

NVNA AND HOSPICE HEALTH CONNECTION

Health Resources and Support in Your Community

Fall 2011

Cancer Support Community MA South Shore *now under NVNA Foundation umbrella*

When Gail Mitton and Ann Allegrini planted the first seeds of community support for people affected by cancer 11 years ago, they had no idea how much it would grow. After several name and address changes, those seeds have evolved into The Cancer Support Community MA South Shore (CSC-MSS), part of a world-wide support system, now operating under the NVNA Foundation at 120 Longwater Drive (Suite 104) in Norwell.

“**The mission has remained the same: to provide free education and support to people affected by cancer...It is the only CSC chapter in Massachusetts”**



While there have been many changes along the way, the mission has remained the same: to provide free education and support to people affected by cancer. Gail and Ann's presence also remains, now involved as board members and continuing to lead fundraising efforts. CSC-MSS is a non-profit operating through the generosity of individual and corporate donors, grants, and foundation funding. *Continue to page 3.*



Ann Allegrini and Gail Mitton accept a plaque in their honor from CSC Director Francine Coluci (left) and Sarah Nash (right), CSC Administrative Coordinator.

Six-Peat Performance on HomeCare Elite™ Top Home Health Agencies



NVNA and Hospice was named for the sixth time to the HomeCare Elite™, a compilation of the top performing home health agencies in the United States. OCS and DecisionHealth® recently announced the award, after their annual review of 9,724 Medicare-certified home health agencies. The top 25% were selected based on quality of care, process measure implementation, and financial performance. Of the 2,434 on the 2011 Home Care Elite™, NVNA and Hospice is one of only 338 agencies nation-wide to be named all six years the award has been given.

“The 2011 class have been able to provide quality care to patients while achieving positive financial outcomes, which is significant given the regulatory changes and challenges that home health agencies continue to face,” said Marci Heydt, product manager for the post-acute care business group of DecisionHealth.

Meg Doherty, CEO of NVNA and Hospice, says it takes a lot of hard work to perform at such a high level. “Our clinicians are committed to providing patients with the best of care, often within difficult circumstances. Our education and performance improvement teams offer great support to maintain and exceed clinical competencies and expertise. I'm very proud of everyone's efforts.”



“With the way healthcare is now, so many rules and regulations, it’s easy to lose sight of the patient. Your staff didn’t.”

A former patient



Scituate Harbor Yacht Club (SHYC) graciously donated the proceeds of the annual golf tournament and auction to NVNA and Hospice and Campus of Caring. Terence Faherty (far right) and Carol MacNeill of SHYC presented the check to Meg Doherty (center), CEO of NVNA and Hospice, Kathy Tedeschi of Campus of Caring and Joan Ankner (far left), Fund Development Specialist of NVNA and Hospice.

Veterans’ Recognition Program

Political opinions aside, our veterans should be recognized for many reasons, not the least of which is to offer our gratitude for their service. “Thank you” is the one thing veterans need to hear most and yet, all too often such words go unsaid.

We decided to change that for our hospice patients when we implemented our veteran’s recognition program two years ago. The response from presenting a simple certificate of appreciation to our patients and their

families was overwhelming. It often opened the door for some of our patients to speak of their involvement in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Daughters, sons and grandchildren began to learn about their loved ones’ histories, often involving quiet acts of heroism.

“We never knew that about our Dad,” is the most common response by families who have

participated. And while most of the patients are sheepish about the attention, they all are most grateful for the acknowledgement. One Vietnam veteran tearfully accepted his award adding his gratitude to us. “*You are the first ones to ever say thank you,*” he said. “*No one thanked us when we came home.*”

The NVNA and Hospice Veteran’s Recognition Program was designed after the Veteran’s Administration Hospice and Palliative Care Initiative pointed out that many veterans have issues that they must come to terms with as they approach death and thus need help to find peace and compassion at the end of life. NVNA and Hospice has recognized over 50 veterans since the program began. Bernie Perry, a hospice volunteer and veteran himself, recently took the program to another level by inviting local veteran agents to participate along with our volunteers in presenting the certificates. “It’s very comforting for the veterans and their families,” says Bernie. “And the thanks I receive is very rewarding.



Hospice Volunteer Bernie Perry
presents certificate to local veterans

Cancer Support Community

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“It was just the right thing to do,” says Meg Doherty, CEO of NVNA and Hospice, who initiated the blending of the two non-profits when CSC-MSS was facing financial challenges. “Our missions are similar as is our commitment to the community.” She points out that it is the only CSC chapter in Massachusetts.

The new location promotes a key tenet of CSS – a comfortable, home-like setting. “Most people affected by cancer do not want to go back to the hospital or clinic setting for support,” says Tim Cummings, LICSW, Program Director for CSC-MSS. Thus, meeting spaces are decorated like family and living rooms. Various levels of support and education for the newly diagnosed, those undergoing treatment, and cancer survivors are offered along with nutrition and exercise programs such as Tai Chi. There are also caregiver and family support programs with everything offered at no charge. “Some individuals facing cancer need more than a support group and some need less. We offer options for every level of need and our intake assessment helps individuals determine what services and support best fit their needs.”

Now that Cancer Support Community - MSS has joined the NVNA Foundation, we are in the process of expanding our fundraising. Building on our Friends group, we are creating a **Circle of Friends** to encompass all of our agency's interests. Would you like to join? Please call Joan Ankner at 781-610-1435 or email to jankner@nvna.org.



CSC-MSS can be reached at 781-610-1490. A complete list of offerings and additional information is available on the website, www.cancersupportcommunityma.org.



Our Team at the **2011 Walk to End Alzheimer's** braved a rainy start but finished on a sunny note, exceeding their fundraising goal by 50%! All proceeds went to the Alzheimer's Association.

TeachBack

Teach Back is just one of many competencies clinicians must have

Anxious to get back home, many patients will nod their heads and affirm they “understand” all the information the hospital, rehab, or doctor has told them. But research shows that patients remember less than half of what clinicians have taught them. As a result, NVNA and Hospice has incorporated the “teach back” technique into our home care delivery.

Quite simply, teach back is a method of talking with patients and caregivers to ensure understanding of key information such as medication use and side effects, exercises and therapies, and disease-specific treatments and practices. Clinicians are taught to use plain language not medical jargon, focus on two or three of the most important concepts, utilize graphics and/or teaching tools when explaining, and repeat key points. The patient is then asked questions to ascertain their understanding of whatever is being taught.

The teach back technique is one component of *Integrated Chronic Care Management*, which the clinician uses in order to engage the patient in his/her own care management. NVNA and Hospice clinicians undergo training in teach-back techniques and must pass competency tests to prove they can incorporate it in their practice, one of many core competencies our clinicians are tested on regularly.

Education is a significant facet of the clinician's practice and NVNA and Hospice considers it one of the prime responsibilities of everyone's role. Ongoing education is offered throughout the year on disease-specific issues, best practices, and technology to enhance practice. Each discipline has its own specific training as well; however, all staff undergo certification training in Alzheimer's care. Many NVNA and Hospice employees are also enrolled in continuing education programs for advanced degrees and/or certifications.



New Home...Same Drive!

We recently moved across the street to larger quarters at 120 Longwater Drive in Norwell. The move has allowed us to welcome the Cancer Support Community to share space (*see story on page one*) and gives us more room to feed our drive to provide caregiver and disease-specific support groups, educational programs for community and staff, and greater clinical space for our certified and hospice clinicians. We recently celebrated our new location with an open house and ribbon cutting ceremony.



Looking on as Board President Bruce Graham cuts the ribbon are (l to r): Joan Ankner, Fund Development Specialist, Bob Dwyer, Board Treasurer, State Rep. Jim Cantwell, CEO Meg Doherty, Francine Coluci, Director of Cancer Support Community – MSS, and Joan Wright, Marketing Communications.



LOW INCOME FUND HELPS THOSE WHO NEED HELP

One of NVNA and Hospice's hallmarks in the community is its provision of care regardless of one's ability to pay. Last year alone, we provided over \$1.5 million in free or underfunded care. When Renee McInnes took on the directorship of NVNA Works, our non-profit private home care division, she was mindful of the financial gaps that people can fall into, and felt that identifying funding for care was very much a part of NVNA Works' mission as well. Renee established a low income fund to help underwrite costs for people who fall into the gap between insurance or benefitted services.

"When there is no nursing skill needed anymore, patients are discharged from Medicare provided homecare. But, some may still need services such as home health aides or homemaking to keep them safe at home," explains Renee. "Those who are unable to pay for such private services fall into a gap while they are searching to see what other resources they qualify for such as veteran's benefits or elder services benefits. The low income fund can keep folks home safely until they can get those financial resources."

Partnering to meet senior needs efficiently

Both NVNA and Hospice and NVNA Works, our non-profit private care division, are working in tandem with South Shore Elder Services to provide home health aide and homemaker services in various "cluster" elderly housing buildings. SSES developed the "cluster" concept within certain geographic areas to service long shift cases or provide short-shift services such as a 15-minute medication reminder visit or a simple shower. Our aides are working in senior housing clusters in Weymouth, Quincy and Scituate. Every client initially receives a nursing evaluation by our nurses. Then, one or two aides are assigned within each housing cluster to provide the needed services to a number of clients.

"This program allows many seniors living in elderly housing to receive necessary services to keep them safe and independent at home," says NVNA Works Director Renee McInnes. "With the rising costs of healthcare, this enables SSES and our agencies to provide such services in a very cost-efficient way."



NVNA Works Director Renee McInnes accepts a check from Jean Snow (left) and Susan McNamara (right) of the Friends of Norwell VNA and Hospice to help towards the low income fund.

The experience {of NVNA's care} reinforces my commitment to help you help those who need home care"

A former patient



National Memory Screening Day: November 15, 2011

NVNA and Hospice is offering free, confidential memory screenings as part of National Memory Screening Day on November 15 from 9 am to 11 am at 120 Longwater Drive in Norwell. The memory screening is not a diagnostic tool but can indicate if someone is having problems and/or might benefit from a more complete medical visit.

Checking memory problems is very important as some can be easily treated and reversed (e.g. vitamin deficiency, thyroid problem). Other memory issues may be more serious but early detection helps initiate earlier treatment and possibly slowing down changes in memory and thinking skills.

Screening is by appointment only; please call 781-659-2342.

Hospice Aide Certification Enhances Patient Care

As many patients and families will attest, it takes a special person to provide hospice care. Many of those special people are home health aides. Providing end of life care requires great sensitivity, expertise and knowledge about the various aspects of medical, emotional, and spiritual care encompassing hospice. So, when some of our home health aides expressed an interest in more in-depth training around hospice care, Jennifer Maynard and Renee McInnes responded.

Jennifer, our Home Health Aide Manager, and Renee, NVNA Works Director, designed a Hospice Aide Certification Program, incorporating the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's (NHPCO) curriculum with the agency's best practices. They then selected nine aides, four from Works and five from the agency, who represented various regions in our 25-town territory, to participate.

"These aides had expressed such an interest to become experts themselves as well as mentor fellow aides," says Jennifer. "We were very excited to put this program together." The aides attend four two-hour long classes, in addition to independent study. The classes review concepts in pain and symptom management employed by the nurses; physical and mental changes in the body; stages of grief for family and bereavement services available; how end of life affects different cultures; and spiritual aspects of end of life. At the program's completion, the aides will sit for the certification exam; expected at end of this year.

"We foresee that these aides, who are already leaders in hospice care, will be better able to support our patients and families who are dealing with end of life issues," says Jennifer. "Their support of fellow staff through education and providing co-visits in the field, along with increased communication with the hospice team, will further enhance patient care."



Lauren Scriver of Hanover, legislative aide for Rep. Rhonda Nyman, presents a proclamation to NVNA and Hospice CEO Meg Doherty and board members Bob Dwyer, Treasurer (left) and Bruce Graham, President (right).

PATIENT EDUCATION KEY FOR CHRONIC DISEASE SELF MANAGEMENT

With chronic disease accounting for almost 70% of all healthcare expenditures, it's no irony that this is a chronic problem! Stanford University designed a Chronic Disease Self Management Program that teaches people how to manage their own chronic conditions (e.g. arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, etc) to reduce hospitalizations, prevent medication errors, and most importantly, improve one's health.

NVNA and Hospice has several clinicians trained in the Stanford program and offers it in multiple community settings. A six week workshop, this evidenced-based program offers strategies to set and meet personal goals, identify and try simple techniques to improve quality of life, improve communication with doctor(s) and handle stress and learn to relax. This program is for people with chronic conditions or their caregivers. Participants receive a CD and book to accompany the lessons learned in class.

Our Diabetes Self Management Program is another educational opportunity that provides comprehensive education for people with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. Taught by our certified diabetic educator, this program helps participants identify blood sugar goals, nutrition goals, meal planning, how exercise affects diabetes management and how to prevent short and long term complications.

For information on our Chronic Disease Self Management or Diabetes Self Management programs, please call 781-659-2342.

SUPPORT GROUPS

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP

8-week programs for various groups, including younger widow/widower and adult children who've lost a parent NVNA and Hospice, 120 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA. Call 781.659.2342, ext. 629 for information.

BRAIN ANEURYSM SUPPORT GROUP

Second Wednesday of month, 7:00 - 8:30 pm

Facilitated by Bernadette Ward, PT and Kara Connerty, OT/R of NVNA and Hospice

Offered by NVNA and Hospice, 120 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

First Monday of month (Sept-May), 10:00 - 11:00 am

Facilitated by Lori Mahoney, RN-BC, BSN, CDE of NVNA and Hospice

Offered by NVNA and Hospice, 120 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA

EARLY STAGE ALZHEIMER'S AND CARE PARTNERS SUPPORT GROUP

First Wednesday of month (Sept-May), 10:30 am - 12 noon

Facilitated by Joan Wright, CMC and Anne Marie Powers, PTA of NVNA and Hospice and Kim Griffin, LSW of Visiting Angels

Offered at South Weymouth Church of the Nazarene, 385 Ralph Talbot Street, South Weymouth, MA

CAREGIVERS OF MID-STAGE ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP

Second Wednesday of month, 10:30 am - 12:00 noon

Facilitated by Renee McInnes, RN, BS, CMC of NVNA Works and Joan Wright, CMC of NVNA and Hospice

Offered at NVNA and Hospice, 120 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA

CAREGIVERS OF EARLY-STAGE ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP *In partnership with Welch Healthcare*

Third Wednesday of month, 10:30 am - 12 noon

Facilitated by Joan Wright, CMC of NVNA and Hospice and Joyce Watson-O'Neill, LICSW of Welch Healthcare

Offered at Village at Proprietor's Green, 10 Village Green Way, Marshfield, MA

GENERAL CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP (predominantly caregivers of people with forms of dementia)

Third Thursday of month, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Facilitated by Joan Wright, CMC and Kerin Connolly, RN of NVNA and Hospice

Offered at Duxbury Senior Center, 10 Mayflower Street, Duxbury, MA

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

DIABETES SUPPORT

First Monday, 10:00 - 11:00 am, NVNA and Hospice

WALKING PROGRAM

Mondays, 2:00 - 3:00 pm, Atria Marina Bay

ARTHRITIS EXERCISE

Monday and Friday, 10:00 - 11:00 am, Scituate COA

MAINTAIN YOUR BRAIN

Fourth Tuesday, 11:00 - 12:00 noon, Hingham COA

HEALTH SCREENINGS

WEEKLY BLOOD PRESSURE

Atria Marina Bay/Quincy

Hanover Mall

Every Monday

Every Friday

1:00 - 2:00 pm

7:45 - 9:00 am

MONTHLY BLOOD PRESSURE

Hingham COA

Allerton/Hingham

Pope Towers/Weymouth

Cadman Place/Weymouth

Duxbury COA

Hanover Y

Inn@ Silver Lake/Kingston

Proprietors Green/Marshfield

Pinehills/Plymouth

Allerton/Weymouth

Joseph Crehan/Weymouth

First Tuesday

First Wednesday

First Wednesday

First Wednesday

First Thursday

First and Third Thursday

Second Tuesday

Second Wednesday

Second Wednesday

Second Wednesday

Third Wednesday

10:00 - 11:00 am

9:30 - 10:30 am

11:00 - 12:00 noon

12:30 - 1:30 pm

10:00 - 11:00 am

11:30 - 12:30 pm

9:30 - 10:30 am

10:00 - 11:00 am

10:15 - 11:45 am

1:00 - 2:00 pm

12:30 - 1:30 pm

MONTHLY BLOOD PRESSURE AND BLOOD SUGAR

Marshfield COA

Norwell COA

Norwell Gardens

Hanover COA (blood sugar only)

Second Tuesday

Second Thursday

Third Wednesday

Third Tuesday

11:00 - 12 noon

10:30 - 12 noon

11:00 - 12 noon

9:00 - 10:00 am

WELLNESS CLINICS

The Moorings/Quincy

Fenno House/Quincy

Granite Place/Quincy

School Street/Quincy

Third Monday

Every Wednesday

Every Thursday

Every Thursday

1:00 - 3:00 pm

9:30 - 11:30 am

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

1:30 - 3:30 pm



Call 781.610.1490 for support groups, Tai Chi classes and special workshops



Ignite the Light

{as seen on **YouTube**

PINK GLOVE DANCE COMPETITION
NVNA and HOSPICE



We elected to participate in Medline's Pink Glove Dance Contest as a way to raise awareness about Breast Cancer. Rachel Langlois, our Admissions Director, took over as choreographer and Michael Fennessy donated his time and talent to video tape each segment and edit it together for our video entry. Field clinicians and home health aides, operations staff, support staff, and administrators all participated in the filming. It was a wonderful team project that "fired up" the agency and captured our collective drive to fight for a cure and support all those affected by cancer.

Our essay that accompanied our video:

Breast cancer is something we see regularly with our patients. It's something many of us have known in our personal lives. But when it hits one of our NVNA and Hospice family members, it hits us all. Although we can't walk in step with them, we travel behind to support, encourage, and pick them back up when they need us. Many of us don't know their pain; but those on our team who are survivors do. They lead the way for us; teach us how to move forward. Our survivors give us hope. As we filmed this video, another one of our own is on the treatment treadmill. We reach out to stay connected to the kinship we share, the mission we carry, the hope that someday breast cancer will no longer wound any of our sisters, working together to **Ignite the Light** for a cure to shine through.

As a non-profit, we welcome your donations to keep our community education and support programs going and help underwrite the cost of underfunded and free care for our less fortunate neighbors. **Please visit our website www.nvna.org to learn more and donate online or mail to 120 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA 02061.**

Third Annual
Festival of Wreaths Gala
to benefit the
Cancer Support Community MA, South Shore



Join us **December 2** from 7 pm to midnight at Black Rock Country Club in Hingham to support the Cancer Support Community MA South Shore (CSC-MSS). It's sure to be a fun evening for a wonderful cause. Tickets are \$100 and can be purchased by contacting Sarah Nash at 781.610.1490 or snash@cancersupportcommunityma.org.

Save the Date!

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APRIL
28

CAMPUS OF CARING GALA

Saturday, April 28, 2012
Quincy Marriott

**Visit campusofcaring.org
to learn more!**



LOG ONTO
www.nvna.org
to opt for our newsletters