ileostomy Program

Initiated by a physician at Emory Hospital, this disease management program was developed for patients discharged after an ileostomy. The new program includes a series of standardized protocols implemented last year by Visiting Nurse.

The results of these strategies are irrefutable. Over the last year, the rates of readmissions among Ileostomy patients dropped from 30% to 7%.

Piedmont Heart Institute

Started by a cardiologist at Piedmont Hospital, this program targeted patients released following treatment for cardiopulmonary and cardiac conditions. Visiting Nurse worked with physicians at Piedmont to identify specific clinical interventions to take when there are signs of trouble. By teaching patients to recognize warning signs and symptoms, we enable them to take better care of themselves at home. We can track their progress over time to promote a healthy recovery and prevent readmission to the hospital.

As the explosive growth of patients with chronic diseases continues, hospitals are under greater pressure to make sure patients are treated effectively before discharge. Furthermore, the Affordable Care Act requires hospitals to incur financial penalties if a patient is readmitted within 30 days of discharge for certain diagnoses, such as Pneumonia, Heart Failure, and COPD.

For every 1% of our patients who are not readmitted to a hospital, the local healthcare system saves over \$2 million.

To reduce hospital readmissions, we work within a continuum of care through collaborative networks we've established internally and with our provider partners. Our efforts support patients through their healthcare journey—from hospital to in-home recovery, and from long-term care at home to hospice. The continuum of care approach is working: we maintain lower readmission rates than any other Atlanta-area provider.

Last year, we implemented programs to improve our standards as demands for care continue to increase.

Innovating Our Approach to Exceed Patient Expectations

Delivering a personal touch for Residential Care hospice patients



Raised awareness around issues facing those with chronic diseases or end-of-life decisions translates to a positive outcome for patients and families. Knowing more leads to seeking more, as savvy consumers want an improved experience. This also means we’re under greater pressure to deliver a high level of personalized care with limited resources.

Thanks to the help of our generous donors, we’re always pushing forward with new ways to meet the high expectations for in-home patient care we’re known to deliver.

Innovation

Person-centered Care
Person-centered care leads us to consider aspects of an individual’s lifestyle, beyond their medical condition, to improve their care experience at home or at our Hospice Atlanta Center.

Being inside a patient’s home allows us to evaluate how people age at home. When assessing what’s working (and what may not be working) for a patient, we consider variables such as emotional and spiritual needs, as well as physical necessities. This enables us to direct those in our care to additional services and support within Visiting Nurse or to external resources in the community.

Innovation + Technology

Home Health Care
An interactive scheduling tool (C.A.T.S.)
Our clinicians are passionate about the personal nature of the work they do, so we’re making sure they spend less time in traffic and more time caring for patients. This new tool minimizes the time nurses spend in the car by considering a series of variables to match the right clinician with appropriate patients within the 26-county area we serve.

Telemonitoring
As the number of high-risk patients continues to rise, we’re constantly leveraging technology to support our patients in their homes. Telemonitoring allows us to check and, when necessary, deliver a patient’s vital signs and other information in real time to their physician. Last year, telemonitoring remotely alerted our clinical team to patients’ danger-zone symptoms—literally saving lives.

Innovation + Communication

Hospice Care
In-home Simulation
At Hospice Atlanta Center, we’ve built an in-home simulation environment that replicates a patient’s home, including a kitchen, bath and bedroom. This allows us to videotape a variety of patient and nurse interactions to demonstrate and address unique challenges and living situations. The videos can be accessed by clinicians in the field, providing a helpful resource to improve the experience for patients and caregivers.

Residential Care Program
We recently dedicated a cottage at Hospice Atlanta Center to accommodate long-term patients whose homes are not equipped for hospice or who may not have a caregiver. Hospice services are covered by commercial insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, but meals, activities, utilities and additional amenities within an environment that feels like a private home are paid for by residents with the means to do so.

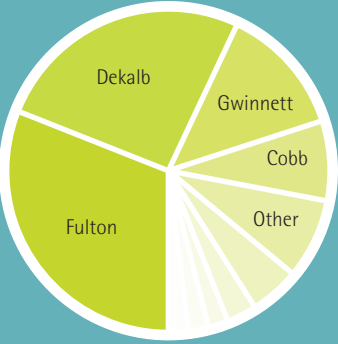
Home hospice program
As we educate patients and their families about the advantages of hospice care, they’re more receptive to the concept. Knowing what to expect ahead of time helps in a crisis, so they know who to turn to. Last year we saw a 32% increase in the average daily census of home hospice patients we served over the previous year—in part, a result of expanded consumer outreach and community education about the realities and advantages of hospice care.

General Inpatient Care
Because our hospital partners trust us to provide quality care to their patients, General Inpatient Services are now available in Emory Main, Emory Midtown and Piedmont Atlanta. Our team provides hospice care on-site, avoiding a transfer to another location when patients are in a fragile condition. This program improves the hospice experience for everyone involved by reducing stress and increasing comfort during the critical end-of-life transition.

Patient Demographics

Patients Served by County

Fulton	31%
DeKalb	26%
Gwinnett	13%
Cobb	8%
Other	8%
Clayton	5%
Henry	4%
Cherokee	2%
Fayette	2%
Forsyth	1%



Patients Served by Age

65 and Over	60%
Under 65	40%

Patients Served by Gender

Female	59%
Male	41%

Patients Served by Program

Home Healthcare	19,151
Hospice and Palliative Care	2,485
Long-Term Care at Home	5,013
Total	26,649

Growing Our Workforce to Address the Nursing Shortage

Nationally, we face a nursing shortage due to an increased and aging patient population, and a shrinking workforce as many nurses retire and fewer new nurses are available to replace them. Locally, Atlanta is a highly competitive market and, as the economy has improved, many hospitals offer large signing bonuses. This is a benefit Visiting Nurse is not able to fully match.

When you consider clinicians who work in home health, hospice, or long-term care at home must have specialized training, the pool of candidates to choose from is significantly smaller.

Visiting Nurse is continually focused on growing our workforce to meet our patients' complex care needs, so we've launched a series of initiatives to offset these challenges.



Managing patient care remotely through the new BSN Residency Program



Innovation + Training

BSN Residency Program

Launched in 2015, this program taps into new talent, offering recent graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree a rare chance to receive training and mentoring from a senior home healthcare RN using two-way video and other technologies. Previously, there was no track for those interested in going outside the traditional hospital career model after graduation. In exchange for a three-year commitment to work for Visiting Nurse, graduates are given hands-on training not available with any home healthcare agency in the country.



Training

Training Program for Hospice Nurses

It takes a special kind of person with very specific training to care for patients in the final stages of life. Visiting Nurse provides a specialized curriculum that covers all facets of hospice care within a supportive environment. This curriculum includes:

- Educating families on how to discuss the patient's decline
- End-of-life symptoms and care
- Pain and symptom management
- Cultural considerations



Communication

Ongoing Outreach

To fill nursing positions requires us to deploy an outreach strategy through multiple channels. From digital and social platforms to more traditional marketing tactics such as print ads, recruitment events, and phone calls, we're reaching out in more places more often to connect with the right clinicians.

Delivering Care to Patients Who May Otherwise Go Without

Our biggest differentiator among Atlanta home healthcare providers—and the one we feel so fiercely passionate about—is that we accept patients regardless of their ability to pay. Whether they are impoverished or simply have commercial insurance that doesn't completely cover what it costs to provide care, we're there for them across the healthcare continuum in 26 counties. Thanks to the support of our generous donors, we're able to serve more uninsured and underinsured patients than any other provider in the Atlanta area.



Providing quality care for our community's most vulnerable residents

As Medicare reimbursements have been reduced annually over the past several years, many providers avoid serving patients who are clinically complex, as care is expensive, while the financial return is minimal. This underscores the need for Visiting Nurse to deliver both acute and long-term care to these vulnerable patients at home.

As a community nonprofit, we're fully committed to maintaining our high standards of care to patients who may otherwise go without.

As part of our partnerships with hospitals, we have committed to serving this segment of the population. In 2015, Visiting Nurse provided \$3.4 million in uncompensated care.



Communication + Education

Donor Outreach

How do we do it? By reaching out to our donor base to convey the importance of reinforcing the "safety net" we provide for those unable to afford critical care at home. We continually encourage memorial gifts, monthly giving and estate planning efforts, in addition to our annual fundraisers and community events.

Though we're maximizing our resources, we take nothing for granted. The expansion of needs can be overwhelming, but with continued support from family, friends, volunteers and the patients we serve—those who've witnessed first-hand the power of person-centered care—we will continue to comfort, nurture and care for patients in the place they call home.

Out-and-About in the Community

Honoring Donors, Interacting with Supporters, and Recognizing Staff



Nearly 600 tickets were purchased for a day on the “slopes” of Snow Mountain at Stone Mountain Park in support of pediatric hospice patients and their families in our care at home and at Hospice Atlanta Center. We wish to thank our sponsors—especially our Presenting Sponsor, The John N. Goddard Foundation—and attendees for raising more than \$100,000 which makes a difference to these families during this difficult time in their lives. In 2016 the 25th Anniversary BIG-TO-DO returns to Zoo Atlanta as a springtime family event.



Hospice Atlanta's nurses Stephanie and Lanise join the Snow Angel and patient Corey



In The Moment
A Celebration of Life



Applause for honorees the Carlos family

This event supports hospice patients and their families receiving care in their home, at Hospice Atlanta Center, and through our hospital partners. More than \$500,000 was raised as we honored the service and commitment of the Carlos family for their generosity to our hospice program over the years. Proceeds funded several critical operational and infrastructure needs in Hospice Atlanta Center, including several items for our Residential Care wing to make it feel like home for our longer-term patients. Thanks to individual and corporate sponsors, our emcee Bill Liss, and numerous attendees and volunteers who allow us to deliver hospice care to all who need our service, regardless of their ability to pay.

In recognition of November being National Hospice Month, the Carlos family and our hospice registered nurse Wendy Gleason were featured in an article on ajc.com which highlighted the genesis of Hospice Atlanta Center and the special care our hospice patients receive.

Read the article at
www.ajc.com/go/choosevisitingnurse



Author Kate Thompson addresses our guests

Visiting Nurse hosted three luncheons in 2015. These small gatherings are designed to connect our supporters with inspiring stories by authors who have turned life's lemons into lemonade. Attendees also hear a family member's powerful story about the exceptional care they received while a loved one was in our hospice care, thus creating their own lemonade.

annual applause

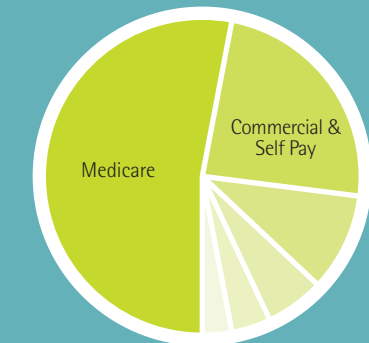


Wendy beams after winning the Dot Cares Award

This internal event—held last November at the Delta Flight Museum—celebrated both the company's achievements and the extraordinary work by members of our staff. Employees were recognized for years of service and overall excellence. The evening was capped off with the presentation of the 2015 Dot Cares Award to hospice nurse Wendy Gleason. The award, named after long-time Visiting Nurse supporter Dot Cohen, is bestowed upon the employee who has demonstrated outstanding performance, lives the mission of Visiting Nurse, and has a reputation among patient and peers as a caregiver who shows uncompromising care and compassion.

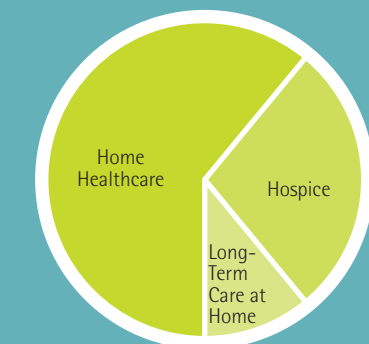
2015 Source of Funds

Medicare.....	53%
Commercial & Self Pay.....	24%
Government Contracts.....	10%
Donor Support.....	6%
Reserves.....	4%
Medicaid.....	3%



2015 Use of Funds

Home Healthcare.....	61%
Hospice.....	28%
Long-Term Care at Home.....	11%



\$8 Million Capital Campaign Launched

More Than Half of Funds Already Raised!

In 2015 we launched an \$8 million capital campaign to address four key strategic priorities: 1) **Technology Improvements** to provide efficiencies and streamline the clinical and geographic complexities of servicing our patients, 2) **Enhanced Clinical Training and Education** of our nurses to meet the more acute needs of a growing patient population, 3) **Care Coordination** systems to reduce costly hospital readmissions to our high-risk patients, and, 4) **Sustainability of our Hospice Atlanta Center**, our 36-bed in-patient facility in Buckhead, including the new private pay Residential Care program now offered to patients seeking a safe and comfortable environment when their homes are not an option while in hospice care.

In 2015, our campaign crossed the halfway mark, raising just over \$4 million. We are grateful to our donors who have generously committed to our efforts:

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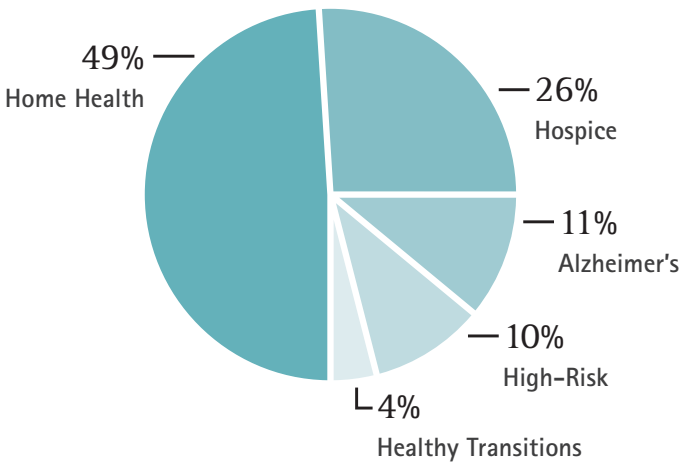
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2015 Donor Impact

In 2015, through the generous support of our donors...

- Visiting Nurse provided access to home health and hospice care to 1,736 patients who were either indigent or underinsured.
- We delivered advanced care and better outcomes to patients and families in need: we provided 5,091 patients with access to specialized care programs including Alzheimer's Respite, Palliative Care, Pediatric Hospice, Healthy Transitions and High-Risk (of re-hospitalization).
- We served more uninsured and Medicaid patients than any other home healthcare provider in Georgia.
 - Uninsured patients are those for which Visiting Nurse covers the full cost of their care.
 - For Medicaid patients, we receive only 42 cents in reimbursement for every dollar in home healthcare we provide.
- We provided \$3.4 million in uncompensated care for uninsured and underinsured patients and for families with special needs. These services were provided in the following manner:



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For every dollar raised by
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to provide services to patients
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JANUARY 1, 2015 – DECEMBER 31, 2015

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Visiting Nurse is grateful to all of our donors, including those in the Nightingale Society who have included Visiting Nurse in their will or living trust.

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Since its inception, Nightingale Society members have provided more than **\$5 million** to fund patient care.



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