Planting the Seeds of Growth
New American Clients Drive Adult Day Expansion

Last year, the Adult Day site in Colchester welcomed 13 Bhutanese clients, and the transition to a multi-cultural environment has proved rewarding for both clients and staff. For the VNA staff and long-time Vermont participants, the transition has meant learning about a country more than 7,000 miles away, mastering a few Nepali words, cooking and eating new ethnic foods, and making new friends. For the Bhutanese clients, Adult Day has meant the end to lonely days at home reflecting on their past, and a start to learning a new language, the customs of their adopted home and building new connections with Vermonters.

“In Nepal, life was difficult,” Adult Day client Maina Tamang said, as VNA caregiver Naina Sinchuari translated. “Coming here makes us really happy, because we get to meet new people. Even though we can’t always understand each other, we feel like friends.”

The language barrier was initially a significant challenge, but thanks to Sinchuari’s interpretation skills, communication has greatly improved. This summer, Bidhya Chamlagai, a UVM nursing student from Nepal, also began working in the program, further bridging the cultural divide. The staff has also conducted cultural awareness activities, allowing the clients to learn from each other.

“The staff is really doing a great job of helping our new friends integrate, and learning the Nepali language themselves,” VNA site supervisor Donna LaFromboise-Perretta said. “It’s all about making the connection.”

The effort has paid off tremendously. The Adult Day Program in Essex recently hosted a luncheon to introduce new Bhutanese families to their program. Nine potential clients who had heard positive things about VNA care from others in their community have expressed an interest in joining the Essex program as soon as possible. No doubt they will be met with the same kind greeting given to all who visit Colchester Adult Day, a welcome that makes it feel like home for all: Namaste.
Letter from our CEO
Renewed Focus on Community-Based Care

I hope this issue of our newsletter finds you well and enjoying another beautiful Vermont summer.

VNA staff are hard at work on a number of clinical pilots and initiatives that are providing innovative care to the patients we serve. These new programs are the result of brainstorming and collaboration among VNA staff and our partners in the community as we look for new ways to enhance the care we provide. I’m proud to share their work with you here.

We are also nine months into our affiliation with the University of Vermont Health Network. Work groups from across the VNA are collaborating with their counterparts at the Network to integrate home health and hospice services across all providers — hospital, physicians and home health — so that patients receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

We will be officially relaunching the VNA under its new name and brand identity this fall. We’ll keep you, our steadfast supporters, informed every step of the way. Rest assured, while our name is changing, our commitment to our mission and the community we serve remains the same. We are very excited for what the future holds and we are so thankful to have you with us as we embark on the next chapter.

All my best,

Judy Peterson
President & CEO

Fun Run Raises $60K for VNA Respite House

On Saturday, May 5, runners, walkers and bikers were off to the races to help raise more than $60,000 for the McClure Miller VNA Respite House through its annual 5K Fun Run & Walk.

After the race, participants enjoyed post-run lawn games, music by Top Hat Entertainment, City Market smoothie bikes, foot-shaped cookies made by longtime volunteers and an awards ceremony for top finishers and fundraisers. Raffle winners also scored gifts from Ski Rack, The Guilty Plate and Vermont Integrative Massage Therapy.

The VNA staff extends its gratitude to the event’s corporate sponsors, Colchester Parks and Recreation for handling race logistics, Colchester Police for ensuring participants’ safety and Malletts Bay School for hosting the event.

To make a donation to the VNA Respite House, please visit www.vnacares.org/donate.
In Memoriam

We deeply appreciate that the VNA and its programs were named to receive memorial gifts between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018, in remembrance of the following people. We thank their families for honoring their loved ones in this meaningful way.

Adult Day Program Memorials
Walter Wilkinson

Home Health Memorials
Margaret Bertsch
Edward Bessett
Annette Boutin
Geraldine Chalmers
Bernard Couillard
Vivian Des Rault
Danielle Duquette
Alfred Fengler
Elsie Follett
George Fontaine
Una Gardner
Russell Goodsell
Rose Guilmette
Langford Hibbard
Marjorie Sevigny
Hubert Severin
William Spear
Deborah Stapleton
Jean Tarte
Loretta Trepanier

Ethel Valach
Margaret Verge
Catherine Wilcox
Walter Wilkinson

Hospice Memorials
Frances Balch
Theresa Bellow
Mary Anne Bessette
Robert Blaine
Leo Blair
Roger Couture
Joan Cross
Barbara Darrt
Joan Fairkoski
Phyllis Gilbeau
Vincent Guica
Rose Guillette
Clifford Hill
Barbara Leamy
Ronald Mussen
Beatrice Neill
Shirley O'Brien
Harriet Richards
Dorothy Sawyer
Janet Smith
Loretta Trepanier
Flora Winterbottom
John Young

New Hire Announcements

Please join us in welcoming our new team members

**Allison Burlock** comes to the VNA with years of experience in data analytics in Vermont and Michigan. She holds a Master of Science in Biostatistics from the University of Michigan and previously worked for OneCare Vermont. She now fills the newly created Manager, Data Analytics position at the VNA. Allison will use her expertise to dial in on innovative ways to enhance care delivery and patient experience. **Christine Williams, RN, BSN**, brings extensive experience to her new role as Clinical Manager for the VNA’s home health services team. Most recently, Christine worked at Addison County Home Health and Hospice, where she was a nurse case manager and supervised LNAs and PCAs. Christine will lead a team of VNA clinicians in the field, providing exceptional and compassionate care to clients at home.
2018 Clinical Pilots and Initiatives
Creating New Opportunities to Better Serve Patients

We’re in an exciting time of change in the world of healthcare delivery. A renewed focus on the importance of community-based healthcare provides great opportunity for growth in home health services. Here in Vermont and across the nation we’re experiencing a shift from a hospital-centric model of care — treating people when they are acutely ill — to one focused on prevention and keeping people well, including helping them to better manage chronic conditions.

Clinical teams across our agency are consistently engaged in exploring new and innovative ways to enhance the care we provide. The collaboration is both internal, as we work together to improve processes for patients who receive multiple VNA services, and external, as we engage with our partners across the UVM Health Network and with other community providers like Age Well, Community Health Centers of Burlington and Howard Center, to name a few.

Here are a few of the highlights:

**New Pilot Program Brings Psychiatric Help Home**
VNA has recently partnered with the Community Health Centers of Burlington (CHCB), through a grant from the University of Vermont Medical Center, to provide psychiatric home visits to individuals who are homebound. This pilot program allows increased psychiatric access for existing VNA patients who are not able to travel to appointments.

Program participants receive in-home visits from CHCB psychiatrist Dr. Adam Greenlee. The integration of psychiatric care into VNA patient care was the idea of VNA social workers and case managers who believe that many clients were not receiving proper mental health support specifically because they were homebound due to physical and psycho-social reasons.

“We found a partner in CHCB who also recognized the need of this underserved population of individuals,” says Heather Filonow, Director of Community Care Services at the VNA, who oversees the program.

This program is the first of its kind in the Burlington area and currently serves 19 individuals who are mutual patients of the VNA and CHCB. Filonow anticipates many positive impacts of the Psychiatric Home Visits Program including improved health outcomes and satisfaction for patients, reduced emergency room visits and hospitalizations and increased support for VNA staff in their work with clients.

“The collaboration between the VNA and CHCB to develop and implement this program has been full of energy and innovation,” Filonow says. “We look forward to continuing to work together to support the health and wellbeing of our community.”

**Integrating Home Health Services with Primary Care**
In collaboration with the UVM Health Network, VNA nurses will soon be on site at Hinesburg Family Medicine, providing guidance and care coordination for complex patients who can benefit from home health services.

**VNA-Facilitated Physician Telemedicine Visits**
Later this summer, we will be piloting physician telemedicine visits with VNA patients who are under the care of UVM Medical Center vascular surgery and palliative medicine. Facilitated by VNA nurses, the video-enabled visits will allow physicians to interact with patients in their home, eliminating the need for them to travel to a clinic.

**Post-Discharge Home Visit Waiver**
For patients discharged from the hospital who are not eligible for traditional home health services, OneCare Vermont’s Next Gen model allows the VNA to provide up to nine home health visits to ensure a safe transition from hospital to home.

**Enhanced Home Infusions**
VNA’s home health nurses are working with UVM Medical Center clinical services and outpatient pharmacy to increase our capacity to provide infusions to patients in the comfort of their homes.
Mentor in Life, Benefactor in Death
VNA Endowments Get Major Boost

Last year, the McClure Miller VNA Respite House unexpectedly received a check for $390,471.90. The VNA Endowment received an equally generous donation the same day. Both were gifts of Benjamin Schweyer, a local attorney with deep ties to the area, who had included the VNA in his estate planning.

“My uncle believed in Burlington,” explains Ben Nostrand, Schweyer’s nephew who delivered the surprise donations and acted as a trustee of his estate. “He only donated to local groups,” he says. “He wanted a strong community.”

Ben Schweyer was both a product and patron of Chittenden County. Born in 1925, he graduated from Burlington High School, joined the army, earning three Battle Stars during World War II, and graduated from the University of Vermont in 1949. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1952, Schweyer embarked on a 40-year law career in his hometown, during which he mentored many young lawyers and small business owners. “He loved this community,” says Nostrand, who lives in Charlotte. “He always wanted to hear about business, had a keen interest in what people were doing and acted as an adviser to many.”

Ben and his wife, Margo, habitually donated to area charities and non-profits, first contributing to the VNA more than 30 years ago. Margo passed away in 2009, and upon Ben’s death in 2016, the VNA became one of eight local charitable organizations to which he left sizeable gifts.

Nostrand describes his uncle as very careful with his money during his lifetime. “One of his favorite sayings was, ‘A fool and his money are soon parted,’” Nostrand remembers with a smile. He was equally as intentional with his estate planning. He asked that his contributions be placed in endowment funds, which allow the donation to be invested and proceeds to be used for decades to come. “He wanted to have an everlasting effect,” explains Nostrand, himself a financial advisor. “Endowment funds, if managed correctly, can be used in perpetuity.”

Each year, the VNA withdraws 4 percent of its endowment, which helps cover the costs of VNA care for clients who cannot afford to pay. “The interest income from our endowment supports much of the important work provided to the most vulnerable in our community — the very young, the very old and the very poor,” says Judy Peterson, CEO of the VNA.

Schweyer believed in the work of local charities and non-profits like ours. “He knew they were helping people,” Nostrand says. “He wanted to help people help people.”

Find Out More About Estate Planning

The VNA is committed to providing needed services to the residents of Chittenden and Grand Isle counties regardless of their ability to pay. We provide approximately $1.5 million annually in charitable care.

Each year the VNA Development Department staff works diligently to raise funds from our generous community to cover operational losses. We conduct annual appeals, solicit donors and request allocations from the cities and towns in our service area, as well as the United Way. Still, there is a gap in the cost of our care and the revenue we are able to generate. Proceeds from our endowment bridge this gap.

As the demand for our services grows, we predict an even greater need for a strong VNA endowment fund. If you’d like to find out more about including a bequest to the VNA in your will or living trust, please call me to discuss joining the VNA’s Julia Smith Wheeler Founders’ Society. You can make a difference in the lives of Vermonters and help ensure that our mission continues for years to come.

Ayeshah Raftery
Director of Development
802.860.4475

“My uncle believed in Burlington. He only donated to local groups. He wanted a strong community.”

Ben Nostrand
Nephew of Benjamin Schweyer, Trustee of his estate
Our Interdisciplinary Team Approach to Better Care

Tara Graham, right, Executive Director of our Hospice and Palliative Care program, facilitates an interdisciplinary team meeting with Hospice Social Worker, Jeanne Sullivan.

VNA’s integrated team of healthcare professionals work collaboratively to carry out each client’s individualized plan of care, providing them the resources and support they need to reach their healthcare goals.

| 156 | Registered Nurses |
| 27  | Licensed Practical Nurses |
| 103 | Licensed Nursing Assistants |
| 165 | Personal Care Attendants |
| 30  | Physical Therapists |
| 5   | Speech Therapists |
| 8   | Occupational Therapists |
| 9   | Clinical Social Workers |
| 5   | Certified Dementia Care Practitioners |
| 3   | Certified Wound Ostomy Nurses |