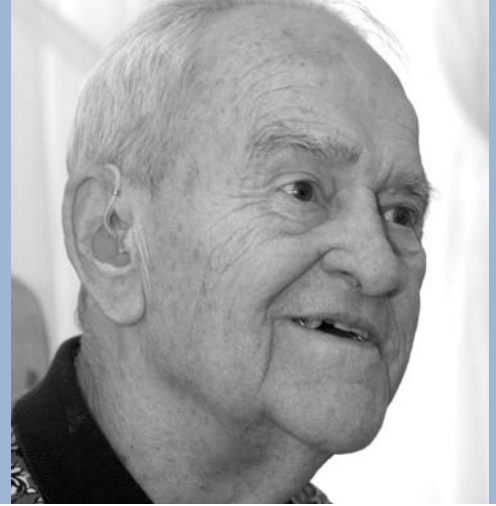


HomeHealth
Visiting Nurses

Inside



Summer 2006

Biannual Newsletter for Patients, Families and Friends

Inside:

National Project to Prevent Hospitalizations

Chronic Disease & New Technology

Volunteers Needed!

Fall Flu Shot Clinics



New Logo Revealed

We are delighted to introduce our new logo to the community. This logo brings to the forefront our 100-year history as visiting nurses and our connection with the Visiting Nurse Associations of America. We are proud to honor this tradition even as we move our organization into the future with innovative programs and technology. Our new shades of blue will enhance our visibility and recognition in the community. We hope you enjoy our new look.

Sandi Kelly Receives Award from Lifeline Systems

Sandi Kelly, Lifeline Program Coordinator at HomeHealth Visiting Nurses, received the "Exceptional Performance Award" from Lifeline Emergency Response Systems. "It is an honor to be recognized in this very special way," said Sandi Kelly. This award exemplifies Sandi's commitment to Lifeline and our mission of "helping people to be as healthy and independent as possible at home and in the community."

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses established the Lifeline program in 1990, and since helped over 2,500 elders live more safely in their own homes. With the touch of a button, the Lifeline service provides immediate emergency help for subscribers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service is \$35.00 per month with a one-time installation fee of \$40.00

To learn more about the Lifeline service, call Sandi Kelly (800) 660-4867



■ Sandi Kelly, pictured at left, accepts the "exceptional Performance Award" from Kathy Andrie, Lifeline Systems Marketing Manager.



National Immunization Awareness

Vaccines are one of public health's great triumphs. With the exception of safe water, no other health strategy has had such a tremendous effect on reducing disease and improving health. Maintaining high immunization rates protects our entire community.

Influenza, or "flu," is a contagious disease caused by the influenza virus. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu each year. In addition, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and an average of 36,000 Americans die from influenza or its complications. For most people, influenza vaccine prevents serious influenza-related illness. Influenza vaccine is recommended for people who are at risk of complications from influenza including pregnant women, children, senior citizens, people with chronic health problems and residents of long-term care facilities. Influenza vaccine also is recommended for caregivers or others in close contact with people at risk of serious influenza including childcare providers, medical professionals and family members.

Medicare Part B covers the cost of influenza vaccine when given by authorized providers. For more information about Medicare's adult immunization benefits and other helpful information, visit http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations/01_Overview.asp.

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses has scheduled flu clinics throughout York and Cumberland Counties beginning the first week in October. As a Medicare provider, we will accept Medicare payment and charge \$25 for those paying privately. October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but getting vaccinated in December or even later can still be beneficial. As Fall approaches, please be sure to visit our website www.homehealth.org or call the flu shot hotline at 1-800-747-4FLU (4358) for specific clinic information and locations.

Flu shot clinics are currently scheduled in the following towns:

York County

Acton, Saco, Old Orchard Beach, Eliot, Lebanon, Alfred, Limington, Cornish, Sanford, Hollis, Buxton, Shapleigh, South Berwick, Biddeford, Waterboro

Cumberland County

Steep Falls, Portland, Yarmouth, Casco, Scarborough, Peaks Island, Gorham, Cape Elizabeth, Naples, Cumberland, Falmouth, Fryeburg, Harrison, Windham, Chebeague Island, Gray, Bridgton, Naples

Portions of this article were excerpted from: CMS listserv, hosted by National Institutes of Health (NIH) and www.cdc.gov/flu

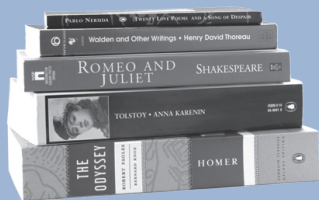
HomeHealth Visiting Nurses

Joins National Project to Reduce Hospitalizations

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) cites that 28% of all home care patients in the United States were hospitalized in 2005. A significant percentage of these hospitalizations were related to cardiac conditions, respiratory problems and falls. With a goal to reduce hospitalizations, HomeHealth Visiting Nurses is working on a national demonstration project with 72 agencies across the county. This two-year initiative, "Reducing Acute Care Hospitalization" (ReACH), aims to reduce avoidable hospitalizations of home health patients to a rate of 23% by August 2007 versus the current 28% hospitalization rate.

"Our agency is dedicated to improving the care that all our patients receive in their home. Reducing avoidable hospitalizations of our home health patients is a top priority and we are dedicated to this goal," said Maryanna Arsenault, CEO of HomeHealth Visiting Nurses. "We are pleased to join home health agencies across the country to work on this important project. We believe the ReACH initiative will provide an important opportunity for collaboration with other agencies committed to achieving significant reductions in acute care hospitalizations nationwide."

Books Revisited



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses owns and operates three "Books Revisited" stores that sell quality, used books in Biddeford, Sanford and Old Orchard Beach. All proceeds from book sales support home health and hospice care. The bookstores are operated entirely by volunteers. We have exciting volunteer opportunities in all three locations. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Diane Carstens at 1-800-660-4867 Ext. 4339 or dcarstens@homehealth.org. *Thanks for your support!*

Chronic Disease and Success with Telehealth

More than 90 million Americans live with chronic illnesses. In Maine, the leading cause of death among adults 65 and over is chronic heart disease. Seventy-five percent of Maine people die from one of the four major chronic disease groups: cardiovascular, cancer, lung or diabetes. (D. Mills, Public Policy Review)

HomeHealth Visiting Nurses was the first agency in Southern Maine to implement Telehealth, using interactive video technology. This equipment allows a specially trained nurse to conduct live, interactive, "home visits" from a central station at agency headquarters. Telehealth patients can actually see and hear the Telehealth nurse by using a small, lightweight monitor installed in the home. Clinicians are able to track vital signs and wound status using peripheral medical equipment.

For the 6-month period of October 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006, Homehealth Visiting Nurses admitted 51 new patients to the Telehealth Program. Patients ranged in age from 44 to 101 years and received a total of 230 Telehealth visits in this 6-month period.

Our findings showed the following:

- 47% of our Telehealth patients got better at taking their medications correctly, compared to the national average of 40%
- 3% of Telehealth patients needed urgent, unplanned medical care compared to 21% of the national average
- 12% of Telehealth patients required hospital admission compared to the national average of 28%

Our Telehealth program is a valuable tool for improving the health and safety of at-risk cardiac patients. If you or someone you know could benefit from Telehealth services, please call Cathy Patnaude, RN, Telehealth Coordinator at 800-660-4867.



Dear Friend,

Whether we are caring for a frail newborn infant or helping an older patient remain independent, we are committed to compassion and clinical excellence. Our professional team provides the care you need to make the transition from hospital to home where friends and family can support recovery and ease the uncertainty of illness. Our services include: Nursing care, Home health aides, Telehealth, Rehabilitative therapies, Parent and child health, Counseling and emotional support, Community health, and Lifeline.

Please don't hesitate to call for more information at 1-800-660-4867



15 Industrial Park Road
Saco, Maine 04072
(800) 660-4867
www.homehealth.org

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org US Postage PAID Permit 492 Portland, ME
--