Visiting Nurse
Home Care & Hospice
of Carroll County and Western Maine

2022 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends, I am pleased to share with you our 2022 Report to the Community, highlighting the amazing work done by our team with the support of our committed Board of Directors.

We continue to move forward with new initiatives while also providing the critical home care services that are the hallmark of our agency. These new programs, many of which focus on dementia care, caregiver support and staff training around Alzheimer's, has been made possible through a three-year grant from the Administration on Community Living. We, along with our community partners – Memorial Hospital, MWV Adult Day Center, and the Gibson Center – are making our service area more prepared than ever to care for an aging population. You'll read about some of these programs in this annual report.

You'll also learn about training programs made possible through the generous support of donors and foundations, such as the Teepa Snow training and the TERi patient simulation lab. Continually investing in the professional development of our staff is one of our core values. We couldn't do what we do without these dedicated professionals. We were happy to recognize the many team members celebrating long years of service in 2022, after being unable to gather to celebrate for two years due to COVID-19.

Whether it's training, support groups or home care services, it all takes your support to make it happen. We hope you'll join our "Donor Honor Roll" this coming year by donating to us before year-end.

Sincerely,
Sandy L. Ruka, MS, RN
Executive Director

Shown left to right: Andrea Masters, Myles Crowe, Joan Lanoie, Patricia Mason, Dawn Morrison, Gail Paine, Susan Ruka, Nancy Lohmiller.
Not shown: Theresa Grisez, Kim Lopashanski, Valerie Lozier

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Kim Lopashanski
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Gail Paine
Susan Ruka, RN, PhD

WE APPRECIATE THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR DONORS.

Make Your Gift Online at www.VNHCH.org or Return the Enclosed Courtesy Envelope with Your Donation.

CAREGIVER EXPO RETURNS

After a two-year hiatus, VNHCH once again offered the Caregiver Expo, a one-stop-shop for caregiver support and information in October, 2022. The event was held at the Mount Washington Valley Adult Day Center with about 40 individuals in attendance.

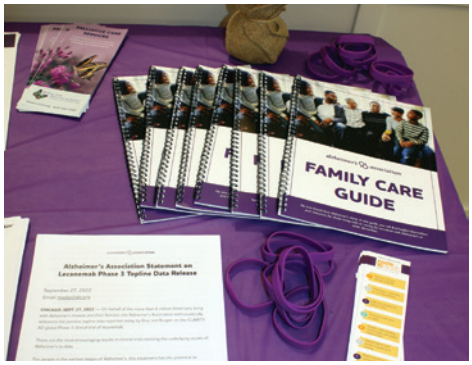
Sandy Ruka, Executive Director; Ashlee Chaine, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Sue Ruka, VNHCH board member, at the 2022 Caregiver Expo

VNHCH Executive Director Sandy Ruka stated, "Caring for someone with memory loss or cognitive impairment can be a rewarding and sometimes overwhelming experience. We want people to know that support is available. We were able to line up a number of speakers this year with a focus on cognitive and memory impairment. We hope every caregiver who attended found this to be an empowering event."

The workshops and speakers for the event included national presenter Gerri King who spoke about self-care for caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association had a representative on hand and Jenny Hagerty was available to talk about the REACH caregiver support group program now being offered locally.

The Expo featured artwork created by those who have participated in OMA, Opening Minds Through Art. OMA is an award-winning evidence-based program for people with Alzheimer's disease.

The Expo was a collaboration between VNHCH, Memorial Hospital and the MWV Adult Day Center. It was sponsored by Merrill Lynch and made possible through an ACL grant *(FUNDED IN PART BY ADMINISTRATION ON COMMUNITY LIVING GRANT #90ADPI0060)*.



The Alzheimer's Association presented resources for caregivers at the event.

Keynote speaker and national presenter Gerri King gave a talk on self-care for caregivers.

OMA volunteer Virginia Moore, shown here with artwork displayed at the Expo.

Virtual Dementia Tours gave participants a first-hand experience of what the disease feels like.

The raffle prize table was a popular stop.

TAKING A POSITIVE APPROACH TO DEMENTIA CARE

VNHCH is grateful for support from the Pequawket Foundation for additional dementia care staff training using the Teepa Snow "Positive Approach to Care" program.

According to the NH Employment Security Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, by 2030 the region's over-65 demographics will be almost 50% of the county's population. The 85 years plus group is expected to increase by 129%. Currently, one-third of elders over 85 years old in the region have dementia. The National Alzheimer's Association projects that Carroll County will have the most rapid increase in people with Alzheimer's disease in the state in the next ten years.

To address the needs of this growing population in the community, VNHCH saw the need for additional staff dementia education training. This training is offered through Teepa Snow's "Positive Approach to Care." Positive Approach to Care enhances life and relationships of those living with brain change by fostering an inclusive global community. The training program outcome is a Positive Approach to Care Certification.

The only constant with dementia, or brains in general, is that they are ever-changing. All humans experience brain change every day. The GEMS Model, developed by Teepa Snow and based on the Allen Cognitive Scale, recognizes the shifts in our skills and abilities in any given moment. With dementia, while the progression, pattern, and changes may look very different for each type of dementia, the movement through the GEMS is somewhat predictable.

Understanding the remaining abilities at each step of this journey can make a world of difference. Teepa Snow training doesn't just provide an understanding of dementia. It's very practical tips for providing care and support for people with dementia.

Teepa Snow

VNHCH Executive Director Sandy Ruka describes it as "The best training I have ever taken because of the very hands-on approach to dementia care."

Jennifer Grise, APRN and Julie Van Dyne both completed the training earlier this year. This training will allow VNHCH to then bring back this learning to the rest of their home care staff and to those in the community, to better serve the needs of those with dementia.

Kathleen Sheehan Scholarship Awarded: **Continued from back page**

In high school, I discovered and excelled in different sciences. This love continued past just science courses and continued with a course offered at Kennett High School, health science technology.

I can not say that prior to my sophomore year I had a lot of experience with doctors or hospitals. That all changed a complete month into the school year when both of my parents were diagnosed with cancer just a few months apart. I quickly became familiar with Memorial Hospital and the oncology department. I felt a sense of hope, not only for my parents to get better but that in a few years, I would be the person giving treatment to those that need it. When we met with my father's oncologist at Dana Farber Cancer Institute, I saw countless doctors walking the halls of this outstanding hospital, this left me dreaming of becoming a physician...again. Caring for people and helping them has always been something that I love."

Congratulations Sydney!

TERi™, a life-like geriatric manikin shown here with Hannah Sparks Occupational therapist and LNAs - Melissa LaRoche, Maureen Cahill, Penny Thomas.

TERI™ HELPS LNAS LEARN HANDS-ON CARE

VNHCH now has the latest technology to train LNAs and other staff members - a patient care simulator. . It's designed to give newly licensed LNAs to get the hands-on practical experience they need to ensure the highest quality of care for home healthcare patients.

The simulator is a life-like geriatric manikin, TERi™. It has soft silicone skin with natural body movements, adding to its realism. LNAs will be able to perform the spectrum of clinical tasks using the simulation manikin.

In 2022, VNHCH completed a successful fundraising campaign to purchase this simulator, which cost over $20,000. It was made possible through generous donations from the Gibson Woodbury Charitable Foundation and the Cogswell Benevolent Trust.

TERi™ made its debut at the agency's June 2022 Skills Day, a twice-yearly training workshop for LNAs.

Ashlee Chaine, Community Outreach Coordinator, explained that the purpose of Skills Day is to make sure that everyone is up to date on their routine skills used every day in the field and to develop new skills.

Executive Director Sandy Ruka stated, "We are so grateful to the foundations and donors who donated generously to this effort."

DEMENTIA PALLIATIVE CARE SERVICES SEES GROWING DEMAND

Jennifer Grise, APRN, Dementia Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner, shown here helping out at the 2022 Caregiver Expo.

In 2020, the Mount Washington Valley received a multi-year grant from the Administration for Community Living Alzheimer's Disease Program to help create a dementia-capable community. In 2022, we continued to roll out our dementia palliative care program focusing on two major areas – increasing early diagnosis and decreasing stigma.

Jennifer Grise, APRN, is VNHCH's Palliative Care Nurse Practitioner. Grise explained the program's four goals:

- Increase screening both by the agency and by primary care providers.
- Collaborate with primary care to increase cognitive screenings for 65 and older in Medicare Wellness Visits.
- Develop best available referrals for caregivers.
- Raise community awareness around cognitive impairment and dementia.

Since the program's launch in 2021, it has become increasingly in demand and has served many community members. Its approach has been so well received that VNHCH is considering revisiting its palliative care initiatives to be tailored to specific health conditions.

For those interested in learning more about dementia palliative care, additional information can be found on our website at vnhch.org/services/palliative-care/ or by calling 603-356-7006 and requesting a brochure.

Palliative care is offered as a free service and is not billed to insurance. Our Dementia Palliative Care program is supported by a Federal grant from the Administration for Community Living.

EMPLOYEES CELEBRATED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

Due to COVID-19, we were unable to hold our annual employee recognition breakfast in 2020 and 2021. This year, we were able to resume the tradition. Please join us in celebrating the following individuals:

2020 Anniversary Recipients	
Gail Boucher	*35 Years*
Margaret Robertson	*25 Years*
Anita Nitz	*25 Years*
Rosalie Miles	*20 Years*
Angela Nelson	*5 Years*
Lisa Whitney	*5 Years*
Penny Thomas	*5 Years*
Jennifer Bell	*5 Years*

2021 Anniversary Recipients	
Tamara Sayers	*15 Years*
Karen Royer	*15 Years*
Jennifer Robinson	*5 Years*
Julia Hardin	*5 Years*
Lynn Burris	*5 Years*
Kelly Peckham	*5 Years*
Maureen Cahill	5 Years

2022 Anniversary Recipients*	
Sandy Ruka	*25 Years*
Anita Duncan	*15 Years*
Tracy Mathieu	*10 Years*
Sue Davidson	*5 Years*
Sherry Morton	*5 Years*

**Jan - June*

Grateful for Our Medical Director

We are fortunate to work with Rachel Hamilton, DO, as our medical director. She is so supportive of our organization and is instrumental in how we care for our hospice patients. Please join us in thanking her for her contributions to our community.

FINANCIAL REPORT - Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022

Where the Money Comes From:	
Medicare	2,471,180
Medicaid	217,793
Private	854,948
Bad Debt	(41,000)
Total Patient Revenue	**3,502,921**
Grants	212,685
Other	109,031
Total Operating Revenue	**3,824,637**

Where the Money Goes:	
Program Expenses	2,852,629
Administrative and General	804,978
Total Operating Expenses	**3,657,607**
Gain from Operations	***167,030***
Contributions	99,860
Investment	71,857
Change in Fair Value	(470,447)
Total Non-Operating Revenues	**(298,730)**
Excess Revenue over Expense	***(131,700)***

VNHCH BY THE NUMBERS

FISCAL YEAR 2022

- **Homecare Visits**
  20,531
- **Homecare Patients**
  880
- **Hospice Visits**
  2,609
- **Hospice Patients**
  105
- **Miles Driven**
  180,580

2022 DONOR HONOR ROLL

Donations to VNHCH during our 2022 fiscal year - 7/1/21-6/30/22

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We are grateful to the many donors and supporters in our community who make it possible for us to fulfill our mission. Thank you for your support.

Visiting Nurse
Home Care & Hospice
of Carroll County and Western Maine

KATHLEEN SHEEHAN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

Sydney Debolis-Hill

Sydney Deblois-Hill of Intervale, NH, was honored with the Kathleen Sheehan Scholarship to support her pursuit of a degree in Biology at St. Lawrence University. This award is given each year to a student currently enrolled in an accredited health-related field of study program who is a current resident of Carroll County, NH or Western Maine.

In her scholarship application, Sydney shared her very personal story about why she wants to pursue medicine as her career. Below are highlights from her essay - we feel her compassion and enthusiasm captures the spirit that embodies this scholarship!

"My interest in the medical field probably began with my first toy stethoscope... from there it just flourished. As a child, I went to the Museum of Science in Boston, Massachusetts. Most of my time there was spent in complete fascination. I would be lying if I said that I did not leave there wanting to know more. I took part in the summer camps with the career and technology programs, and I participated in the health field one. This summer camp left me craving more experience and knowledge.

Kathleen Sheehan Scholarship Awarded: **Continued on page 7**

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