

## VNA Northwest Nurses Are Certified in Hospice Care

Seven members of VNA Northwest's staff are certified in hospice and palliative care by the National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses (NBCHPN). They are: Tara Golden, RN, CHPN; Sharon Kloczko, RN, CHPN; Sarah Minervino, RN, CHPN; Malisa O'Neill, LPN, CHPLN; MaryAnne Spring, LPN, CHPLN; Joanne White, RN, CHPN, and Nona Williams, RN, CHPN.

NBCHPN® is a national organization that advances quality in the provision of care to patients and families facing life-limiting illnesses through certification of health professionals. According to NBCHPN officials, there are currently just 155 registered nurses, and only 17 licensed practical nurses in the state of Connecticut who have earned this certification.

Hospice and palliative nursing practice is the provision of nursing care for the patient and family that places emphasis on the patient's physical, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs at the end of life. Board certification in hospice and palliative nursing is highly valued and provides formal recognition of basic hospice and palliative nursing knowledge. For more information, please call Director Joanne White at 860-567-6000.

*"Exceptional care was given to Mom – compassion, kindness, emotional support, spiritual support – Excellent all the way around. Thank you all!"*

— Family of VNA Northwest Hospice patient from Washington

*"All the [care] given to my husband was exceptional. Each one that came into my home has a special place in my heart. God bless them all."*

— Wife of VNA Northwest Hospice patient from Litchfield

*"The members of your VNA are wonderful and caring people. My husband and the rest of my family were treated with respect, and we feel these people are part of our family. We will certainly recommend your services to friends."*

— Wife of VNA Northwest Hospice patient from North Canaan

*"You helped our family cope with a difficult and emotional period in a very caring and compassionate way. My wife was able to die at home with her family as she always wished. The respectful care given to her physical body just before and following death was especially appreciated. That allowed the family to focus on her spiritual well being and start to seek closure once she died. My heartfelt thanks to the entire staff."*

— Husband of VNA Northwest Hospice patient from Woodbury

*"I can't express my thanks enough for the wonderful, comforting care given to [my husband] and our family. No one can ever appreciate the hospice care unless they experience how much it means. God bless all of you."*

— Wife of VNA Northwest Hospice patient from Torrington



Joanne White, RN, CHPN  
*Hospice Director*



Tara Golden, RN, CHPN



Sharon Kloczko, RN, CHPN



Sarah Minervino, RN, CHPN



Malisa O'Neill, LPN, CHPLN



MaryAnne Spring, LPN, CHPLN



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# Hospice News from VNA Northwest

Mrs. Dolores “DeeDee” Santulli was a fun-loving woman who lived life to the fullest. She is described by her family as “always the life of the party.”

Mrs. Santulli first elected to have hospice care from VNA Northwest in July of 2011. She was the mother of eight grown children, 23 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, and her family was obviously very dear to her. She told our staff about her desire to visit one of her daughters in South Carolina, and it was determined that Mrs. Santulli could continue receiving the Medicare Hospice Benefit even while away from her own home.

Our Hospice Director, Joanne White, made arrangements with a hospice agency located in the area that Mrs. Santulli would be visiting, and that agency’s caregivers were ready to assist our patient during her stay there. So she was able to make the trip and fulfill her desire to spend time with her daughter. Our hospice team works

diligently to meet the needs of patients as they near the end of life, and “this means we get you to the places you want to be, whether it is a family outing, a wedding, a graduation, or another significant event,” Joanne explains.

Between July of 2011 and May of 2012, the symptoms of Mrs. Santulli’s illness improved, and she was able to “graduate” from hospice care to home care. She and her family were pleased that she could continue receiving care from VNA Northwest nurses and home health aides.

For several more months, our staff enjoyed their visits with “DeeDee” at her daughter’s home. In September of 2012, Mrs. Santulli’s illness worsened, and her family asked that she resume hospice care. She died at home on September 30th, surrounded by her loving family.

## *What is Hospice Care and How Does it Work?*

VNA Northwest is a nonprofit, Medicare-certified and state-licensed home care and hospice agency. Hospice is a special concept of care designed to provide comfort and support to patients and their families when a life-limiting illness no longer responds to cure-oriented treatments. At VNA Northwest, each hospice case is managed by our team of dedicated professionals, including nurses, physicians, home health aides, therapists, social workers, clergy and trained volunteers.

Patients who have been receiving home care from our agency can retain many of the same caregivers they have already come to know and trust, since many of our home care nurses are also certified in Hospice and Palliative Care. VNA Northwest Nursing Registry can provide additional services to hospice patients and their families.

The hospice team works together to meet the needs of patients as they near the end of life. And each case is unique. We are dedicated to ensuring that patients live their final days with dignity, without pain and in a loving environment. Please see next page for family testimonials.

## *Interested in Learning More About End-of-Life Care Options?*

VNA Northwest will present an information session on this topic free of charge to your group or organization. Please call our Administrative Assistant, Bridget Beauchaine, at 860-567-6000 to make arrangements. Our Hospice Director, Joanne White, can be reached at the same number. She is always available to answer any questions or concerns you may have. You may also visit the Hospice page on our website, [www.vnanw.org](http://www.vnanw.org), for more information.

*Your tax-deductible donations to VNA Northwest enable the agency to provide hospice and home care to local patients who are uninsured or underinsured. You may donate online at [www.vnanw.org](http://www.vnanw.org), or use the enclosed envelope to mail your contribution.*



*Kristina Douglas, RN, with Dolores Santulli*

***Serving All Towns in Litchfield County***