VNA Care’s mission is to provide the right care with kindness and compassion every day for every person we serve.

VNAcare
VNA Care Network
VNA of Boston
VNA Hospice & Palliative Care
Holly Chaffee, BSN, MSN, RN, was recently appointed president and CEO of VNA Care by the board of directors after a nationwide search. She replaces Mary Ann O’Connor, who retired this winter.

For the past decade, Holly has been the president and CEO of Porchlight VNA/Home Care in Western Massachusetts. Most recently, she was recognized as a 2017 Healthcare Hero by the publications Business West and Healthcare News.

A registered nurse with more than 30 years of experience, Holly has distinguished herself as an innovator in enhancing the quality of patient care. She serves as board president of the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts, and previously held the role of board president of the Visiting Nurse Associations of New England from 2012 to 2014. Holly received a bachelor of science in nursing from Skidmore College and a master of science in nursing administration from the University of Hartford.

Rita S. Advani, a board member for over 11 years, has been named chair of the VNA Care board of directors. She takes the reigns from outgoing board chair Diane Leclair.

Rita is the president of Bush Pond Ventures, LLC, an organization focused on increasing science literacy for pre-K through grade 12. She is also the director of High Touch High Tech of New England, an organization that brings STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) enrichment programs to early childhood centers, elementary, and middle schools in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

She has more than 30 years of experience in marketing strategy, global product management, emerging markets development, health care, and loss prevention. Rita also serves as a member of a state commission on education, an elected member of a local school board, and chairs a municipality’s energy committee.
Yoffies’ bequest supports cardiac and other educational opportunities for clinicians

Charitable gift in your will can advance local health care services

Benjamin Franklin once wrote, “An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.” Thanks to donor support, the returns on VNA Care’s clinical education programs are particularly great – improving the health and quality of life for people with complex health conditions.

For nearly a decade, a bequest from William A. Yoffie and Judith S. Yoffie has furthered our nurses’ and rehabilitation therapists’ education, and led to the establishment of such programs as the Lee Silverman Voice Treatment (LSVT) BIG and LSVT LOUD therapies for Parkinson’s patients.

The Yoffies’ legacy most recently supported Michele Rosenthal, RN, clinical orientation and education manager, in attending the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses’ national conference, State of Heart Failure: Transforming Practice to Improve Patient Outcomes. During the conference, Michele successfully completed an exam to receive the designation of Certified Heart Failure Nurse – Knowledge.

Michele has since shared what she learned about the latest treatment options, devices, and medications with colleagues and serves as a resource for clinicians caring for individuals with heart failure.

Music therapy ...continued from front cover

The two wrote a song together using the words the patient wanted to leave behind for those she loved. Cara recorded the song and made CDs for the family.

Musicians have been among Cara’s patients. One gentleman was a drummer and performed with bands all over New England. He talked to Cara about having a concert for his neighbors, and Cara got things rolling. Cara and the patient rehearsed over the course of two weeks for the show.

“From the outside, it looks like entertainment, but it really was so therapeutic. He didn’t have a ton of family, but he was able to leave something within the last weeks of his life for the people in his building,” said Cara. “Just the level of joy that was brought about through the experience was incredible. He passed away within a week of the performance. It really was one of his last life experiences.”

Your legacy makes a difference

When you include VNA Care in your will or other estate plans, you will improve the quality of life for people facing complicated health conditions.

Individuals may leave a specific dollar amount, a percentage, the residual of their estate, or an asset, such as real estate, through their will. If you already have a will, a codicil allows you to add a bequest or make other changes without replacing the will.

Your legal counsel can provide assistance in making a bequest. We generally recommend:

1. Naming VNA Care Network/ VNA Hospice & Palliative Care/ VNA of Boston as the designated organization. All are 501(c) (3) nonprofit organizations.

2. Make the gift unrestricted (this is preferred because it gives us flexibility to respond to the health care challenges and needs of the future) or specify a certain area, such as hospice, hospice residence, or home health care.

3. Specify the amount or percentage of the gift.

If you let VNA Care know about your bequest, we will welcome you as a member of the Caring Bequest Society.

For more information about how your legacy can make a lasting impact, please contact Jane Woodbury, vice president of fund development, at 888-663-3688, ext. 1360 or Jane_Woodbury@vnacare.org.
VNA of Boston’s Heroes in Health Care Awards celebrate leaders who are shaping the future of health care. From left: Dusty Majumdar, PhD, chief marketing officer, accepted the Heroes Award on behalf of IBM Watson Health; Pierantonio Russo, MD, former vice president of health services for Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Heroes honoree; Mary Ann O’Connor, retired president and CEO of VNA Care; and Richard Rakowski, CEO of Medically Home Group and Heroes honoree.

Heroes in Health Care Gala celebrated innovations in medicine and raised vital funds for home health care

The 12th annual Heroes in Health Care Gala raised $275,000 for VNA of Boston’s Maternal Child Health and charitable care programs, as well as for palliative care provided by VNA Hospice & Palliative Care. We are grateful for our generous sponsors and donors who help us improve health and relieve suffering for patients and families in our community. To sponsor the 2018 Gala, please contact Laura Wise, manager of fund development, at 617-886-6460.
Craig Mandeville, CEO of patron sponsor Forcura, and Heather Mandeville

From left: Mike and Jean Maguire; Theresa Greed; John Greed, president and CEO of Mutual of America; Meggan and Chris Bailey; Kate St. Laurent; and Joe Gerardi from trustee sponsor Mutual of America.

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In-Kind Sponsors

Photos by Roger Farrington

From left: Marilyn Warren, Merle McKenzie, Barbara Belony, RN, and Gloria Herbert with benefactor sponsor Suburban Homemaking & Maternity Agency

From left: Grace Gomez, Nicole Green, and Dianivette Melendez with benefactor sponsor Boston Children’s Hospital

From left: Scott and Jill Vaillancourt, Lindsay Magner and Jay Janus with supporter sponsor Supplemental Health Care
Miss Margaret Howe, a longtime Danvers resident, was deeply impressed by the difference visiting nurses were making in other communities in the early 1900’s. Among those caring for the sick and promoting good health were organizations that are now part of VNA Care: VNA of Boston, established in 1886; Dedham VNA, established in 1891; Worcester VNA, established in 1892; and Cambridge VNA, established in 1904.

Miss Howe turned to fellow members of the Danvers Women’s Association for the leadership needed to hire a nurse to care for Danvers residents. The group voted on May 25, 1908, to form the Danvers Visiting Nurse Association. Anyone who donated $1 or more to support the work of a visiting nurse would be given membership in the Association and listed in the annual report.

The charitable support of many enabled the Association to hire Mrs. Annie M. Norris, who began visiting patients on Sept. 1, 1908. Clara Putnam Hale, recording secretary, wrote in the Danvers Visiting Nurse Association’s first annual report that “too much cannot be said in praise of the public spirit in which this movement has been met, of the cooperation of all our physicians, the help and sympathy from churches and schools, (and) the generous contributions from a long list of subscribers…”

The Danvers Visiting Nurse Association later became known as the Visiting Nurse Association of North Shore after a merger in 1979 with the Beverly Visiting Nurse Association, Cape Ann Community Nursing Association, and Manchester Nursing Service. The Visiting Nurse Association of North Shore co-founded VNA Care Network in 1995 with the Cambridge and Dedham Visiting Nurses to better serve residents of Eastern and Central Massachusetts.

The public spirit that brought visiting nurses to the North Shore 110 years ago has continued ever since. Donor and volunteer support has enabled our staff to respond to the needs of the community, including flu epidemics, the AIDS crisis, and the growing number of people living with multiple chronic health conditions. We are grateful for your support of our mission to “provide the right care with kindness and compassion every day for every person we serve.”

Join the anniversary celebration

Photos, documents, and other items from our archives will be on display during the North Shore Community Cabinet’s Kentucky Derby Party on Saturday, May 5, at 7 p.m. in the Salem Country Club, Peabody. The evening also features live music, dancing, heavy hors d’oeuvres, live and silent auctions, and hat contest. Tickets are available now at www.vnacare.org/derby.

110 years of Visiting Nurses on the North Shore

Upcoming events

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<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Kentucky Derby Party</td>
<td>Salem Country Club, Peabody</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vnacare.org/derby">www.vnacare.org/derby</a></td>
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<td>September 21</td>
<td>Autumn Swing</td>
<td>Needham Golf Club</td>
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<td>September 30</td>
<td>Step Out for Hospice Walk/Run</td>
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<td>November 10</td>
<td>Heroes in Health Care Gala</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.vnacare.org/gala">www.vnacare.org/gala</a></td>
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Getting started with advance care planning

Conversations and documents to make your health care wishes known

Kerry O’Connor, APNP, palliative care nurse practitioner, decided to ask her parents the same question she asks many of her patients. What kind of health care would they want if they were ever unable to speak for themselves?

“I was completely shocked by their responses,” said Kerry. “I want to do the best by them. I’m so glad I asked.”

While the topic might be difficult to bring up with loved ones, there are many tools to help you and your loved ones start thinking and talking about your wishes. (See the resources list at right.) Some of these tools are known as living wills, which let people put their wishes for medical treatment in writing. Living wills are not legally recognized in Massachusetts, but can still be a helpful guide for those making decisions on your behalf.

Two documents that are recognized in Massachusetts, and have counterparts in other states, are the health care proxy and Massachusetts Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST).

Health care proxy

The health care proxy form allows you to appoint someone, known as an agent, to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to make or communicate those decisions yourself. The agent only gets to make these decisions if a clinician has evaluated the patient and determined that the patient no longer has the ability to make these decisions. The decision-making power returns to the patient when their condition improves enough that they are once again able to make and communicate their decisions.

The form is readily available online and from health care providers. If you ever want to change your agent, simply complete a new form. Make sure your agent either has a copy or knows where you keep it. You may also want to give a copy to your physician, hospital or health plan, and others who may be involved in handling your affairs, such as your lawyer. Be sure to talk to the person you appoint as your agent about the types of medical care you do and do not want.

MOLST

Kerry recommends that people with a serious illness or anyone who is advancing in years also have a MOLST form. (Many other states use a form known as POLST, Physicians Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment.)

The form allows you to document what life-sustaining treatments you do or do not want, such as using a ventilator if you can’t breathe on your own. The document is a medical order that relays your decisions between health care professionals. The MOLST form will need to be signed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant after a conversation about the goals for care between the signing clinician and the patient. Like the health care proxy, you can make changes to the MOLST form at any point in time. Talk to your medical provider to learn more.

Kerry views these documents and conversations about health care wishes as “good self-care, because it’s helping to take care of yourself now and in the future. It’s also good family care, because it’s helping reduce any stress your family might have in trying to determine what you want. …There are a lot better outcomes emotionally for patients and families when they’ve done this kind of advanced work.”

Resources

Five Wishes helps you have conversations about and document your wishes. The booklet includes a health care proxy form. Visit www.agingwithdignity.org.

The Conversation Project’s website has a conversation starter kit available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, French, Hebrew, Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese. They also offer a starter kit for families and loved ones of people with Alzheimer’s and other types of dementia, tips for talking to your doctor, and advice for choosing or being a health care proxy. Visit www.theconversationproject.org.

National Healthcare Decisions Day has a long list of resources for expressing and documenting your wishes. Visit www.nhdd.org and click on resources.

The Massachusetts Medical Society offers the health care proxy form, information, and instructions at www.massmed.org/healthcareproxy. The page also has a list of discussion questions.

This information is intended for educational purposes only. For legal, health, tax, or financial advice, please contact your professional advisors.
A routine biopsy revealed that Dawn DeLuca's cancer had returned. Her battle began in 2015 at the age of 32. Multiple surgeries, chemotherapy that blinded Dawn for 10 days, and radiation removed the colorectal cancer. She celebrated one year of remission last July.

Dawn underwent surgery again in January. The seven-hour procedure was a success, and she returned home a few days later with the support of her husband Mike and VNA Care Network. “It was tough going home. I didn’t realize how much surgery I had and how extensive it was,” said Dawn, a registered nurse who works in a hospital intensive care unit.

VNA Care Network’s nurse specialists include a team of certified wound, ostomy, and continence nurses (CWOCN), who have advanced education in the field and completed a certification exam. The CWOCNs serve as a resource for patients facing complex surgical wounds, pressure ulcers, ostomies, and more. VNA Care Network’s CWOCN program and staff have won state and national awards.

Shirley Lucier, RN, CWOCN, of VNA Care Network, began caring for Dawn at home. Dawn’s surgery included an ostomy, a surgically created opening that allows the body to get rid of waste into a pouch. Shirley, a past recipient of the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts’ Clinician of the Year Award, has supported Dawn in overcoming fatigue and adjusting to the ostomy as well as finding the right ostomy supplies as Dawn continues healing.

Dawn said that having Shirley monitor her recovery has been “huge. I’m so thankful.” She added, “My surgeon is floored at how well I’m doing.”