VNA Community Giving

VNA CALIFORNIA ADDS CAPACITY TO SERVE MORE PATIENTS
Los Angeles County and North San Diego County Patients Benefit

VNA California reached another milestone with our expansion into Eastern Los Angeles and North San Diego counties.

Patients often choose to receive treatment in facilities or from health care professionals outside of their local area. When our partners refer patients to VNA California, we want to transition and provide the care that our partners know they can expect from us. This expansion means that we can support all patient referrals and provide the continuum of in-home quality care options to support their recovery and comfort.

VNA California’s expansion into Los Angeles County includes the cities of Claremont, LaVerne, Diamond Bar, Pomona and San Dimas. San Diego County coverage now includes Carlsbad, Encinitas, Escondido, Oceanside, San Marcos and Vista.

Mike Rusnak, CEO, is committed to ensuring access to quality patient care. “We get calls daily from physicians and hospitals asking for our help in assisting their patients at home,” he commented. As hospital stays continue to be shorter in duration, the need for in-home care increases. “People frequently travel long distances to reach their health care provider or to be cared for in a specific hospital. We want to make sure we can provide services regardless of where they live.”

Palm Springs Expansion Responds to Growing Patient Need

The Palm Springs Resource Center was opened in March to provide additional resources and information on home health, rehabilitative, palliative and hospice services to residents in the western areas of the Coachella Valley. This expansion supports the VNA California branch in Palm Desert.

Positive Outcomes

VNA IN-HOME REHABILITATION

Weekly therapy helps stroke patient

When Ruth Peterson was being released from the hospital after her eighth stroke, the first call was to VNA California in-home care.

Feisty and determined to “fight through it”, Ruth looks forward to the twice-weekly visits by VNA Occupational therapist, Denise, and Physical Therapist, Kevin, who have become like family while helping Ruth improve. Sessions focus on working with Ruth to regain the skills needed for daily living so that she can remain independent and live in her own home.

“I’m fighting every step of the way,” Ruth says, adding that the “care she receives from VNA is great! They are the best.”

Patients recovering from stroke can find simple tasks such as fastening a button or holding a pencil difficult. With regular therapy and continued practice, patients can regain mobility, independence and confidence.
Hospice Care

HOSPICE CARE VISITS FROM “SPECIAL” FRIENDS

The wag of a tail and a wet nose can provide comfort

Hospice care focuses on comfort and peace while managing the challenges of the end of life. VNA California’s hospice volunteers play a critical role in providing comfort and support to patients and their families. From a friendly smile to reading or holding a hand, our volunteers are dedicated to making life’s precious moments memorable. One such experience can be a visit from one of VNA California’s four-legged volunteers. Over 25 dogs provide “pet therapy” and have proven to be invaluable.

There’s something about the cuddling presence of a dog that brings a smile to the face and a twinkle in the eye, perking up even our most challenged patients. VNA California’s hospice program developed pet therapy certified training so that volunteers who wanted to expand their level of compassion could do so by including their pets in the program.

VNA Student Mentoring Program

STUDENTS RECEIVE “HANDS-ON” TRAINING

A critical part of every therapist, nursing or medical student’s curriculum is learning “hands-on” with patients and gaining insight, while being supervised and mentored by an experienced professional.

Deanna McLaughlin, RN, VNA’s Clinical Program Manager, works closely with over fifteen schools and matches students with VNA professionals who can help them learn about the practical aspects of providing care in the home. Student programs can range from a one-day nursing experience making home health visits to a twelve-week physical therapy rotation shadowing professionals in all VNA home care settings - home health, palliative, rehabilitative and hospice.

Students have a chance to see what it takes, both professionally and personally to provide quality in-home care. From clinical assessment, documentation and communication to a friendly smile that can be chicken soup for the soul.

“The home care setting is very different from in-patient and out-patient services” comments Lu Girardin, RN Clinical Educator. “Our nurses need to have a broad range of skills so that they can work independently while following the various care plans established by our patients’ physicians.”

In-home health care professionals are experienced in making an assessment of a patient’s health status and providing the required care. Frequently, a nurse will contact the patient’s physician while in the home to discuss the assessment and confirm the plan of care.

A day making home health patient visits opened the eyes of California Baptist University nursing student, Amanda Waldher. “I had no idea that in-home visits required such a high level of expertise and care. Patients at home need as much help in recovering from an illness or operation as those in the hospital.”

Omid Kajbaf is a Clinical Physical Therapy Doctorate student from Western University completing a 12-week rotation with VNA in the Apple Valley area. He worked alongside various professionals who gave him an understanding of how and why the team effort for in-home patient care works.

“The experience has changed my ideas about the various ways of providing physical therapy. It has opened up opportunities that I didn’t fully understand. This experience has been invaluable.”
ICe: It’s not Winter, but it is ICe
In Case of Emergency – When Minutes Count

It’s hard to predict or prepare for an emergency. Yet, when an emergency arises, minutes count. First responders need to act quickly. The better informed they are, the better they can help. By having your medical history, medication information, contact information and the necessary health care documentation readily available, you can save precious time in getting treatment.

VNA California recently introduced the ICE (In Case of Emergency) kit to home health patients. Each patient receives a kit that contains a medical history and contact form, important numbers sheet, refrigerator decal and front door sticker, along with a plastic tube. The completed ICE form is placed in the tube which is, in turn, placed in the freezer. With a front door sticker and refrigerator decal, first responders are quickly alerted where to find potentially life-saving information.

Are you ICed? If you would like a VNA California ICE kit, we ask that you consider making a $25 donation. Donations for the ICE kit can be sent to: ICE Donation c/o VNA California, 42-600 Cook Street, Palm Desert, CA 92211.
Save the Dates

7TH ANNUAL CAMP ERIN
FRIDAY - SUNDAY, JULY 19-21
NEAR BIG BEAR
Camp for Grieving Kids
www.MourningStar.org

TRADITION OF CARING
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5
RIVERSIDE

VNA MONSTER MASH 5K OBSTACLE RUN
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26
San Bernardino Fairgrounds, Victorville
www.VNAMonsterMash.org

GIVE BIG RIVERSIDE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12
City of Riverside Online Giving Day
www.GiveBIGRiverside.org

UPCOMING JOB FAIRS
California Physical Therapists
Association Annual Conference
Sept. 20-21 - Pasadena

Job Fair at Loma Linda University
October 25 - Loma Linda

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
GET BACK MORE THAN GIVING

CAMP ERIN – JULY 19 – 21, 2013
NEAR BIG BEAR
Each summer, the Mourning Star Centers host a weekend bereavement camp for children and teens, ages 6 to 17. Camp Erin is designed to support grieving children through activities that allow them to share with others, build trust, learn new coping skills and have fun.

Camp Erin is staffed by professional grief counselors from Mourning Star and VNA California, as well as trained community volunteers.

If you would like to volunteer, call Pamela Gabbay, Director of Mourning Star Centers at 760-773-6333. Training sessions are being held in Riverside on May 18 and in Palm Desert on June 1 and are provided free of charge.

HOSPICE BRANCHES
VNA California’s Hospice program provides patients who have life-limiting, terminal illnesses with a personal choice for end-of-life care. Dedicated volunteers supply meaningful support to hospice patients and critical relief for their families.

Volunteers are needed for all VNA hospice programs. If you would like to volunteer, call Sharon Beattie at 951-413-1216 or email her at Sharon.Beattie@VNACalifornia.org. Training is provided free of charge.
Donors: Giving Back

Many thanks to our donors! Your support is crucial during a time of budget reductions and outright cuts. Your generosity makes our Community Outreach programs and health care partnerships possible.
One of the oldest in-home nursing, rehabilitative and hospice providers in Southern California, VNA California supported over 19,500 patients with 227,000+ visits last year. The only community-based non-profit to offer a complete continuum of home care, VNA provides Home Health, Palliative and Hospice services throughout Riverside, San Bernardino, North San Diego and East Los Angeles Counties. In addition, VNA’s Community Outreach efforts include Mourning Star Centers for Child and Teen Grief and Bereavement, the Nightingale Society, Charity Care Services, adult bereavement, professional continuing education and various seminars and workshops.

Visit www.VNACalifornia.org or call 855-VNA-2211 for more information.