at Home

A newsletter for donors and friends of Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice

INTRODUCING OUR NEW NEWSLETTER - at Home

Dear Friends:

Our new at Home is a very special newsletter – combining our Home Care and Hospice newsletters into one publication.

The new at Home demonstrates our belief that while Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice offer distinct services, they share the same mission and play a similar role. That role is to provide all our patients with high quality, compassionate care in the place where most want to be – their own home. In addition, this newly combined newsletter provides economies as we stretch our dollars to support patients in the best possible way.

Compassion and skilled care are key themes of this first issue, and for these we focus on our home health aides and their special contribution to patient and family well-being. Through recent training, many of our home care aides can now also transition with their patients from Partners Home Care to Partners Hospice – making that transition easier on patients and their families.

Whether you or a loved one has come to know us through home care or hospice, please know that those distinct services continue and we welcome your support. You will continue to see stories in

our newsletter that highlight events in each of the services and be able to support the programs of your choice.

We hope you enjoy this fall newsletter, and thank you for your continued support of home care and hospice services now and in the future.

Christopher M. Attaya, MBA, FHFMA

Clemen Jr. Allange

President & CEO

INSIDE: TEE-OFF A HUGE SUCCESS!



The 16th Annual Tee-Off for Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice was an extraordinary success that will benefit caregivers, patients and their families (SEE P. 8).







HOME HEALTH AIDE TRAININGS STRENGTHEN PATIENT CARE

Significant charitable grants help make services even stronger

"I feel confident that as an HHA, I have strategies to offer pain relief to my patients. I feel so proud that my employer would go to the trouble of offering me these trainings."

- Home Health Aide, Partners Hospice

"Home health aides play a vital role in patient care," said Nancy Chane, RN, Director of the Partners Transitions Program. "They are integrated into the day-to-day life of a patient and their family, and are in a unique position to affect overall care for the patient."

Recognizing that importance, over the past 18 months the Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice Development Department secured \$70,000 in grants to develop specialized training, education and certification programs.

Schwartz Center Grants – Enhancing Compassionate Care

Supported by grants worth more than \$24,000 from the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center, home health aide (HHA) education began in February 2008 and spanned 16 months.

To accommodate the needs of patients, education sessions for home care and hospice HHAs were held at different times and locations. Nancy Chane, who facilitated sessions for the home care HHAs, noted that more than 50 home care HHAs and the 12 hospice HHAs participated in the programs.

Program goals achieved:

- · Raising awareness of the importance of the HHA role,
- Enhancing communication skills between HHAs, patients and the Interdisciplinary Group (IDG) or team of clinicians and caregivers,
- Providing skills and understanding that could particularly benefit patients at end of life,
- Increasing the level of compassion of the HHAs as they provide care and services, and
- Enhancing the end-of-life skills of HHAs that travel with a patient through home care into hospice.

For example, in "Principles of Pain Screening and Management," HHAs reviewed the non verbal signs of pain, such as facial grimacing or certain body posi-

tioning. They were encouraged to "speak up" if they suspected that a patient was in pain or experiencing other difficulties. "They can call a nurse or the office, or tell the team supervisor," Nancy said. "Their assessment is important to the IDG, and we wanted the HHAs to be aware of that."

Increasing Comfort and Healing

Other training included "Complementary Therapies" and a session on "Expressive Therapies" in which HHAs learned how to help patients and their families work through emotional pain – using photography, pottery, knitting, journaling, and writing or reading poetry.

certification shows our commitment to high standards and skillful, compassionate care.

In "Cultural Competency: Conversations with Patients About Culture, Customs and Beliefs," facilitated by Rachel Spector, RN, DNSc, a professor at Boston College School of Nursing, they explored diverse

cultures for a heightened appreciation of differences.

Carpenter Foundation Grant – Supporting New Learning, Certification

With the help of a grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, a number of hospice HHAs, Registered Nurses (RNs), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) also studied for and achieved certification through the National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses (NBCHPN).

The Carpenter Foundation grant paid for training manuals, study sessions, membership, registration and testing fees for the exam. As of August, nine RNs, two LPNs and five HHAs passed. Grant funds will allow all RNs, HHAs and other staff to achieve certification.

Supporting a Unique Role

"This training and certification shows our commitment to high standards and skillful, compassionate care," Nancy concluded. "Home health aides have considerable opportunity to infuse compassion into their work responsibilities and to observe changes in a patient's condition."

COMPASSIONATE CAREGIVING: THE GOAL OF EVERY HOME HEALTH AIDE

Recently, home health and hospice aides (HHAs) Claudette Kluge, Partners Home Care, and Danielle LeBlanc, Partners Hospice, took time between patient visits to recall some of their especially memorable patients.

Claudette and Danielle bring a special commitment to their HHA roles – doing what it takes to care for each of their very special patients and making it possible for patients to stay at home.

"I started working with one man when his daughter was two years old – and she's now in high school," Claudette began. "His wife tells me that he wouldn't be alive today without his nurse and home health aide."

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Danielle recalls a patient – a woman in her late 40's "with beautiful blond hair." Danielle would wash and blow dry her hair – even apply a little makeup – doing whatever would make her patient feel good and "normal." The evening she

passed away, Danielle had just cared for her, and she looked beautiful. "I know that helped the family," she recalled.

Supporting Comfort and Dignity

Providing compassionate personal care – doing whatever it takes to help patients stay clean, well groomed, and comfortable – is the important role of the HHA.

Claudette, who has worked for 15 years with Partners Home Care and now Partners Hospice, mentions two current patients – a husband and wife – with whom she works.

"They have a great family, very supportive," she said, "and we work together to get both patients showered. She [the female patient] is very timid, but responds to singing. So each time she is to have a shower, I hold both her hands and we march into the shower singing."

What draws Claudette and Danielle to their roles? "I took care of my mom and then my dad," said Danielle, who

spends nonwork hours on weekends caring for her brother who has Down Syndrome. She has worked for seven years with Partners Home Care and now Partners Hospice.

"I lost my father when I was 25 and my mother at 35 – and that was much too



Home Health and Hospice Aides Danielle LeBlanc (left) and Claudette Kluge.

young," Claudette said. "Home health work lets me do what I couldn't do for them. When I leave patients, I will ask them, 'Are you as comfortable as I can make you?' "

While patients may have widely varying needs, "we are never alone," Claudette added. She mentioned the numerous resources that Partners makes available – including nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, social workers, a chaplain, volunteers, and others.

"Recently, I noticed that one of my patients had a hemorrhage in her eye – and I reported that," Danielle said. "The very next day a nurse was there to check on the patient, and, fortunately in this case, it was nothing serious."

Training for a Key Role

Both Claudette and Danielle spoke highly of the recent HHA training supported by grants from the Kenneth B. Schwartz Center (see article opposite). The training focused on many areas, including cultural diversity and expressive therapy.

They pointed out that such training was in addition to regular in-service training – twice-monthly sessions on safety, pain management, infection control, and the bereavement process. For these sessions, if a number of HHAs are working with patients with a particular diagnosis, a resource will be brought in to address that subject.

And knowledge helps, noted Claudette, such as knowing that hearing is the last sense to go, so it's always important to keep talking with patients – telling them when you are going to do something, like "I'm going to turn you now."

Compassionate Caregiving continued from page 3

A Compassionate Approach

Is the work difficult? "No," said Danielle, "I thank people for letting me be part of the journey – but you cry with them."

"It's not difficult," said Claudette, "but when a patient passes away, I almost always go to the wake and sometimes to the funeral because you need closure. There's not one case where I don't get attached."

She added that the most important traits are compassion and sensitivity. "I had a patient with cancer who always wanted to look good, and on a visit, I washed his hair, blew it dry, and you could almost see a smile on his face. And then he died that night."

"There are difficult times," she continued, "but when you go home, you know you did the absolute best job you could do – and that means a lot."

"IT'S A GIFT": THE SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF HOME HEALTH AIDES



Joanne Bryanos,
Home Health Aide
Manager for the
Partners Home Care
Chelsea and Beverly
branches and Partners
Hospice notes that
HHAs play a special
role in helping patients
be cared for in their
own home. Here she
discusses their part in
patient care.

Q. What services do HHAs provide?

HHAs help home care and hospice patients with their everyday personal care – from bathing and dressing to sometimes helping with eating. Their goal is to ensure that the patient is clean and comfortable—and supported in other ways, too. For example, they may remind them to take their medication or do a prescribed exercise.

Q. How often do they see patients?

We are a seven-day operation, but the kinds of services and frequency of visits will vary – it depends on the individual situation. At the time of admission, a clinician will do an assessment and develop a treatment plan. If the patient's medical status changes, the HHA services will change according to their needs.

Q. Do HHAs work just in home care or just in hospice?

Because of recent training, a number of our aides in home care can "cross over" to hospice. This is very important because we've had patients who refused to enter hospice services because they didn't want to lose their HHA. It's a very personal relationship, and patients don't want that loss. One of our HHAs, Danielle LeBlanc, worked with my mother in home care and then transi-

tioned to hospice with her – and that meant so much. My mother was very happy with that.

Q. What is important to patients?

Patients want this continuity, since personal care giving involves such a special relationship. When there is trust, patients benefit – and so do their families. With peace of mind, a family member may be able to take a break, perhaps just go for a walk. Also, patients generally want to be at home, even to have the comfort of their animals, and HHAs enable them to stay at home.

Q. How would you describe the HHAs?

They work very hard and are so well loved by their patients – and not just because of their loving personalities; patients have great respect for their abilities.

Q. What do you think is special about the aides?

Their resourcefulness – it's a gift. For example, Danielle is known for her French crepes. She worked with a patient who had ALS and had trouble swallowing, so her response was to try food which is light, good tasting, and easy to eat. Also, our HHAs are willing to listen, and that's important because they may be among the few people that patients see. They bring a special spirit to their work.

Q. How do HHAs continue to develop?

Training is ongoing, but we've also had special programs, such as those funded through grants from the Schwartz Center and Carpenter Foundation. Thanks to grant funds and the hard work of the HHAs, five have recently received their NBCHPN certification. We are proud of their achievements.

Q. What draws you to this work?

I've worked in the health care field for many years and started fairly young after experiencing the illness and death of my cousin, who was 13 years old. She died at home surrounded by her family and with the cat that she loved on her bed. I learned that there's no place like home.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEDICAL DIRECTOR: JOANNE NOWAK, MD

To Dr. JoAnne Nowak, working as a full-time medical director for Partners Hospice and Partners Home Care provides an opportunity to deliver a level of care generally not available to hospice patients.

Dr. Nowak, a Board Certified Internist and a Palliative Care Specialist, notes that few hospices have a full-time physician on the clinical team. "Partners has made a unique investment and this allows me to be available to the team 24/7 for both phone consultations and to visit patients as required," she said.

She explains that while hospice patients often maintain contact with their attending physicians, eventually many are unable to travel to medical facilities. When that occurs, the attending physician or a Partners Hospice nurse will contact her and ask her to come on a nursing visit to provide a consultation.

"Often our patients have sophisticated medical needs," she said. "They may require a higher level of medical care, and it's my role to try to see to their comfort – particularly in the area of pain management."

Through Dr. Nowak, Partners Hospice also is a training site for the Harvard University Palliative Care Fellowship – an association that delivers further benefits to patients. Each September through June, an internist or another



JoAnne T. Nowak, MD, is the Medical Director of Partners Hospice and Partners Home Care, as well as an attending physician on the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Palliative Care Service and an instructor in Medicine at Harvard Medical School. She completed her fellowship in Palliative Care at MGH in 2000 and is a Board Member of the New England Hospice & Palliative Care Federation of Massachusetts.

physician in post-graduate training works with the Partners Hospice team of nurses – accompanying them on home visits and serving as an extra medical eye.

What draws her to her work? "There is no greater privilege than to be invited into the home of a patient and their family during this most vulnerable and important stage of their lives," she said. "If I can make patients comfortable and help them achieve their personal goals, then that is incredibly rewarding. And I love connecting with our team – the nurses, social worker, and chaplain; we all work together and that's really satisfying."

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

We are grateful to the many patients and families and their friends who send us wonderful letters and e-mails expressing their gratitude to our staff and for the services that Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice are able to provide. We are pleased to share these kind words of support with you.

Dear Partners Hospice:

I would like to express my deep appreciation to Partners Hospice for their help, support and caring provided to me and members of my family. They were ever present and available, providing advice, medicine, personal care and equipment. Their experience, skill and caring helped us to make and accept decisions so important. We would not have been able to get through those final days without Partners Hospice there to guide us.

Dear Partners Home Care:

I have been receiving the services of several visiting nurses, and I am happy to say they are super individuals, each one of them. I just can't say enough about all of them.

Dear Partners Home Care:

My home health aide is excellent. She is very thorough and professional in her work. I am extremely satisfied and pleased with what she does for me.

MARY BRASCO: "SHE MADE EVERY DAY COUNT"

When Wayne Brasco talks about his late wife, Mary, you can feel the love and friendship they shared for thirty-two years.

"Mary was a very special woman. She made every day count," Wayne said. "She celebrated every day right up to the end of her life."

Mary Brasco was diagnosed with cancer in 1994. She fought bravely for six years and was on hospice care. Like Mary, Partners Hospice



Wayne Brasco with a photograph of his late wife, Mary

66 Mary faced her death the way she lived her life. She always thought of others first.

believes that every day counts. They also believe that Mary had the right to live in the comfort of her own home, surrounded by family and friends.

"Mary faced her death the way she lived her life. She always thought of others first," Wayne said.

Thinking of others seems to be a Brasco family trait. The Brascos were the recipients of the National Day of Volunteering award from the Points of Light Foundation, chosen from more than 160,000 volunteers from across the country. They collected food, clothing, and toiletries for homeless shelters in Massachusetts. **USA Today** flew the Brascos to the White House, where President Clinton conferred the award on them.

"It was Mary's idea," Wayne said. "She thought it would be a great service for the family to do together."

Wayne, who owns the Brasco Funeral Home in Waltham, also knows how to give back, providing free burial services for the homeless.

"Anytime I call Wayne to help provide funeral services for a person in need, he says yes, he never hesitates," said the Partners Hospice patient care manager. "I can always count on Wayne. He is very generous and kind."

Wayne has been a longtime supporter of Partners Hospice and the hospice mission in general. He was a founding board member of the Health Care Dimensions Hospice (one of the several hospices that became Partners Hospice) and helped to train others to become hospice volunteers.

Wayne knows firsthand the challenges that arise when a family member is diagnosed with a terminal illness, challenges that turn a family's life upside down. He knows that hospice care can help a family meet these challenges. And like his beloved wife Mary, Wayne knows that Partners Hospice makes every day count.

HOME CARE CONNECTION ARTICLE INSPIRES DONATION TO HONOR JUDITH ARNESON, BSN, RN

We are grateful to Virginia Hurley of Cambridge who recently made a \$1,000 donation to Partners Home Care in honor of Judith Arneson, BSN, RN, Clinical Instructor and Coordinator of the New Graduate Internship Program.



In a letter, Mrs. Hurley referenced the article about Judith and the Internship Program that was featured in the summer 2009 issue of the **Home Care Connection** newsletter.

"I'm delighted to see that Judith Arneson is finally receiving the recognition she truly deserves," Mrs. Hurley wrote. "She does not stop at caring for the patients' illness but rather cares for the entire patient. Judith made sure I had the support needed so that I could stay independent. She is a blessing beyond measure. The goals of your program are admirable, but it is your staff who makes the difference in the continuity of care."

NEW TREE OF HOPE TO BE ESTABLISHED; FIRST DONATION HONORS RAYMOND RICHARDS



As we launch this new at Home newsletter for Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice, we are pleased to share so many ways that donors, patients and families can benefit from our combined efforts. The following story exemplifies this.

We are grateful to Mrs. Randi Richards, a longtime contributor to and former patient of Partners Home Care, who recently

made a gift in memory of her husband, Raymond, with a generous \$5,000 donation for a Tree of Hope memorial butterfly. Mr. and Mrs. Richards, shown above on their wedding day in 1944, were married for 50 years until Mr. Richards' death in 1994.

"I will always be grateful for the love and care that Raymond received from the nurses and doctors at the hospice," said Mrs. Richards. "I am happy that I can support the mission of Partners Hospice and remember my husband, Ray, at the same time."

Mrs. Richards is the first contributor to the new Tree of Hope (see article below), and we are honored to say that she has also become a member of the **Grace D**. **Keenan Society**, which recognizes donors who make a commitment

be grateful for the love and care that Raymond received ... I am happy that I can support the mission of Partners Hospice and remember Ray at the same time.?

for a planned gift to Partners Home Care or Partners Hospice. Mrs. Richards has named Partners Home Care as a bequest beneficiary in her will. We are grateful to Mrs. Richards and all of the donors to Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice.



May my life be like a great hospitable tree, and may weary wanderers find in me a rest.

– John Henry Jowett

The **Tree of Hope** will soon be installed in the lobby of the Waltham office. The multi-dimensional and brightly-colored tree is inscribed with the message "In loving memory or honor and in grateful recognition."

We are very pleased that 140 leaves and boulders previously inscribed on memorial trees from the prior hospices, have been newly inscribed and along with Ray Richards' butterfly will adorn the new Tree of Hope upon its installation.

Gifts to the Tree of Hope offer a symbolic and tangible way to remember a loved one or honor a special caregiver with a lasting tribute. Choose from a leaf, butterfly, bird or boulder to inscribe a name and special message. The leaves are placed on the tree while the birds and butterflies will be mounted to look as if they are soaring by the tree, and boulders provide a strong base to surround the tree's trunk.

Your gift to the Tree of Hope also has a lasting impact on our caregivers and the patients and families we serve, as charitable contributions help to grow and strengthen our grief support and bereavement programs and services for patients and families managing the loss of a loved one.

Donations to the Tree of Hope are welcomed from all. To invest in a leaf, butterfly, bird or boulder, please visit our website at **www.partnershospice.org/hope** to download an order form or call 781-290-4021 to make a Tree of Hope donation. ■



To Benefit • Partners Home Care & Partners Hospice

June 24, 2009 • PINEHILLS GOLF CLUB • PLYMOUTH, MA

PRESENTED BY Bankof America

THANK YOU!

Under any circumstances, the 16th Annual Tee-Off for Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice was a success, but in this economy the results are even more extraordinary, with more than 200 golfers, over 72 corporate and individual donors, **not a drop of rain during play**, and a total income of \$315,000!

As a result, we are able to help the more than 3,000 patients we serve daily in some of the following ways:

- Provide 210 days of hospice to free care patients
- Purchase as many as 16 telemonitors
- Make more than 750 home care visits
- Purchase 60 point of care devices for home care clinicians in the field
- Provide 50 bereavement bags for children coping with the grief of losing a loved one.

Everyone at Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice is grateful to our tireless committee, generous sponsors, donors and golfers for their support and role in making this an extraordinary event to benefit our caregivers, patients and their families.

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Top photo, I. to r.: Danielle Degnan, Vice President of Development, Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice; Roger Boucher, Tee-Off Committee Co-chair, Bank of America; Chris Attaya, President and CEO, Partners Home Care; David Storto, Tee-Off Committee member, President, Partners Continuing Care; Mike Manning, Tee-Off Committee Co-chair, Partners HealthCare. Bottom photo: one of the Bank of America foursomes, I. to r.: former Boston Bruins player, Jean-Yves Roy; Roger Boucher, Bank of America; Paul Cushing, Partners HealthCare; Dennis Stratton, Merrill Lynch.

YOUR DONATIONS TO PARTNERS HOME CARE AND PARTNERS HOSPICE

As a donor, how does this combined newsletter affect my giving?

Your donation has even greater value since we are saving money on our printing costs by producing one newsletter for both organizations.

Do I need to do anything differently to make sure my donation goes to either Partners Home Care or Partners Hospice?

You do not need to do anything differently. Whether

you use the envelope attached herein or go to our websites you can select either Partners Home Care or Partners Hospice. You will continue to receive information about the organization that you support – that will not change.

Your gift to Partners Home Care or Partners Hospice is very important to our staff and the patients and families we serve. We appreciate every donation and take time to make sure your gift is processed to your satisfaction.

Partners Home Care and Partners Hospice would like to thank the friends and family members who generously contributed gifts in honor or memory of someone special in their lives. The names of these special people are listed below and reflect tribute gifts made between April 26, 2009 and September 30, 2009.

Michael K. Buckley*

* THE NAMES OF THESE LOVED ONES WERE COMMEMORATED AT THE ANNUAL BUTTERFLY RELEASE.

IN HONOR OF

Joseph "Jay" Bourgeois

Judith Arneson

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IN MEMORY OF

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James J. Lynch

Live Butterfly Release

Thursday, June 4, 2009 The Bradley Estate, Canton, MA

More than 150 guests celebrated the lives of cherished family and friends at the June Butterfly Release receptions held in Canton and Waltham, which included poems, inspirational stories, music and the reading of the names during the commemoration service. Following the commemoration service each butterfly was released into the beautiful gardens in honor of those named.

Perhaps having a butterfly released in memory of a loved one helps in the grieving process or provides an uplifting opportunity to remember a loved one. Supporting the Butterfly Release event also helps others as proceeds are used to ensure the availability of bereavement programs for all members of the community.

If you would like to be added to the Butterfly Release invitation list for June 2010, please email ksawyer@partners.org or call 781-290-4021.

Thursday, June 11, 2009
The Lyman Estate, Waltham, MA





Tribute Gifts (IN MEMORY OF) continued from page 10

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We have made every effort to be inclusive and accurate and respect requests for anonymity. However, if you have questions, corrections or would like to amend the listing of a name, please call 781-290-4093.



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> Thank you to all those involved in making this event a success! Our next issue of at Home will feature a story about the event.