

The **VNA Care** NETWORK & HOSPICE *Caring* CONNECTION

Summer 2009

FAMILY MEMBERS HONORED FOR COMPASSIONATE CAREGIVING

If there were a hall of fame for caregivers, the five individuals honored during VNA Care Network & Hospice's Extra Mile Awards would be the first inductees.

This annual award recognizes family caregivers whose devoted care allowed loved ones to continue living at home despite serious illness. Winners for 2009 were Erika Eisnor, My Lan Grolman, Paul and Pauleen Hurley, and Eileen Lee.

ERIKA EISNOR

Brycen Eisnor was born prematurely in April 2007 at 24 weeks, weighing only 1 pound, 8 ounces. Doctors gave him a five percent chance of surviving. After four months in a newborn intensive care unit, Brycen finally joined his parents and sisters at home.

Erika soon became an expert on managing her son's oxygen and extensive needs for heart, lung, and other health problems. She received support from VNA Care Network & Hospice's home health staff and later Children's Choices, the agency's pediatric palliative care program.

Because of Erika's vigilant care, Brycen has defied the odds and is thriving. The two-year-old even joined his mom at the awards ceremony. (Read more about the Eisnors and Children's Choices by downloading the fall 2008 edition of *The Caring Connection* at www.vnacarenetwork.org.)

MY LAN GROLMAN

My Lan Grolman set an extraordinary example during the months that she juggled caring for her mother, Loi Duckett, husband, and children while also running her hair salon.

VNA Care Network & Hospice came to know the family when they turned to the agency for hospice care. An interdisciplinary team provides emotional, physical, practical, and spiritual



Left to right: Brycen and Erika Eisnor with Karen Green, president and CEO of VNA Care Network & Hospice

continued on page 2...

DIANE LECLAIR NAMED CHAIR OF FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



VNA Care Network & Hospice recently welcomed Diane Leclair as chair of the VNA Care Network Foundation board of directors.

A certified public accountant, she brings many years of experience in finance and accounting as well as expertise in the health care field to this

role guiding the agency's nonprofit mission of caring. VNA Care Network & Hospice's home health care services allow individuals to cope with illness and injury while remaining in their own homes. Hospice for the terminally ill is provided in patients' homes, nursing homes, and other facilities, and VNA Care Network & Hospice's residences in Cambridge, Needham, and Worcester. Wellness programs include flu immunization clinics, cultural competency, and workplace health screenings and education.

"My dad had hospice in his home, and I saw what wonderful care he received," said Leclair. She wanted to give back to the community, so joined the board of VNA Care Hospice in 2002 and, three years later, the board of VNA Care Network Foundation.

Leclair is senior vice president for Greenberg, Rosenblatt, Kull & Bitsoli, P.C. With more than 30 years' experience at the Worcester-based accounting firm, she provides a wide range of tax, accounting, and consulting/advisory services to closely held businesses. Leclair's expertise includes business formation, buy-sell agreements, management and tax consulting, and financial reporting.

Leclair is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants as well as the Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants. She holds a bachelor's degree from Bentley College and an MBA from Babson College.

VNA CARE NETWORK & HOSPICE PRESENTS CAREGIVING AWARDS

...continued from page 1

support to patients and their loved ones with an emphasis on pain and symptom management for patients.

My Lan spent hours each day painstakingly caring for her mother — exercising her even when she was bedbound, taking her outside in her wheelchair for fresh air, and seeing to her personal care. My Lan included her mother in all the family outings. Even when it was nearly impossible to move Loi, her daughter would find a way to transport her to the children's soccer games and keep her involved in things she loved.



Left to right: My Lan Grolman with children, Micah, Caleb, and Rachael

As My Lan accepted the Extra Mile Award, she thanked the hospice staff for supporting her and caring for her mother. “Anytime I needed help, I would just call and they would be there to help me through,”



Left to right: Karen Green, president and CEO of VNA Care Network & Hospice, with Pauleen and Paul Hurley

she said. “VNA (Care Network & Hospice) made it very easy for me. The employees are amazing.”

PAUL AND PAULEEN HURLEY

Paul and Pauleen Hurley worked as a team to ensure Pauleen's mother, Mary Berry, had the best quality of life possible during her months on hospice.

As arteriosclerosis and dementia took over Mary's body and mind, Paul and Pauleen provided for every aspect of Mary's care. They would get up

early each morning to feed Mary then carry her into the shower. Members of our hospice team who visited Mary at home said that she was always positioned perfectly and that her family saw to all of her needs no matter how tired they were.

Most importantly, they always honored who Mary was as a person before her illness took over her life. One of our nurses wrote that Pauleen and Paul “were the most devoted and tireless caregivers I have ever had the privilege of working with.”

EILEEN LEE

VNA Care Network & Hospice's home health team first came to know Eileen Lee about 21 years ago after the birth of her son, Michael. Almost every system of Michael's body was challenged, and a severe disorder required a feeding tube and visits from an occupational therapist.



Rebecca Hill, occupational therapist for VNA Care Network & Hospice, (left) and Eileen Lee

Through the process of educating herself and caring for Michael over the years, Eileen developed strong advocacy skills and the desire to help other families with medically fragile children. She started doing just that in 1997 when the Department of Mental Retardation created the Family Partnership Program, and she joined the staff as a coordinator for the North Shore. At any one time, she may offer support to as many as 35 families and runs a monthly meeting that's open to parents even when her caseload is full.

Eileen told VNA Care Network & Hospice staff gathered at the awards ceremony that “you inspire all of us to do better and make the world a better place.”

VOLUNTEER TEAM IMPROVES GROUNDS OF TIPPETT HOME

A group from the Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks program recently spent a day volunteering at the Tippet Home, VNA Care Network & Hospice's residence in Needham for the terminally ill.

“The team's work and company's donation of supplies for improving and maintaining the property was invaluable,” said Karen Webber, development associate. “Their generosity has made a big impact. Every time a patient goes outside or looks out a window, they'll enjoy the beautiful gardens.”



VNA CARE NETWORK & HOSPICE RECEIVES PATIENT SATISFACTION AWARD OF DISTINCTION



VNA Care Network & Hospice recently received the Patient Satisfaction Award of Distinction from Fazzi Associates.

Former home health care patients of 350 agencies across the

United States had the opportunity to rate their care by completing a patient satisfaction survey. Fazzi Associates, a consulting and benchmarking firm, tracked the results and honored home health care providers ranking in the top 25 percent for the past year.

“I’m proud of our staff who go the extra mile for patients every day,” said Karen Green, president and CEO of VNA Care

Network & Hospice. “Their compassion, expertise, and dedication have made us a national leader in patient satisfaction.”

VNA Care Network & Hospice’s home health care services help people of all ages in Eastern and Central Massachusetts cope with illness and injury while living at home. Care includes nursing; physical, occupational, and speech therapy; home health aide support; social work; nutrition; and disease management programs for diabetes, asthma, cardiopulmonary conditions, and more.

The agency also offers hospice for the terminally ill in patients’ homes, assisted living communities, and other facilities; hospice residences in Cambridge, Needham, and Worcester; inpatient hospice in Worcester; and wellness programs.

For more information, contact VNA Care Network & Hospice at 800-728-1862 or info@vnacarenetwork.org or visit www.vnacarenetwork.org.

BREAST CANCER TREATMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM AWARDED GRANTS TOTALING \$50,000

VNA Care Network & Hospice will help even more women across Massachusetts survive breast cancer thanks to grants totaling \$50,000.

The Breast Cancer Treatment Support Program reaches out to low-income women who are receiving treatment for breast cancer. The program provides stipends for use towards medications, co-payments, transportation to treatment, and other things the women decide are most important to completing treatment and supporting their recovery.

Additional assistance is available from a nursing case manager, who offers guidance on clinical issues and links women to support groups and other community resources, and a client navigator, who reduces barriers to completing treatment by arranging such things as interpreter services and transportation.

The Massachusetts Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure recently presented a \$40,000 grant to VNA Care Network & Hospice. The organization has supported the Breast Cancer Treatment Support Program since it began in 2001. The North Shore Community Health Network awarded the program \$10,000 to assist women in 18 Danvers and Gloucester area communities.

“The generosity of the Massachusetts Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure and the North Shore Community Health



Joan Schaefer, women’s health manager for VNA Care Network & Hospice, (left) and Jeanette Beltran, director of community initiatives for the Massachusetts Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure

Network will enable us to help even more women regain hope and focus on recovering from breast cancer,” said Joan Schaefer, RN, women’s health manager.

For more information about VNA Care Network & Hospice’s Breast Cancer Treatment Support Program, contact Joan Schaefer, RN, at 888-663-3688, ext. 1264 or jschaefer@vnacarenetwork.org. Information is also available at www.vnacarenetwork.org.

EXERCISE YOUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE A HOME HEALTH/HOSPICE PROVIDER

Americans value their freedom of choice, yet many don't realize that freedom extends to choosing a home health care or hospice provider.

"Medicare and Medicaid subscribers have the greatest freedom when selecting home health care and hospice agencies because their right to choose is built-in and both plans are widely accepted," said Jacque Anderson, Referral Center supervisor for VNA Care Network & Hospice.

Managed care groups (HMOs) have contracts with certain home health care and hospice providers, and VNA Care Network and VNA Care Hospice have established relationships with most of these HMOs and other insurers.

"Members of managed care plans should ask about their options and be actively involved in choosing an agency so they receive the best possible care for their situation," said Anderson.

VNA Care Network & Hospice recommends taking these steps to exercise your freedom of choice:



1. Ask to see a list of all your options. Your hospital discharge planner, health insurer, or physician can provide a list of home health care and hospice agencies. If VNA Care Network or VNA Care Hospice isn't on the list, ask them to double check that you have been given the correct list of all your options.

2. If you already have an established relationship or preference for a particular home health care or hospice provider, ask for them by name. "It is not enough to ask for the Visiting Nurse or the VNA. VNA is a generic term like hospital. To ensure VNA Care Network or VNA Care Hospice provides your care, you must ask for us using the full name," said Anderson.

3. Beware of common misconceptions. Patients are not required to choose a home health or hospice agency that is owned by the hospital they use or with which their doctor is affiliated. "A lot of people think if they choose an agency that isn't part of their hospital or doctor's practice that the outside organization won't have access to important medical information. That's not the case," said Anderson. "All home health care and hospice organizations are guided by the same patient privacy laws which cover sharing information."

4. Before signing up for a managed care plan, look into the benefits and restrictions. Does the plan enable you to continue using your current medical providers?

5. Carry VNA Care Network & Hospice's preferred patient card to show your relationship to the agency. Just show your card to whoever is arranging your care and ask them to call the information and referral line at 800-728-1862. VNA Care Network & Hospice staff will arrange services for residents of Eastern and Central Massachusetts.

To receive a free preferred patient card, please contact VNA Care Network & Hospice at 800-728-1862 or info@vnacarenetwork.org.

HOW TO REACH VNA CARE NETWORK & HOSPICE:

Service Information

800-728-1862

Mailing List and Donations

888-663-3688, ext. 1370

Web Site

www.vnacarenetwork.org

Bequests

888-663-3688, ext. 1360

Hospice Volunteer Opportunities

Central Massachusetts/North Shore:

888-663-3688, ext. 6887

Eastern Massachusetts:

888-663-3688, ext. 4271

DONORS BUILD THE FUTURE OF HOSPICE WITH “GREEN” RESIDENCE

Chilton House made history in 1991 as Massachusetts’s first residential hospice for the terminally ill. Now, almost two decades later, the residence is preparing to make history once again by renovating the Cambridge building to create New England’s first “green-certified” hospice.

Chilton House, part of VNA Care Network & Hospice, will implement at least 15 different eco-friendly items that will help it meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification in the homes category. Updates include solar panels to preheat water and zero-emission Icynene foam insulation (view the complete list at www.vnacarenetwork.org).

At the heart of the project will be the installation of three 450-foot geothermal wells connected to a high-efficiency heating and air-conditioning system. Circulating antifreeze will carry heat down to the wells in the summer to cool the building and will bring heat up in the winter. In fact, Chilton House will be a 100% geothermal-heated building.

When completed in late 2009, Chilton House will be “greener” in five key areas: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. These changes will help the environment while creating quiet, comfortable, and attractive surroundings that are more economical to operate and maintain.

YOUR GIFT SUPPORTS CARE FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS

Donors are making these and other extensive renovations possible so terminally ill patients and their loved ones can receive compassionate care in a place that feels like home.

So far, the Campaign for Chilton House has received over \$1 million from individuals, local businesses, and foundations. The nonprofit is just \$54,000 away from obtaining a \$500,000 matching grant; then \$200,000 will be needed to meet the overall campaign goal of \$1.8 million.

You can help terminally ill patients and their families today and in the future by making a charitable gift to the Campaign for Chilton House. Donations may be made online at



Chilton House now has high efficiency, double pane, low-E coated, argon filled windows. New siding is also being installed.

www.vnacarenetwork.org or contact Jane Woodbury, vice president of business and fund development, at 617-547-2620, ext. 1360; 888-663-3688, ext. 1360; or jwoodbury@vnacarenetwork.org. Naming opportunities are available.

LEARN MORE ABOUT “GREEN” HOME DESIGN

Representatives from VNA Care Network & Hospice, Chan Mock Architects, and S+H Construction will talk about their approach to transforming Chilton House into an environmentally friendly residence during the Chilton House Celebration and Cocktail Reception on Thursday, Nov. 12, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 113 Brattle St., Cambridge.

The evening will be hosted by the Hospice of Cambridge Development Committee. You can help support Chilton House by sponsoring the celebration. Tickets will be limited but can be guaranteed by becoming a sponsor. Sponsorships are available at the Angel level for \$1,500 (includes four tickets to the event), Benefactor at \$1,000 (includes three tickets), Friend at \$750 (includes two tickets), or Sponsor at \$250 (includes one ticket).

For reservations or more information, contact Jodi Vigneron, development associate, at 617-547-2620, ext. 1363 or jvigneron@vnacarenetwork.org.

NEW BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP MEETING IN DANVERS

VNA Care Network & Hospice recently started a bereavement support group in Danvers.

Meetings are held on alternate Tuesdays from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in Calvary Episcopal Church, corner of Holten and Cherry streets, Danvers (directions available at www.vnacarenetwork.org). The first hour of the group is for mutual support and the second hour for special presentations.

Upcoming meetings are Sept. 8 and 22 (no meeting Sept. 1), Oct. 6 and 20, Nov. 3 and 17, and Dec. 1 and 15 (no meeting

Dec. 29). There is no charge for this group. For more information, contact Chloe Meadows, MDiv, hospice chaplain for VNA Care Network & Hospice, at 978-777-6100, ext. 1401 or 888-663-3688, ext. 1401.

Bereavement support groups are also available in Cambridge, Needham, Northborough, Spencer, and Worcester. For a schedule, visit the News & Resources section of www.vnacarenetwork.org or call VNA Care Network & Hospice’s Referral Center at 800-728-1862.

CAREGIVERS CAN GET SUPPORT WITHOUT LEAVING HOME OR WORK



If you're among the 44 million Americans caring for an adult family member or friend, support is just a phone call away with VNA Care Network & Hospice's free caregiver education series this fall.

Caregiver U is a series of three teleconferences allowing participants to call a toll-free number to get practical advice from elder care experts from VNA Care Network & Hospice. The following sessions will be held from noon to 1 p.m.:

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER (SEPT. 30): Caregivers don't have to go it alone. Learn about the wealth of resources available to support those caring for seniors, and how to take care of yourself while also caring for a loved one.

SAFE AT HOME (OCT. 14): When loved ones have memory loss, difficulty walking, or other health concerns, day-to-day activities like cooking, driving, and even walking around their home may no longer be safe. Learn to recognize the signs that a loved one may be having difficulty and steps to take to keep them living safely at home.

WHEN THERE'S NO CURE (OCT. 28): A loved one's chronic or life-limiting illness can be an emotional roller coaster for the entire family. Get advice for coping with a loved one's diagnosis and options for home-based health care to help you and your loved one focus on life.

Each session includes time for questions and answers. You may sign up for any or all of the sessions.

Caregiver U is offered at no cost to the community. Preregistration is required. Contact VNA Care Network & Hospice's Referral Center at 800-728-1862 to sign up or get more information.



- Patients give high marks to care
- Chilton House goes "green"
- Exercise your right to choose a home health/hospice provider

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Development Office
5 Federal Street
Danvers, MA 01923

At Home with Your Health
VNAcare
NETWORK & HOSPICE