

Hospice Care

In your community



About the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH

The Visiting Nurse & Hospice of Vermont and New Hampshire is a Medicare certified non-profit homecare and hospice organization. Serving our communities for over 100 years, we are committed and honored to be providing clinically excellent services to you, your family and friends.

Our Hospice Commitment

Our diverse team of health care professionals works together with patients and families to provide pain and symptom management, medical, emotional and spiritual support.

We commit to you that:

- » **Your wishes will be honored, with dignity**
- » **We will provide a team approach which meets your individual needs**
- » **Admission visits are made within 24 hours of the referral or as requested**
- » **Hospice services are provided where you want them - home, hospital, assisted living or nursing facility**
- » **Routine house calls are made by our Medical Directors**
- » **We are available to you 24 hours a day**
- » **Follow up bereavement services are provided to your loved ones for up to 13 months**

For further information or to schedule a personal visit to discuss hospice services, please contact our referrals department at 800-575-5162.

New Hospice Initiatives

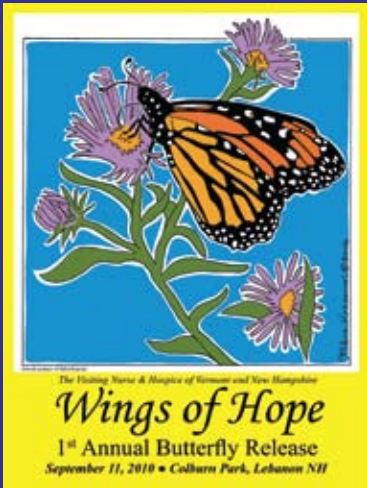


1st Annual Wings of Hope Butterfly Release

What a phenomenally moving and uplifting event this was! More than 300 monarch butterflies were “sponsored”, and nearly that many people joined us at Colburn Park that gorgeous sunny day for a truly memorable celebration. The numbers far exceeded our expectations; everyone enjoyed the powerful and haunting music, the wonderful readings, the very creative face painting, and stories from patients’ families about the gift of hospice and of VNA care.

At the appointed time, participants released the butterflies, and all the names of those honored or memorialized were read aloud. It was awe-inspiring to see hundreds of butterflies flying, hovering, landing on leaves, flowers and occasionally, a shoulder! Wings of Hope educated the public about hospice; provided our patients, families and staff an opportunity to share a touching experience; brought community groups together in a unique way; and touched hearts with the beauty and simplicity of the day.

A Wings of Hope photo gallery is posted on our Website, as is a video featuring highlights of the event. Visit www.vnavnh.org, and click on “Wings of Hope Butterfly Release” in the menu.



This striking “Wings of Hope” artwork (courtesy of Debra Kraemer, Jungles of VT, Thetford Center) was featured at the Wings of Hope event. Posters (18” x 24”) are still available for \$15 each. Contact the Development Office at 888-300-8853 or vnah@vnavnh.org to order.



Pet Peace of Mind

One of the most wonderful aspects of hospice care at home is being able to enjoy the comforts of familiar surroundings, including beloved pets. But what happens when a pet owner is physically or financially challenged to care for that pet? That's where Pet Peace of Mind can help. A new program provided by trained hospice volunteers and supported by a grant from the Banfield Charitable Trust, Pet Peace of Mind can help defray the cost of pet food, kitty litter, and, in collaboration with veterinarians throughout our service area, vet visits.

Although the program's launch won't be official until the end of October, Pet Peace of mind has already helped care for "Itty Bitty," a cat belonging to a hospice patient. The program can also help to find homes for pets after a hospice patient has moved to a nursing facility or has passed away.

Treating the whole person and understanding the uniqueness of every patient – that's what Pet Peace of Mind is all about, and the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH is the only hospice program in the area offering this service.

Pediatric Hospice

What seems like an unfathomable need also is an opportunity for service. We are fortunate to have a very skilled and experienced maternal and child health staff, led by veteran Visiting Nurse & Hospice nurse June Manley. In addition to caring for children with high-tech medical needs, the role of pediatric hospice has become obvious.

With the help of a generous grant from Hypertherm, we are creating a formalized program to provide the youngest patients, siblings and other

family members the multi-disciplinary care that hospice has always provided. For children whose hospice benefit is provided by Medicaid, a notable difference from the traditional hospice benefit is that children may continue to receive curative treatment in addition to hospice care.

Our VNA is a leader in this effort, and is the only local VNA to have the dedicated and skilled staff to provide this type of pediatric service.

What is Hospice?

- A concept of care available to people of all ages who are in the final months of their lives
- A team of people providing comfort and support
- A chance for patients to participate fully in their own plan of care, choosing what is most important to them
- Expert symptom management and pain control, to support patients in attaining their own personal goals – attending a grandchild's wedding or graduation, visiting a beloved destination, celebrating the birth of a child, a special anniversary or holiday.

Hospice Fund-Raising Events

Erin's Story

John and Denise Page have long considered the staff of the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH to be part of their family. The parents of Erin Odessa Page (who became a VNAH patient shortly after birth and who died in February at the age of 8 in VNAH care) spoke at the recent Wings of Hope event. John was eloquent in his description of the services they received, and he explained how much that skillful and loving care meant to all three of them. Celebrating the accomplishments and joys of a short life, rather than focusing on all the challenges... that was the gift the VNAH nurses gave.



Lady Linda's Moon Dance

Linda Blakeman loved her family and friends. She was a devoted mom. She loved music and dancing. She was full of life, and drew people to her. When she died of cancer in January at the age of 58, people in the community were taken by surprise. Linda hadn't wanted people to know how sick she was. She was intent on living every minute of her life to the fullest, totally devoid of a "why me" attitude.

Linda and her family chose hospice care provided by the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH, so that she could remain at home, in familiar and comfortable surroundings. Linda's husband, Kevin, says that having the hospice staff there for support made an unimaginable situation tolerable, and credits the VNA & Hospice team for

helping make Linda's last days as happy as they could possibly be.

One of Linda's wishes was that friends and family enjoy a huge party in her memory. Kevin embraced that idea as a fitting memorial, but also wanted to give back to the non-profit hospice that provided so much to the Blakeman family. After months of work, the Lady Linda's Moondance became a reality.

Many generous sponsors, including businesses and individuals, collaborated to create it an amazing celebration of Linda's life. Through ticket sales, donations and an auction, the Blakeman family presented the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH with nearly \$8000 to benefit our hospice program. We are deeply grateful.

Gail Clark Memorial Golf Tournament

2nd Annual Gail Clark Memorial Golf Tournament to benefit hospice, Montague Golf Club, Randolph In memory of his wife, Stuart Clark and his family and

friends hosted a very successful golf tourney on September 24. \$5500 was raised for hospice, which nearly doubled last year's total!

Hospice House Feasibility Study



Why Choose Not-for-Profit?

Re-investment in care

Not-for-profits re-invest donations and other contributions into charity care and improved services.

Direct accountability

Local people sit on the board that governs the VNAH. Our financial records are open to the public.

Strong volunteer base

More than 300 people volunteer their time to support our staff of caring professionals.

Legacy of service

Not-for-profits are developed by local people for local people to serve the needs of the community.

Feasibility Study Volunteers

If you would like to participate in this needs assessment, then please contact Gaye LaCasce, VP of Community Relations and Development at 603-298-2857 or glacasce@vnavnh.org.

As one of the largest hospice providers in the area, the Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH is pleased to announce that we are beginning a market feasibility study to determine if there is a need for an inpatient hospice facility.

In 2003 we conducted a similar feasibility study; results at that time indicated that there wasn't sufficient need for an inpatient facility here. This year, however, through some local focus groups, the question of demand has again been raised, and to be certain we're meeting community needs, Simione Consultants will help us revisit the question. While some local hospitals have a room or two devoted to hospice care, our communities do not have access to an inpatient hospice facility or respite house. There are just four inpatient facilities in our two states – in Concord, Merrimack and Dover, NH, and Williston, VT.

You may imagine that it is sometimes difficult to care for a hospice patient at home. A capable and willing caregiver may not be available; pain and symptoms may be difficult to control; home may not be equipped to handle a hospice patient's needs. Other times, patients and caregivers need active intervention, around the clock... care that can't be accomplished in the home.

Since our agency's mission is to provide needed services to patients and families in the communities we serve, we have contracted with Simione Consultants, a national leader in home health and hospice, to assess community need for an inpatient hospice facility. During the initial phase of the study, you may hear discussion or questions in our communities, as Simione staff meet and/or interview major stakeholders, including referral sources, physicians, community partners, patients and patient families and other interested parties. You may be invited to participate in the feasibility conversations, and we welcome your input and ideas.

As a proud leader in home care and hospice services, we are excited about this first step, and will keep you apprised of news as it becomes available.

Look inside for

Our Hospice Commitment
Wings of Hope Butterfly Release
Pet Peace of Mind
Pediatric Hospice
Hospice Fund Raising Events
Hospice House Feasibility



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66 Benning St. Suite 6
West Lebanon, NH 03784