

# HOMECARE

# connection

A PUBLICATION OF THE RUTLAND AREA VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION & HOSPICE AND DORSET NURSING

## Carol's Story

*Carol Carroll worked as a Registered Nurse most of her life, caring for patients with dementia. But after suffering a series of health setbacks, the roles reversed and she became a patient herself.*

One afternoon, on a cold winter day, Carol Carroll slipped and fell on the sidewalk, hitting her head in the process, which led to a concussion. Had this been an isolated event, Carol likely would have rebounded somewhat quickly. However, just two weeks later, Carol suffered a second, and more severe, concussion after falling in her apartment. Shortly after, she developed pneumonia. The combination took a toll on Carol, and since she couldn't leave her house without great difficulty, her physician, Dr. Hogenkamp, referred her to homecare for physical therapy.

"I had never needed homecare services before, but I was very familiar with RAVNAH and their good work, so the choice was easy for me," Carol said of her decision to choose RAVNAH as her home health agency. Carol began treatment with 2-3 visits a week from RAVNAH physical therapists, Janelle Cassant and Nancy Houghton, who helped Carol regain overall strength in her body. "I was very pleased with the care I received," Carol explained. "I felt it was very personalized care. I knew they understood my situation because the goals they set for me were the same goals I had for myself."

While Carol was making good progress physically, she began having concerns about her memory. "I was forgetting names, and that is very unlike me," Carol explained. That's when Janelle suggested that speech therapy might be beneficial for Carol. Carol agreed, and a few days later, Speech Therapist Celina Fuller met with Carol to see what was going on. After the initial evaluation, Celina realized that in addition to her concussion, Carol had a lot of anxiety stemming from her health issues –

both of which were affecting her memory. Carol, however, had assumed the problem was much more severe, attributing her memory loss to what she feared was the beginning stages of Alzheimer's or dementia. "All she really knew was that she was having issues with her memory," Celina explained. "She didn't know that a concussion could affect her in that way. But from the moment I told her it was a post-concussion issue and that we could help her, she was a different person."

Celina worked with Carol using different memory strategies to help her recall names, lists, errands and story narratives. "The first week, I would give her three words to memorize, and even that was a struggle," Celina recalled. But Carol was committed to the process and eager to regain her memory, so she did everything Celina asked her to – and then some. "She followed through on everything I asked her to do, and she even asked me for more homework!" Celina said with a laugh.

Celina explained that many memory problems are due to lack of attention, so the information never gets processed in a meaningful way. Teaching Carol simple techniques that helped her process information in a more meaningful way made it easier for her to retrieve the information. Celina's techniques included:

- Association - You can learn or recall something more easily if you associate it with something you already know or remember. This technique helped Carol remember items such as her to-do list.
- Visualization - This means forming a picture

See Carol's Story, continued on page 3



Top: Celina Fuller, Speech Therapist, left, reviews memory exercises with patient Carol Carroll.



Bottom: Celina and Carol say goodbye when Carol is discharged from her services.

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# The Director's

# Corner

Dear Friends,

As you may have heard, Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (RAVNAH) has some good news to share! RAVNAH and Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) have collectively been awarded a State Innovation Model (SIM) grant from the State to help support health care system innovation.

To give you some background, the Federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) awarded the State Innovation Model (SIM) grant to Vermont to support health care payment and delivery system reforms aimed at improving care, improving the health of the population and reducing per capita health care costs by 2017. The overall goal of this grant is to expand and integrate innovative health care provider payment and health information technology that supports more effective and efficient care delivery.

Vermont has named the project that will utilize the SIM grant funds the Vermont Health Care Innovation Project (VHCIP). VHCIP will provide a forum for coordinating policy and resources to support development of the organizations, technology and financing necessary to achieve the shared public/private goals articulated in our State Health Care Innovation Plan: development of a high performance health care system for Vermont.

To maximize the impact of non-governmental entity involvement in this health care reform effort, Vermont earmarked \$3 million in funding within its SIM grant to directly support providers engaged in payment and delivery system transformation – and this is where we come in.

In a joint collaboration, RRMC and RAVNAH presented the Supportive Care Program to VHCIP for funding consideration. The Supportive Care Program aims to bridge the gap between

inpatient palliative care and hospice. Together with Vermont Blueprint (Rutland) and Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region (CHCRR), this program will address the complex needs of

50 seriously ill patients with Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) and/or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) diagnoses. This project will show that earlier communication, coordination and planning between the patient, physicians, home care and the hospital and hospice, reduce the incidence of hospitalization and emergency department visits for symptom management, saving more financially than the investment; it also comes with patient quality of life benefits which are beyond measure.

On April 2, 2014, Governor Peter Shumlin visited RAVNAH for a press conference announcing the recipients of the grant. I am very proud to say that RRMC and RAVNAH's Supportive Care Program were awarded \$112,063. Receiving this grant means that RAVNAH, RRMC and our community partners can continue to work together towards the goal of better care, better outcomes, and lower-cost health care.

We thank our partners at RRMC, CHCRR, CHF Collaborative and our local Blueprint/Community Health for their support in seeking this grant. Without this support, we would not have been chosen to receive this important grant.

Thank you all for your continued support of RAVNAH.

**Happy Spring!** ☘



Ron Cioffi, CEO

*“Receiving this grant means that RAVNAH, RRMC and our community partners can continue to work together towards the goal of better care, better outcomes, and lower-cost health care.”*

TUNE IN TO RAVNAH's CABLE SHOW...

**HOME CARE CONNECTION** With host, Harry Snyder

Program and event topics span a variety of subjects including RAVNAH's home and community health services, managing your health, prevention strategies, understanding Medicare, and much, much more.

Watch on Channel 15 Mondays • 9:30 am Tuesdays • 2:00 pm Wednesdays • 7:30 pm

**Carol's Story, continued from page 1**

in your mind's eye of the things you want to remember. To help with Carol's long-term memory, Celina would tell Carol stories – both long and short – and then ask Carol to repeat the story back the following week. In order to recall the details of the stories, Carol learned to picture herself in the story, which helped her visualize elements of the story.

- Repetition and Rehearsal - Repeating new information several times, and spacing these repetitions out over time can help you learn new information. Celina and Carol would review a scenario, or words, several times and then Carol would re-tell it in her own words.

In addition to teaching her memory skills, Celina also worked with Carol on ways to reduce her anxiety, such as breathing techniques and focus points. "Carol's health problems were really causing her a lot of stress, and that stress was also having an effect on her memory, so we needed to find a way to resolve that as well," Celina pointed out.

"After five weeks of working together, Celina saw a huge improvement in Carol's memory. "I would say she's nearly back to her former

memory abilities and more confident in her ability to remember things going forward," Celina ventured. Around the same time, Carol successfully completed her physical therapy rehabilitation and was given the "all-clear" to resume her daily activities, which included leaving the house to run errands. Celina and Carol discussed Carol's progress with her memory and anxiety issues and agreed that Carol would benefit from a few more weeks of speech therapy through the hospital.

Looking back on her experience, Carol expresses her fondness for Celina as she helped guide her through recovery. "She gave me hope" Carol explained. "I was so discouraged; I didn't think I would get better. But Celina gave me hope. She just has a way of putting people at ease right away. She taught me valuable tools to help keep and strengthen my memory, which was extremely helpful, but she was also non-judgmental and patient, which meant a lot to me." After a while, Carol even began to look forward to the sessions. "The thing about Celina is, she makes it fun," Carol says with a smile. "She makes it fun, and that's when the healing begins." ❁

## Letters of Thanks

*As a non-profit home health agency, we are proud of the on-going support from individuals, businesses, communities and organizations that enable us to take care of our neighbors, regardless of their ability to pay, complexity of health issues or location of residence.*

*Nearly every day, RAVNAH receives letters and thanks from our patients and family members about the exceptional, professional and compassionate care they receive from our staff. Here are just a few excerpts we'd like to share with you.*

*"To the Staff at RAVNAH,*

*Please accept our belated thanks for the recent services of RAVNAH and especially to Dan Collins for his visits.*

*My husband, Dick, had hip replacement surgery on January 20. After he was discharged from the hospital, Dan came to our home to provide physical therapy and to do the Coumadin checks. We enjoyed Dan's visits. He was very pleasant and reassuring, taking the time to answer our questions and concerns, as well as teaching Dick exercises and monitoring his progress.*

*Even though Dick was discharged from the hospital on a Saturday, we received calls from RAVNAH right away. They told us someone would be on-call and gave phone numbers to use if we needed anything over the weekend. Then, of course, we heard from Dan on Monday prior to his first visit.*

*Again, we felt most fortunate to have the care provided by your organization. Many thanks to you all, and especially to Dan."*

*Sincerely,  
Ardena J. Ackerman (Mrs. Richard Ackerman)*

*"To All,*

*I want to thank all of you for the care you gave Sheila. You made such a huge difference in the quality of her life. I will always be grateful for everything you did for us."*

*Sincerely,  
Tom Wheeler*

*"Dear Hospice Team Members,*

*Our family would like to thank you for your services. Your help in caring for our mom's last two weeks was very much appreciated. A special thanks to Wendy, Jasmine, Karen, Katie, and Pat."*

*Sincerely,  
The family of Mamie E. Richards*



# Dorset Nursing News

*Dorset Nursing Association (DNA), a branch office of the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice, is a not-for-profit Medicare-certified home health agency providing home health care services in the Dorset, Rupert and Pawlet communities.*



Dorset Nursing Association

## Welcome Robin Jones!

The Dorset Nursing Association (DNA) has a new face! Although DNA was sad to say goodbye to longtime receptionist Libby Morey last October, the agency is thrilled to have Robin Jones step into the role.

“It was actually through a friend of Libby’s that I found out about the position,” Robin says with a laugh. “A mutual friend of ours told me that DNA would be looking for a receptionist after Libby left, and so I decided to look into it.”

Along with minding the phones, Robin takes care of everything from scheduling the foot clinics, to ordering supplies, to general upkeep of the agency, which includes housekeeping, scheduling property maintenance and going to the post office.

“My favorite thing is scheduling the foot clinics,” Robin says. “I love getting to know the people who come back on a regular basis. DNA is a very familiar face around here, and I’m thrilled to be a part of it now.”

Robin is a longtime resident of Southwestern Vermont, having moved

to Sandgate, Vermont in the 1970s. Even before that, however, Robin developed a strong affinity for Vermont. “I was born and raised in Connecticut, but we used to come up to Vermont every weekend. Literally, every single weekend” shares Robin. Despite having lived in Vermont for so many years, she doesn’t take it for granted. “I love living in the country,” she says. “Every day I drive to work, without having to battle traffic, and I get to see the most gorgeous views. Everyone on my street knows me. I just love it here.”



DNA's new receptionist, Robin Jones

In addition to her job at DNA, Robin also works part-time at the Vermont Veterans Home in Bennington as a receptionist. If you are in the area, please stop in and say hello to Robin! ☺

## Did You Know?

The Dorset Nursing Association, located at the Brooks House on scenic Route 30, has a beautiful conference room that can accommodate 10-12 people and is free and open to the public for a variety of uses. If you would like to use the room for a small gathering, meeting or workshop, give DNA’s receptionist Robin Jones a call at 802-362-1200, and she’ll be happy to schedule it for you. ☺



DNA's Conference Room

## RAVNAH Welcomes New Hospice and Palliative Care Director

Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (RAVNAH) and Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) are pleased to welcome Juanita Morris, MSN, APRN-BC as Director of Palliative and Hospice Services. Juanita will be responsible for overall management and oversight of the RAVNAH and RRMC Hospice and Outpatient Palliative Care program. In addition, she will serve as the RAVNAH liaison to the state and national Hospice & Palliative Care Organizations, and other local, state and federal entities.

Juanita has over 20 years, combined experience in nursing, counseling, and health care management. She brings with her a comprehensive diagnostic and clinical background in multiple specialties, including hospice, palliative, primary care, geriatric, surgical, cardiac, and psychiatric care.

Prior to RAVNAH, Juanita was a Nurse Practitioner simultaneously at North Adams Commons and Sweet Brook of Williamstown Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, both in Massachusetts, where she provided hospice and palliative care to patients, collaborated with visiting nurses, and facilitated patient transitions within and between health care settings.

In her new role, Juanita will use her demonstrated leadership in the community to manage, market and grow the combined Hospice and Palliative Care programs. "After meeting with the Hospice team at RAVNAH and the Palliative team at RRMC, I was impressed with their focus on patient-centered care. Their approach and dedication to serving the residents of this community was inspiring and refreshing. I immediately knew that I wanted to be a part of this team," says Juanita.

"Juanita brings energy, experience and a unique perspective to RAVNAH, and we are thrilled to have her join the team" says RAVNAH CEO Ron Cioffi. "Hospice and Palliative care are extremely important in the spectrum of health and are greatly beneficial to the well-being of our patients. With Juanita's strong background in hospice care, she and her team will be there to



Juanita Morris, MSN, APRN-BC, with her husband Peter and daughter Katie.

provide a broad range of support services to our patients and their families during what can be a trying and difficult time."

Juanita received her Master of Science/Adult Nurse Practitioner from Russell Sage College in New York, her Master of Social Work from the State University of New York, her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from North Adams State College in Massachusetts, her Associate of Science in Nursing from Castleton State College, and her Associate of Science in Human Services from Berkshire Community College in Massachusetts. Juanita, a long-time resident of Manchester, Vt., enjoys reading, traveling, cooking, and spending time with her husband, Peter, and her 8-year-old daughter, Katie. ☺☺☺

## Hospice Remembrance Ornaments Now Available Year-Round

Remembrance Ornaments are a special way to honor someone who has touched your life. RAVNAH's dove ornament is elegantly crafted by Danforth Pewter in Middlebury, Vermont. It measures 1 ½ inches tall and 4 ¼ inches wide, is tied with a satin ribbon, and comes tucked inside a flannel pouch. Each ornament comes in a gift box with a memorial card enclosed. RAVNAH Hospice Remembrance ornaments are now available year-round. Please call or email Ann LaRocque at 802-770-1516 or [larocque@ravnah.org](mailto:larocque@ravnah.org) to place your order. ☺☺☺



## Rutland Area VNA & Hospice Honored by Vermont Legislature

2014 is already shaping up to be an eventful year for the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice.

On February 26, 2014, RAVNAH was honored by the Vermont Legislature with a joint resolution that praises the work of the agency.

Rep. Larry Cupoli of Rutland City, sponsor of the House concurrent resolution, wanted to bring awareness to other officials in the state to recognize the contributions that RAVNAH provides to its service area, which includes Rutland County, Dorset and Rupert.

“RAVNAH is not only a progressive health care provider, the organization also contributes to our state’s economy by providing employment and good paying opportunities for many of our citizens,” said Cupoli. “The efforts of the organization to help keep the cost of health care down, by applying programs and education to clients, are especially important in today’s society.

“We’re very proud of each and every one of our staff, our board of directors and committee members for their commitment to providing the highest-quality home health and hospice care for our patients,” said Ronald J. Cioffi, RAVNAH’s Executive Director. “It’s an honor to be recognized for our efforts.”



RAVNAH Executive Director Ron Cioffi (right) poses with Rep. Cupoli (center) and Tim Collins (left), RAVNAH Finance Committee Member.

The resolution was sponsored by Representatives Cupoli of Rutland City, Tom Burditt of West Rutland, William Canfield of Fair Haven, Stephan Carr of Brandon, Dennis Devereux of Mount Holly, Andy Donaghy of Poultney, Peter Fagan of Rutland City, Douglas Gage of Rutland City, Anne Gallivan of Chittenden, Robert Helm of Fair Haven, John Malcolm of Pawlet, David Potter of Clarendon, Herb Russell of Rutland City, Loren Shaw of Pittsford, and Thomas Terenzini of Rutland Town. Senate sponsors were Peg Flory, Eldred French and Kevin Mullin. ♣

## Governor Shumlin Visits Rutland Area VNA & Hospice to Announce Grant Recipients

As mentioned on page 2, RAVNAH was the recipient of a State Innovation Model (SIM) grant in the amount of \$112,063 for their Supportive Care Program. The project is expected to reduce use of hospital and emergency department care, improve patient quality of life, and save money.

RAVNAH had the honor of hosting the Governor’s Press Conference, where he spoke to a packed crowd that included

numerous members of the Rutland coalition behind the Supportive Care Program: RAVNAH and Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC) in collaboration with Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region (CHCRR), and the Rutland Community Health Team. Also in attendance were Vermont Health Care Innovation Project’s Core Team led by Anya Rader Wallack; RAVNAH and RRMC Board members; employees from RAVNAH, RRMC and Rutland Community Health Team; as well as the local press. ♣



Governor Shumlin addresses the crowd gathered at RAVNAH.



RAVNAH CFO Sara King visits with Board President Dr. Lovett following the event.



# Calendar of Events

*Upcoming opportunities to support and celebrate the work of RAVNAH*



## **26<sup>th</sup> Annual Killington-Pico Rotary Golf Tournament** Wednesday, May 28, 2014

Golfers will tee it up at the beautiful Green Mountain National Golf Course in Killington to raise funds for RAVNAH's Hospice program, which supports terminally ill patients and their families. Businesses are encouraged to sponsor a hole or form a team. The entry fee for each golfer is \$75.00 and includes the greens fee, golf carts, and barbecue and awards luncheon. For more information or to register, call Bernadette Robin at 802-747-3634.

## **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Bella Notte: A Beautiful Night for Giving** Sunday, September 14, 2014

Hosted by Three Tomatoes Trattoria, the event raises funds to benefit RAVNAH's Hospice Program. Participants enjoy a finely prepared Italian dinner and an evening of fun and friendship. Stay tuned for more details about this year's live auction, which will feature unique and rare items! Call Bernadette Robin at 802-747-3634 for more information, including sponsorship opportunities.



## **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Rutland Health Foundation Golf Invitational** Friday, September 19, 2014

Held at the Rutland Country Club, this is one of the area's most prestigious golf tournaments. The annual invitational raises funds for programs of the Rutland Regional Medical Center and RAVNAH. The tournament features a captain and crew format, breakfast, and awards luncheon. Call Bernadette Robin at 802-747-3634 for sponsorship opportunities.

## **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Dancing with the Rutland Stars** Saturday, October 11, 2014

Last year's sold-out event Dancing with the Rutland Stars returns to the Paramount Theatre! Professional dancers paired with local celebrities perform original dance routines before a panel of local judges. Proceeds benefit Kids on the Move, RAVNAH's pediatric rehabilitation program. For ticket information, please contact Bernadette Robin at 802-747-3634.





# Why Give to the VNA?

By Bernadette C. Robin, CFRE

No one in our community should have to face a health crisis alone. Health issues eventually impact every family, and that impact is often felt the hardest by those who are underinsured or have no insurance at all. Even with recent health care reform, these challenges persist.

Over the years, the Rutland Area Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice has become synonymous with providing high-quality health care for our community, including those who are unable to pay.

## When you donate

You can help us provide home health care to those recovering from injury or surgery and those living with chronic illnesses. You can help us provide hospice care for patients and families facing life's end. And you can help us comfort spouses, children and families who have lost loved ones.

When you donate to RAVNAH or one of our affiliate programs, Dorset Nursing Association or Kids on the Move, you don't have to wonder if your gift will make a difference. Your support matters every day to the thousands of people who rely on us for exceptional home health, hospice, and community wellness services. And the people who benefit from your donation aren't strangers—they are your friends, your neighbors, your coworkers, perhaps even your own family.

To make a gift to RAVNAH or an affiliate member, please visit our website [www.ravnah.org](http://www.ravnah.org) or call 802.747.3634. ☺

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