



Bringing the Best Care Home

2017 ANNUAL REPORT





For 116 years, Visiting Nurse Services in Westchester has been bringing the best care home to people of all ages, from all backgrounds, including under-resourced individuals and families, to fulfill our vital not-for-profit mission:

To promote and support the health and sustain the independence of residents of Westchester and Putnam counties and adjoining communities through the delivery of home healthcare and related community services by VNS Westchester, Westchester Care at Home and other subsidiaries.



A Message from the President and Board Chair

Dear Friends,

Since 1901, Visiting Nurse Services in Westchester has played an integral role in helping generations of families recover from illness and injury and manage chronic health conditions in the comfort of their homes. In providing the highest quality skilled nursing, rehabilitation therapies, social work and home health aide services, we strive to preserve the independence and dignity of the over 10,000 patients we serve annually.

Today, with longer life spans and shorter hospital stays, the need for our services has never been greater. One out of five people in our region is age 60 or over, the majority grappling with one or more chronic health conditions. In a little more than a decade, it will be one out of every four. People are living longer and they wish to “age in place,” at home.

As a home healthcare provider, we are constantly challenged to not only treat patients in the home, but to do all we can to ensure that they remain healthy at home, enjoying a better quality of life.

To achieve this goal, we are wholly committed to reducing preventable hospital readmissions and exploring new ways to improve quality of care, working in concert with other healthcare providers to ensure a continuum of care for our patients.

Technology-based approaches are revolutionizing the home care industry and we are heartened by the continued success of innovative programs like our Telehealth Remote Patient Monitoring and VNSW Care Calls service. These programs, expanded to benefit a greater volume of patients, enable us to better monitor and engage our most vulnerable patients, resulting in fewer hospital readmissions.

The heart and soul of our agency is our dedicated staff who continue to embrace new technologies and best practice solutions to help their patients thrive. They exemplify our core values of service, compassion and attentiveness to their patients and to people in our community whom they serve through a wide range of endeavors.

We are grateful to the growing number of people and organizations who help sustain our not-for-profit mission through contributions to our VNSW Foundation. Finally, we thank our Board of Directors who continue to lead and inspire us toward innovations in care that foster the best possible outcomes for those we serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy P. Leddy".

Timothy P. Leddy
President & CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Ansehl".

Dr. Amy Ansehl, DNP
Board Chair

Advancing Patient Care

Significantly reducing the number of preventable hospital readmissions among our patients – particularly our elderly patients who are at high-risk for repeat hospital visits – is a key focus of VNSW’s clinical team. Studies show substantial reductions in readmission rates for home care patients when a range of best practices are integrated into the patient’s plan of care, augmented by innovative programs that foster patient and family education and engagement.

Managing Care at Home: Reducing Hospital Readmissions

With one of the lowest hospital readmission rates in the region, VNSW is at the forefront in helping patients improve their health and better manage chronic medical conditions in the comfort of their homes following acute and post-acute care.

Our Medicare patient hospital readmission rate, following 30-day acute care hospitalization, is **9.8%** substantially lower than the national average of 12.3%.

Advanced Staff Training a Critical Tool

VNSW’s clinical team is receiving certification training on OASIS (Outcome Information and Assessment Set) that will help them keep our patients healthier at home. Through this training, our nurses, rehabilitation therapists and medical social workers are trained to evaluate patient data pertaining to functional status and other characteristics that will help them identify those at greatest risk for hospital readmission, leading to early patient interventions.



Screening for Sepsis: A Life Threatening Condition



Sepsis, the body’s overwhelming and life-threatening response to infection, is a national medical emergency, with 80% of sepsis cases afflicting people 65 or older with chronic health conditions at home and in the community. At VNSW, 12% of our patients readmitted to hospitals had a sepsis diagnosis. To better identify patients at risk of sepsis as well as those with active symptoms, our clinical staff will embark in the months ahead on a new grant-funded program (see pg. 8) that will enable staff to utilize an innovative Sepsis Screening, Intervention and Education tool during patient visits. The tool was developed by the Home Care Association of NYS, IPRO, the Sepsis Alliance and the Rory Staunton Foundation, as part of a statewide initiative to identify and provide early intervention for sepsis at home.

Role of Technology

With close to 400 patients enrolled, a 28% increase over the previous year, our **Telehealth Remote Patient Monitoring Program** continues to have a significant impact on reducing preventable hospital readmissions. Patients enrolled in our Telehealth program who had an acute care hospitalization for chronic heart failure (CHF) had a 5.4% hospital readmissions rate, substantially lower than the national hospital readmissions rate of over 19% for CHF patients. By remotely monitoring patient vital signs daily, our Telehealth nurses can quickly spot irregularities, alert the patient's physician to alter treatment as needed, and encourage healthy behaviors through regular communication with the patient, their family and other caregivers.



“I am very happy with your services and very pleased to be remembered.”

VNSW Care Calls patient

After completing a successful pilot project in 2016, we extended our **VNSW Care Calls** program, an interactive patient engagement platform that enabled us to conduct telephone follow-up calls with over 9,000 patients in 2017, with close to 87% of our patients engaged in at least one call. Evidence-based studies show that frequent communications with patients are instrumental in helping them to get involved with and adhere to their treatment plans — a critical factor in reducing hospital readmissions and increasing patient satisfaction.

Timely Initiation of Care

It is well documented that patients who receive home health visits immediately following hospital discharge are less likely to return to the hospital. At VNSW, 97% of our patients are seen within 24 hours of receiving physicians' orders – including weekends – enabling our staff to quickly assess the health status of the patient and ensure that an appropriate, comprehensive patient-centered plan of care is put into place. Timely initiation of care is an important outcomes measure that factors into the performance ratings of home healthcare agencies nationwide through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). VNSW continues to exceed NY State and national averages for this measure with a 97% rating vs. 95.3% (NYS) and 94.3% (national) ratings.

“The nurse was at my home the day after I returned home (from the hospital). I was very impressed with the quality of care... I would recommend the service to anyone.”

2017 Patient Satisfaction Survey

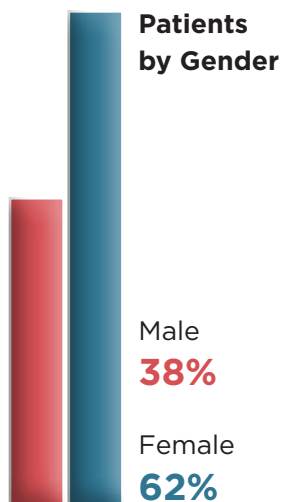
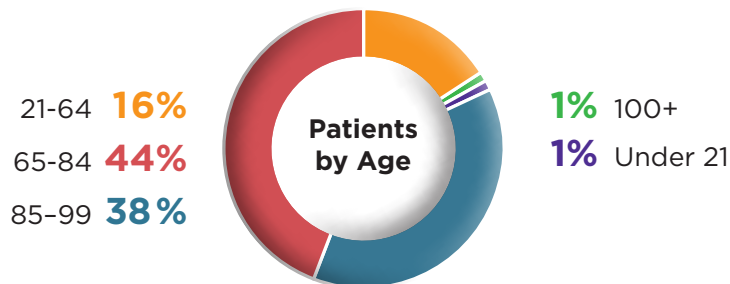


Our Home Care Services

VNSW Admissions	VNSW Home Visits	Westchester Care at Home Hours of Service
9,809	172,194	303,295



Our Patients



Telehealth enrollees
398

Tobacco cessation patients assessed
9,667

↓
Received intervention counseling
1,762

Top 10 Diagnoses

- 1** Circulatory/Cardiac Disorders
- 2** Injury/Toxicity
- 3** Respiratory Diseases
- 4** Musculoskeletal/Orthopedic Disorders
- 5** Wounds
- 6** Neurological Disorders
- 7** Cancer
- 8** Gastrointestinal Disorders
- 9** Disorders of the Urinary Tract
- 10** Diabetes/Endocrine Disorders

Our Healthcare Partners

Number of Referrals
10,047

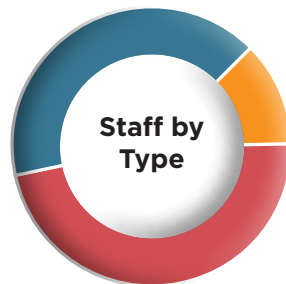
Number of healthcare facilities w/VNSW RN liaisons on-site
92

Referral Sources



Our Staff

Number of Staff
562



41% Clinical
47% Paraprofessional
12% Business

Our Community Programs

Number of Community Programs
84

People Served
5,400+

"I'm so grateful to your nurses, therapists and home health aides for putting me back together again after surgery. They were instrumental in my recovery at home."

Mary Ann Schaefer



Achievements & Accolades

One of the hallmarks of our agency is the willingness of our staff to consistently go the extra mile in caring for our patients and the broader communities we serve. Their achievements shine a light on their commitment to continuously strive to learn more, to advocate for best practices in care and to volunteer their time to advance preventative care to improve the health, well-being and quality of life for citizens in our region.



VNSW's Telehealth RN, **Sally Wilson**, and Home Health Aide, **Eileen Crawford**, were selected as two of the *Top 10 Westchester Magazine Healthcare Heroes* for 2017. Sally and Eileen were honored for going "above and beyond" in providing home health care services to our patients, as well as for their years of dedicated service volunteering at local senior centers and houses of worship. Together, they represent close to 50 years of service to our agency, our patients and our community.

Eileen Crawford was also the recipient of the *Home Care Association of New York State's 2017 "Caring Award."* This prestigious award was bestowed upon Eileen for "exhibiting the compassion, skills and service that set her contributions apart, and whose actions exemplify outstanding compassionate care."



VNSW Director of Business Development and Community Relations, **Mary Gadowski** (5th from right), represented the home healthcare field on a panel of health industry experts at the *Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation's "Thought Leaders Master Series Summit: Room to Grow,"* held in March at Marist College. With nearly 300 community leaders in attendance, Mary shed light on ways that rapidly evolving technologies are enhancing patient-centered care at home.

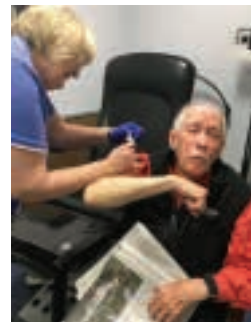
Supported by a grant from the NYS Department of Health, **Westchester Care at Home**, VNSW's affiliate agency, in collaboration with **Vital Care Services**, provided hands-on training for 66 Home Health Aides, RNs and support staff on using Telehealth and other digital remote patient monitoring technologies to promote early health interventions and help patients better manage chronic health conditions at home.



A Commitment to Community

An intrinsic part of our not-for-profit mission is our continued engagement in the provision of free healthcare programs for community residents. For close to 30 years, our “Ask the Visiting Nurse” program has offered free preventative health screenings and programs to enhance the health of vulnerable individuals. Our free workforce development training programs are providing needed employment opportunities in our field, benefitting job-seekers and our patients, while our staff and leadership participate in charitable and advocacy initiatives for the public good.

VNSW RN, **Sheila Seelke**, conducted one of our **Community Flu Vaccination Clinics** at The Bristol in Armonk. In 2017, our nurses provided 800 flu vaccinations at 16 community sites, including senior centers, assisted living facilities, schools, businesses and houses of worship.



Conducted by **Sara Somerville, VNSW Chronic Disease Management Specialist**, (2nd from left) the “**Health for Life**” workshop, sponsored by the Westchester County Public/Private Partnership, helped scores of residents age 55+ learn how to better manage their chronic conditions, such as diabetes and high-blood pressure. Several of the proud program graduates displayed their certificates of completion.



As part of the **Hurricane Harvey relief efforts** organized by the Metro-NY Affiliate of the Wound Ostomy Continence Nursing (WOCN) Society, **VNSW WOCNs, Janice Malett and Claudia Weiner**, organized and shipped our donation of vital wound and ostomy supplies to aid residents severely affected by the storm.



With the fast-growing senior population, there is a critical need to train more individuals to serve as Home Health Aides (HHAs) — paraprofessionals who assist clients with activities of daily living — allowing them to stay in their homes. **Westchester Care at Home** launched a free Home Health Aide Certification Training Program, certifying 14 new HHAs who were offered positions at our agency. The program fulfills dual goals of better serving our patients while providing paraprofessional jobs in our community.

VNSW President and CEO, Tim Leddy (left) met with **NY State Senator Terrence Murphy** (40th Senate District) to discuss ways that public/private partnerships can help people of all ages – especially vulnerable populations including the elderly, veterans, and underinsured individuals – manage their health and live independently at home.



Funding support from our community – including individual, corporate and foundation contributions – fills a critical need in preserving and expanding VNS Westchester’s programs and services. With shrinking government reimbursements for our home healthcare services, we are extremely grateful for the generous donations that enable our not-for-profit agency to sustain the level of quality, personalized care on which our patients and community residents rely.

Your donations to the VNSW Foundation help make possible such programs as our Telehealth remote patient monitoring; pain and palliative care and smoking cessation services; charitable care for uninsured and underinsured individuals; and an array of community health programs focused on preventative care. These, among other essential services, are integral to the health and well-being of your family, friends and neighbors. Thank you for being part of our growing family of donors.

“My thanks to your nurse Kathy who took care of me for the past few weeks. She was a joy to have as my caregiver. Please accept the enclosed donation given in her honor for a job well done.” Renee Flanel

Funding to Stem the Tide of Sepsis

We express our gratitude to Aging in America, Inc. for providing VNSW with a \$25,000 grant to help stem the tide of sepsis among our patients (see article on sepsis on page 2). The grant will enable us to integrate an innovative Sepsis Screening, Education and Intervention Tool into our clinical practice. A \$25,000 matching grant from the VNSW Foundation will underwrite staff training on utilizing the new tool in the home setting. Dr. William T. Smith, President/CEO of Aging in America, Inc. (far right in photo), presented the award to VNSW President & CEO, Tim Leddy; Director of Development and Communications, Joyce Infante; and Director of Business Development & Communications, Mary Gadomski.



Marjorie J. Kraus Legacy Society



Estate gifts, including bequests and other legacy donations from individuals and families, play an important role in the long-term sustainability of our agency. In 2017 we were privileged to receive a bequest from the Estate of Mrs. Marjorie Kraus, a former patient and long-time annual donor. Her gift was inspired by her mother, Beatrice Jacobs, former president of the VNA of Mt. Vernon, which ultimately merged with other VNAs to become VNS Westchester. “Supporting VNSW is my way of perpetuating my mother’s memory,” Mrs. Kraus had said. “When I saw the service performed by those terrific nurses where she worked, I knew I wanted to support this wonderful service as long as I can.” We are delighted to acknowledge Mrs. Kraus’ community-minded spirit in perpetuity through the establishment of our Marjorie J. Kraus Legacy Society.

2017 Annual Spring Benefit Gala



Gala host, NBC 4 New York's Michael Gargiulo; VNSW President & CEO, Tim Leddy; Congresswoman Nita Lowey; WVNS Group Board Chair, Dr. Amy Ansehl; VNSW Foundation Board Member, Katharine W. Conroy; and VNSW Director of Business Development & Community Relations, Mary Gadowski.

2017 VNSW Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors

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 Debra Swee

The VNSW Foundation, Inc. hosted our annual Spring Benefit Gala on May 10th at the Willow Ridge Country Club with close to 200 attendees representing the region's healthcare, business and nonprofit communities. The event raised \$112,000 which will help support VNSW's free community health programs and services. We were delighted to honor two outstanding individuals who have helped us advance our mission: Dr. Amy Ansehl, Chair, Westchester Visiting Nurse Services Group Inc. Board, who received our Community Leadership award; and Congresswoman Nita Lowey, NY's 17th District, recipient of our Distinguished Service Award. Our sincere thanks to our Presenting Sponsor, Wells Fargo Private Bank and Commercial Bank, and to all of the generous donors, sponsors and participants who contributed to the event's success.

VNS Westchester / Westchester Care At Home

Statement of Operations and Change in Net Assets 2017

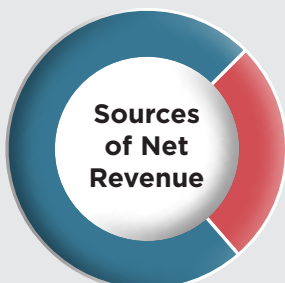
Revenue, Gains and Other Support

Net Patient Service Revenue	\$37,664,639
Other Operating Revenue	347,934
Total Revenue	38,012,573
Expenses	\$37,881,472
Change in Net Assets	131,101

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