



GARDNER VNA

Your Home Connection.

\$20,000 Grant for Residential Hospice Feasibility Study

The Gardner Visiting Nursing Association, Inc. (Gardner VNA) recently received a \$20,000 grant from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts to conduct a feasibility study to help the community determine if a residential hospice is a viable option for the region.

The Gardner VNA has been providing in-home hospice services in Worcester County and North Quabbin areas of Massachusetts for 18 years. "While in-home Hospice is an invaluable service and remains a priority for the Gardner VNA, we feel that in order to better serve all of our patients, providing options regarding where they receive Hospice care is of the utmost importance," said Elaine Fluet, CEO of the Gardner VNA. "We find that in some instances a patient doesn't have a family member living with them, which makes it impossible for him/her to remain in their home," she said. "This person would be a perfect candidate for a residential hospice. By conducting this study, we hope to ultimately fulfill a need in our community that we feel is being overlooked," she added.

Continued on back page

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Accomplishments in 2008 at Annual Meeting

The Gardner VNA recently held its Annual Meeting at The Old Mill in Westminster, MA. According to Elaine Fluet, CEO, the meeting was a time to reflect and celebrate all of our accomplishments during the past year, as well as an opportunity to thank our employees, Board members and volunteers for their ongoing support of the Gardner VNA.

"We are very excited to have advanced our technology over the past year, adding our new telemonitoring system and a computer scheduling package for our homecare and hospice programs," said Fluet. "We were also very honored to have received donations specifically for the purchase of new equipment," she added. "Our mission remains unchanged and it is our unwavering commitment to the community to provide high quality care to our clients that makes the Gardner VNA so unique," she said.

"In order to celebrate our success, we must recognize individuals who have supported our ability to provide quality care to the residents of the surrounding 24 communities, so this year we honored Dr. Bryan Miller with the Fifth Annual Make A Difference Award," said Fluet. "We truly appreciate his service to the agency as our Medical Director and know that we can count on him to support our programs," she said.

The Gardner VNA Board of Directors for 2009 include Gerald Bankowski, Lynn Barrieau, Andrew

Continued on page 2



Pictured above (L to R) are new board member Nancy Monette; CEO Elaine Fluet; new board member Ellie Fox; Board Treasurer Gerald Bankowski; Board Secretary Scott Graves; Board Vice President Debbie Orre and Board President Brian Jette.



Pictured left are Gardner VNA Employees Cindy Winslow and Diane Moquin enjoying the Annual Meeting with colleagues and friends of the Gardner VNA.

Adult Day Health Services Provided in Three Communities

The Gardner VNA offers Adult Day Health Services in Gardner, Athol and Fitchburg. According to Murielle Conway, RN, Adult Day Health Program Director, the Gardner VNA opened its first Adult Day Health Center in 1984 in Gardner. "After we opened our first, the adult day health care industry grew and became recognized as an intricate part of the health care delivery system," said Conway. "With this growth happening and the need clearly identified, the Gardner VNA opened its second center in Fitchburg in 1987 and the third in Orange in 1993, which was relocated to a larger Center in Athol in the Fall of 2007," she said. The centers are all certified by the Department of Medical Assistance.

Conway noted that the centers are designed to meet the physical, functional and social needs of elderly and disabled adults who are unable to live independently. "Our centers and staff are able to provide for people with Alzheimer's or dementia and/or medical needs, as well as those people seeking socialization," she said.

"The benefits of having an adult day health center available to area residents is enormous," said Conway. The program provides participants and caregivers with:

- an alternative to nursing home placement or social isolation
- a stimulating environment for love ones who cannot be left alone
- a friendly, therapeutic and safe environment
- care and companionship
- respite for caregivers
- promoting a level of independence for the participant
- availability of nurses and social workers to answer any questions

Conway added that anyone who is interested in visiting one of our centers on a day that is convenient for them and their loved one is more than welcome to call for an appointment. "It gives us the opportunity to show family members, first-hand, the benefits of



Pictured (L to R) are Adult Day Health Program Directors Kathy Kilhart, Cindy Winslow, Louise Smith and Murielle Conway.

sending a loved one to an Adult Day Health Center," she said. Some of the benefits include increased personal safety with supportive supervision and top quality medical services, carefully planned daily exercise and activities that enhance health and happiness, a chance to make new friends, and assurance that health monitoring and personal care are the top priorities.

"With the support of our Adult Day Health Centers, you can balance your caregiving role with time to care for yourself, and have time for other obligations and interests," said Conway. "We cannot replace the care that only you can give, but we can certainly help relieve some of your stress," she added.

The locations of the centers are Gardner at 34 Pearly Lane, Gardner, MA; Fitchburg at 481 Electric Ave, Parkhill Plaza, Fitchburg, MA; and Athol at 1471 Main Street Rear, Athol, MA.

If you have any questions regarding Adult Day Health Services, please call our centers in Gardner at (978) 632-1230, Fitchburg at (978) 342-9428 and Athol at (978) 248-9470.



Pictured above are GFA employees Kelly Mason and Bob Jumber at the Gardner VNA's annual meeting.

Annual Meeting – Continued from front page

Boucher, Charles Brownlee, Paulette Carroll, John Flick, Eleanor Georgi, Michael Gerry, Ellen Goderre, Heather Layton, Peter Erickson, Scott Graves, Priscilla Jaillet, Brian Jette, Joyce LaFontaine, Roberta Lesperance, and Debbie Orre. The newest members to join the Board are Ellie Fox and Nancy Monette.

Elected officers for 2009 are Brian Jette, President; Debbie Orre, Vice President; Gerald Bankowski, Treasurer and Scott Graves, Secretary.

"We have such a dedicated group of Directors who are committed to the mission and values of our agency," said Fluet. "We have accomplished so much throughout the years and this would not have been possible without these community members who volunteer their time and expertise to our Board of Directors," she added.

Fluet recognized Board member Eleanor Georgi for her years of dedicated service to the Gardner VNA. "She has donated her time to our Board of Directors for the past 15 years and we are thankful for her feedback," she said.

Celebration Breakfast to Honor Employees

The Gardner VNA hosted a special breakfast on March 4th to honor several employees celebrating milestones in their years of service. Gardner VNA's CEO, Elaine Fluet, expressed how fortunate the agency was to have such dedicated employees who believe so passionately in the work we do in the community. Employees celebrating anniversaries include:

30 years: Joseph Piaseczny

20 years: Linda Gough
Susan Dower

15 years: Casandra Clukey
Nancy Turner

10 years: Betty Lavender
Dale DelleChiaie
Gloria LeBlanc

5 years: Rena Hemlock



Gardner VNA's CEO, Elaine Fluet, presents Joe Piaseczny with 30 year service award.

Gardner VNA Extends Congratulations to Employees

Gardner VNA employees achieve certifications and attend National Conference.



Karen Linabury recently passed the COS-C (Certificate for OASIS Specialist – Clinical) examination. The OASIS Certificate and Competency Board (OCCB) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting greater reliability in OASIS data, through consistent application of guidelines provided by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Efforts to achieve that goal include offering a voluntary certificate examination, which home care providers may take in order to demonstrate and establish their expertise and commitment to OASIS data accuracy. Having successfully completed the examination, Karen will be awarded the Certificate for OASIS Specialist – Clinical (COS-C) designation.



Judy Durkee recently completed a 10-week course in Gardner earning a certification in The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. This is an emergency preparedness program supported by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The CERT Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the skills learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community. Since 1993, 28 communities in the U.S. and Puerto Rico have offered CERT trainings.



Janice Huff recently had the honor of attending a national meeting in Washington D.C. to meet with two Representatives who are the co-chairs for the Nursing Caucus in the House and other key legislators involved with healthcare reform and nursing issues. Janice received a \$500 scholarship from the Regional WOCN organization to attend this year's conference. Janice also had an opportunity to meet with staff members from Senator Kerry, Senator Kennedy and Representative Olver's offices.

Grant – Continued from front page

The Gardner VNA hospice program served more than 140 patients during 2007 and found that one out of every 15 potential patients is unable to enroll in the program because they do not have a caregiver at home. Those unable to access hospice services often end up in nursing homes or hospitals when they can no longer be left on their own.

“The value of residential hospice services has been well-documented,” said Dr. Jan Yost, President and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. “But given the limited resources in our health care system, a feasibility study to ensure the viability of a residential hospice in the region is a prudent course of action,” Yost added.

The Gardner VNA will hire a consultant to conduct the study – using both qualitative and quantitative research – to help

the community determine the viability of this project. The study is expected to be completed in about a year.

The Gardner VNA is dedicated to providing high quality, affordable health and social services to North Worcester County and Franklin County and serves the cities and towns of the region including: Ashburnham, Ashby, Athol, Baldwinville, Barre, Clinton, Erving, Fitchburg, Gardner, Hubbardston, Leominster, Lunenburg, New Salem, Orange, Petersham, Phillipston, Royalston, Rutland, Templeton, Townsend, Warwick, Wendell, Westminster and Winchendon. For more information about this project or about the Gardner VNA, please call 978-632-1230 or visit their website at www.gardnervna.org.



Gardner VNA Services

Adult Day Health Services – *Gardner, Fitchburg & Athol*

Community Education Programs

Corporate Wellness

Healthy Families®

Home Assisted Living™ – *Group Adult Foster Care*

Homecare Services

- *Skilled Nursing*
- *Maternal/Child Health Services*
- *Wound, Ostomy & Continence Specialist*
- *Rehabilitation Therapists– Occupational, Physical & Speech*
- *Medical Social Services*
- *Home Health Aides*
- *Telehealth Program*

Hospice

Lifeline

My Home Connection™ – *A Private Duty Service*

Public Health-Flu & Blood Pressure Clinics

Support Groups

- *Caregiver's Support Groups– Fitchburg & Gardner*
- *Bereavement Support Group*
- *New Beginnings Support Group*

Community Outreach Programs

Gardner VNA Community Services Center:

- *HIV Prevention & Education*
- *HIV Counseling & Testing*

Gardner VNA Mission

We build healthy communities by delivering high quality health and social services in a fiscally responsible manner in the homes and neighborhoods of North Central and North Quabbin areas of Massachusetts.

Gardner VNA Customer Service Standards

- We value our employees and their commitment to our customers and the agency.
- We believe that health and well-being are an individual's most valuable possessions.
- We value the trust placed in us by our customers.
- We provide excellent service.

Donations

The Gardner VNA is grateful for the generous support of our donors. If you are interested in making a tax-deductible donation to the Gardner VNA or if you have any questions regarding how to make a donation, please call (978) 632-1230, ext. 3080.

“We want to thank you for all the wonderful nurses, physical therapists and health aides you have sent to us.”

If you would like to share any thoughts with our CEO, Elaine Fluet, please drop us a line at 34 Pearly Lane, Gardner, MA 01440 or email her at elaine.fluet@gardnervna.org.

For any other questions about the Gardner VNA or our services, please call 978-632-1230.