

Home is the center of your care
Your guide to healthcare at home



The Leaders in Home Health and Hospice Care • Offices in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine



Home Health VNA
Merrimack Valley Hospice
HomeCare, Inc.



Home is your very own healthcare center

An important part of today's healthcare happens in the place you call home. And the medical and support teams to deliver that care are found through the agencies of Home Health Foundation – Home Health VNA, Merrimack Valley Hospice, and HomeCare, Inc. They bring the medical expertise, skill and training to care for people wherever they call home. Working with people of all ages, with all types of healthcare needs, their staff delivers that care to your door.

How do you know if you or someone you know may need care at home? This guide will help explain some of the ways these services can help. The agencies of Home Health Foundation work together so as your needs change, the services adapt to make sure that you have the right resources at every step along the way. Whether it is a short term need for recovery, learning to live well with a long-term or chronic illness, or setting up a plan for advanced care, you can find answers in this guide.

As the region's largest and most trusted not-for-profit home health and hospice organization, the agencies of Home Health Foundation provide the expertise and resources you need to be cared for and supported in a safe and comfortable setting – the place you call home.

Living independently in the place you call home is a goal you can reach with the right team on your side.

Your guide to all types of care



Home is the center of your care. Complex medical care, specialized nursing, therapy services and more are offered in the home.

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A history of caring



Merrimack Valley Hospice House enables individuals to pass from this life with respect, dignity and comfort in a setting designed to support peaceful, positive experiences for patients and their families.

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Friends of Merrimack Valley Hospice



Home Health VNA keeps patients in the safe and familiar surroundings of home, offering a full continuum of medical care and supportive services for individuals of all ages and every stage of illness or injury.

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HomeCare, Inc. offers safety, security, and peace of mind, providing personal care and supportive services to help individuals of all ages remain independent in their own home and community.

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Introducing "Kind Connections"



Merrimack Valley Hospice creates better endings for families by providing comfort care and palliative services to patients facing life-limiting illnesses, whether at home, in a hospital, a long-term care facility, an assisted living facility, or at Merrimack Valley Hospice House.

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Learn more about Home Health Foundation and how to become involved in its family of agencies.

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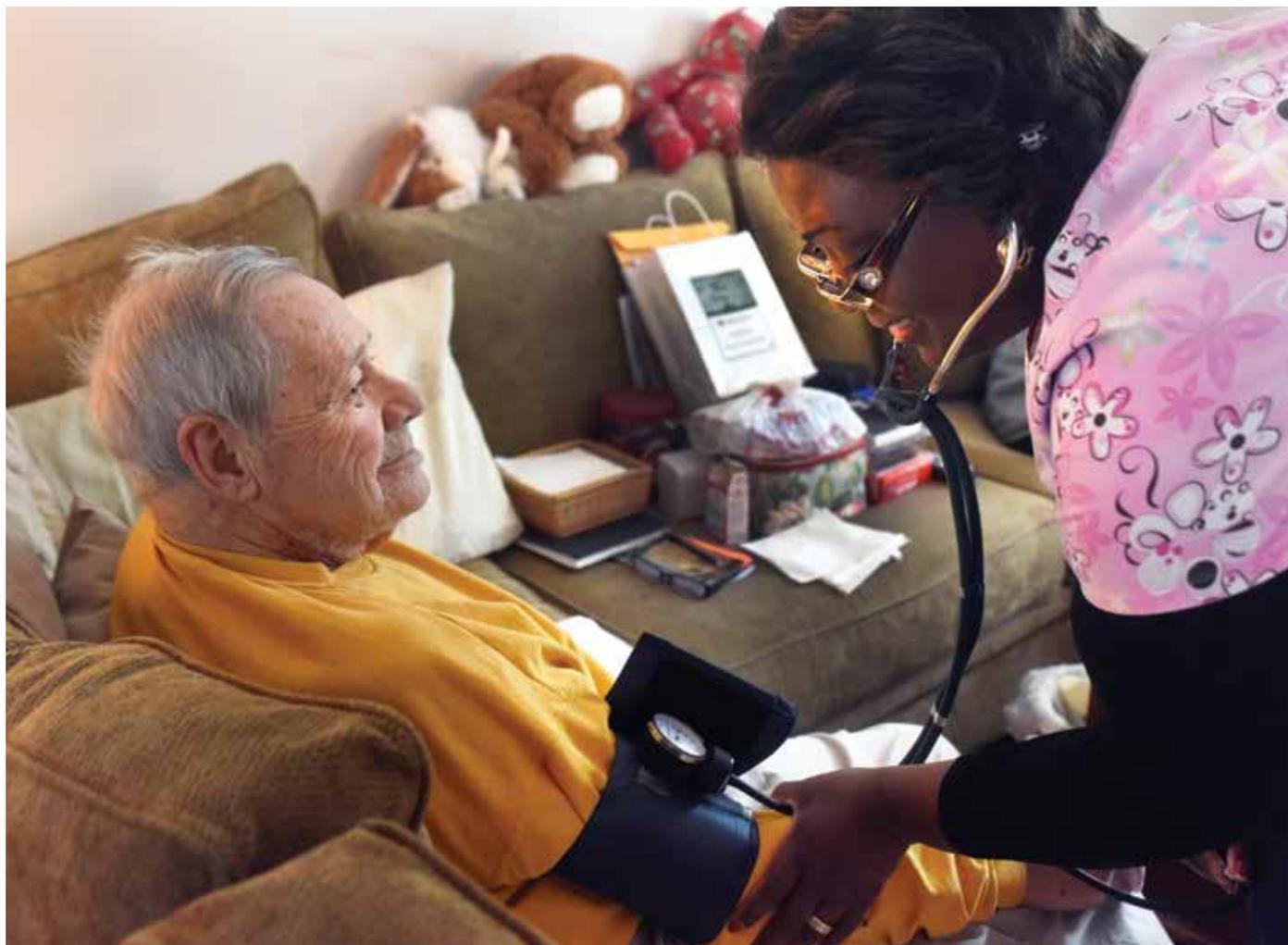
Experience. Commitment. A history of caring

Home Health VNA, Merrimack Valley Hospice and HomeCare, Inc. still make house calls – bringing care to people in the places they call home. And after so many years, they remain trusted and known as the experts in the specialty of home care nursing. As time and healthcare have evolved, so have the services provided at home, including increasingly complicated and intensive care never before offered outside the hospital setting – delivering chemotherapy and life-sustaining IV therapy, navigating complex diagnoses and family dynamics, and connecting specialists outside the agencies who are caring for patients to what is happening in real-time.

More than 120 years of caring brings experience and know-how along with a commitment to the community with excellence, reliability, compassion, dignity, and caring.



Home Health VNA. Experience. Caring.



Healthcare today is better than ever, with earlier and more accurate diagnoses of illness, innovations in treatment, and access to life saving medications. People today are living at home with illnesses that even 10 years ago they were not likely to survive.

When leaving home becomes too difficult due to illness or injury, it is important to have an alternative to outpatient care centers. Home healthcare nurses and therapists provide services such as IV therapy, physical therapy, wound treatment, pain management and mobility training. They offer people who cannot easily leave home the ability to recover from acute conditions and manage chronic illness, at times becoming the difference between life and death. The professional team of clinicians at Home Health VNA provide a broad array of services that help people remain at home, where they most want to be.

Your home is the center of caring

Working collaboratively with a wide network of healthcare partners that mutually provide care in dozens of cities and towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, Home Health VNA is instrumental in management of high risk patients, those who are most vulnerable to complications related to their disease and repeated hospitalizations. Integrating technology with health systems, hospitals and physician practices, they seamlessly coordinate the care of patients – making each and every home visit valuable to patients' goals and desired outcomes.

Help for an unexpected illness and preparing for significant surgery

In the winter of 2014-2015, Stefanie began experiencing some troubling issues. She found herself having difficulty swallowing and trouble moving her arm. Then, she became unsteady on her feet, had vision issues and started to experience unusual lapses in memory. In early January, Stefanie was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

With surgery scheduled in March, her doctors connected her to Home Health VNA in the hope that therapy and skilled nursing prior to surgery would ease her worsening symptoms and speed her recovery after surgery.

Home Health VNA caregivers helped Stefanie make changes within her home to help deal with her loss of balance and vision, making her safer. They provided therapy for the physical impairments caused by the tumor. And they kept her on track with reminders of ordinary tasks and daily chores that were becoming increasingly difficult

as memory lapses became more frequent. The dedication, skill and compassion of these home care providers allowed Stefanie to safely prepare for surgery, calmed her fears, and improved her strength so she would have a shorter recovery and return to the active life she had led before. Just six months after her surgery, Stefanie resumed her studies at a local community college earning an A in her first class!

One year later, as she sorted through papers in preparation for a move to a new home, Stefanie came upon notes and little reminders, lists of things she needed to do or remember that her Home Health VNA team had made for her. The discovery of these handwritten messages brought back memories of the dedicated team of caregivers from Home Health VNA who had braved the treacherous New England winter of 2015, to provide the care and support she needed at a critical and vulnerable time in her life.



"The women who cared for me were remarkable in their willingness to trudge through snow, ice and inclement road conditions during that challenging winter. The encouragement and care that they provided to help me, physically and emotionally, got me through this difficult time and got me back to my life!"

The clinical team at Home Health VNA provides medical care for all types of patients in their homes before and after major medical procedures, following an acute illness, or when a chronic condition becomes difficult to manage.

Matters of the heart

Heart failure, sometimes known as congestive heart failure, occurs when your heart muscle doesn't pump blood as well as it should. Certain conditions, such as narrowed arteries in your heart (coronary artery disease) or high blood pressure, gradually leave your heart too weak or stiff to fill and pump efficiently.

Medications and other treatments can improve the signs and symptoms of heart failure and help you live longer. Lifestyle changes – such as exercising, reducing salt in your diet, managing stress and losing weight – can improve your quality of life.

Home Health VNA offers a Hearts at Home Program, designed to provide you with the nursing care and

support you need to control your heart failure symptoms so you can feel better and manage well at home.

Mary had three hospitalizations for CHF in just two months. Once she began the Hearts at Home program with Home Health VNA, a telehealth system monitored changes and warning signs related to her disease before they became dangerous. With nurses' instructions and home visits as needed, Mary has not had a hospital visit in over seven months, a result of the real-time monitoring and close management.

For more information or to receive a free guide "Caring for Your Heart: Living Well with Heart Failure", please call 978-552-4045.

Home Health VNA

Home Health VNA provides many types of at-home medical care for patients of all ages, from newborn to seniors, including:

- IV therapy
- Speech therapy
- Wound care
- Nursing services
- Maternal and child health
- Pain management
- Behavioral health services
- Occupational and physical therapy
- Post-surgical and rehabilitation care
- Chronic disease management such as cardiac, diabetes, or respiratory illnesses

To arrange for care, please call the Home Health VNA Referral Department at 978-552-4444 or 800-333-4799. Their helpful referral team is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help answer your questions and begin the process of arranging the proper care.

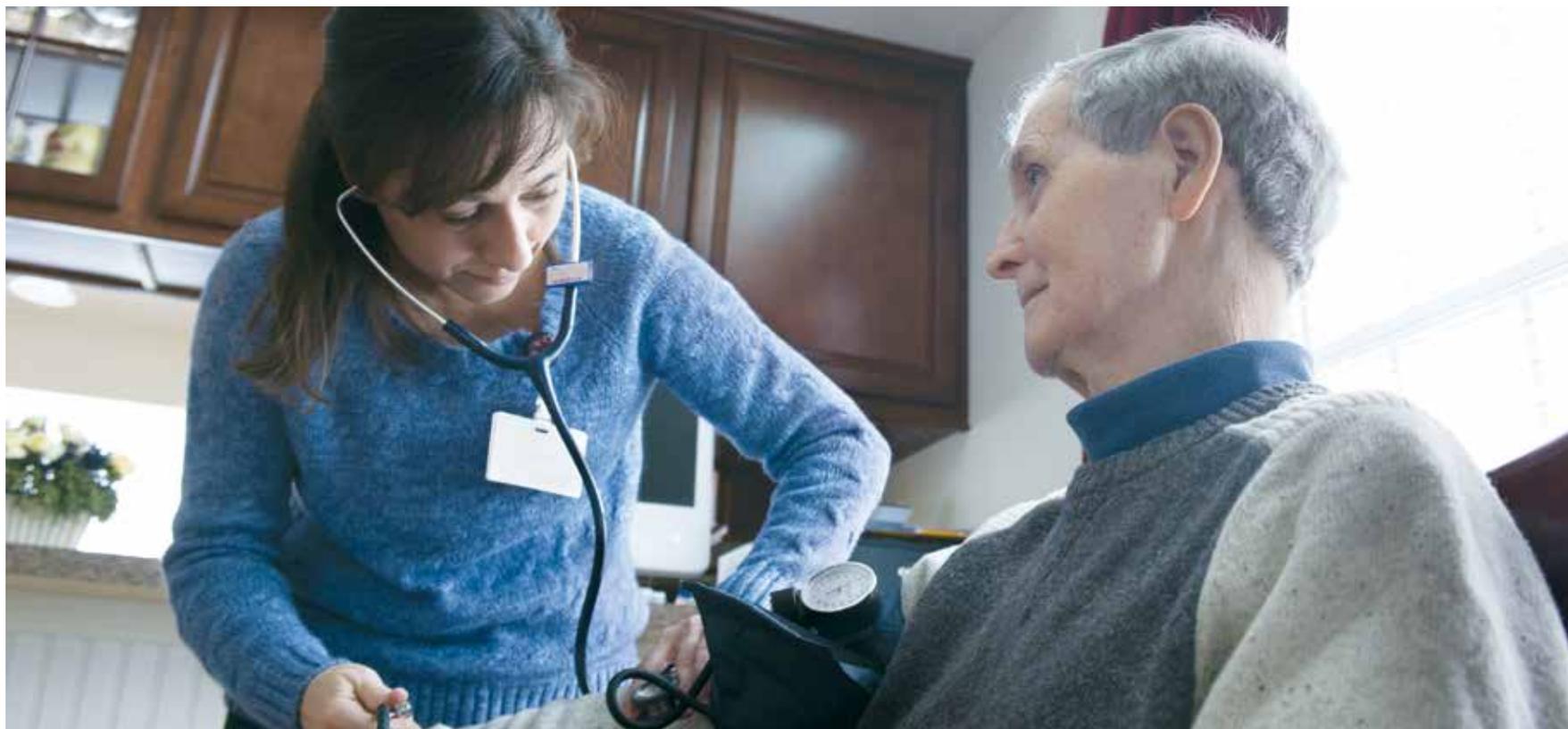
Care plans for better quality of life

Are you taking medication for a chronic illness and wonder if it's helping? Do you become short of breath when lying in bed? Do you need to prop yourself up with pillows, or sleep in a recliner? Does it take you longer to do your regular activities due to weakness, pain or difficulty breathing?

If you have a chronic medical condition like COPD or congestive heart failure, the answers to these questions may be cause for concern or signal that you need to take action. A home health plan of care helps you manage your chronic condition. Home Health VNA has a team of clinical professionals to help monitor and manage your condition and connect you to your physician, caregivers, and others involved in your care. By connecting you to your healthcare team, Home Health VNA becomes a trusted resource on your road to wellness.

Speak with your physician if you feel that home healthcare will help you take better care of yourself or someone you love. Or call 978-552-4444.

Merrimack Valley Hospice. Experience. Dignity.



Receiving hospice care at home, Barry and his wife Carol enjoy the things that matter most to them. Merrimack Valley Hospice provides resources and support that focus on quality of life.



“When you stop chasing time, you can start making use of the time you do have for the things that are important to you – the better things in life.”

For Barry, turning to hospice means enjoying the scones his wife bakes, joining his friends for walks through the neighborhood on his scooter, and watching his grandsons on the basketball court. In his last course of treatment for cancer, he found himself constantly feeling awful – unable to eat or not tasting what he did eat, so weakened and sick that the extra few months the treatment might bring him were not filled with the “life” he wanted to enjoy.

Deciding to set up hospice was a chance to focus on how he wanted to live and arrange the resources that would help

him do that. Today, his Merrimack Valley Hospice nurse Lisa visits weekly, scheduling his care around his life. She’s adapted his medication delivery to a time that works best for he and his wife’s daily plans and arranged her nursing visits to fit into his schedule. And she is responsive to Barry’s concerns and needs whenever they arise. They work together to improve the quality of his life, understand his wishes and reach his goals.

“Some people wait too long to enjoy the benefits of hospice. I knew I wanted to get the most of life. Deciding on hospice, I chose how I wanted to live.”

The role of hospice

Hospice is a form of compassionate, comprehensive care for those facing a terminal illness that is no longer responding to curative treatment. It's designed to improve quality of life by meeting physical, social and emotional needs with a team of professionals and volunteers. At home, in a hospital, in an assisted living facility or at Merrimack Valley Hospice House in Haverhill, MA – hospice care fosters peace and comfort with support for patients and their families.

Typically a family member serves as the primary caregiver and, when appropriate, helps make decisions for the terminally ill individual. Members of the hospice staff make regular visits to assess the patient and provide additional services. Hospice staff are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The hospice team develops a care plan that

meets each patient's needs for pain management and symptom control.

Providing a compassionate team

The hospice team involves many professionals who tend to symptom management, medication and supplies, care coordination and specialty care and support. Each person in the team helps to meet the many and often changing needs that arise. With hospice and palliative nurses, board certified practitioners, aides, social workers, bereavement counselor, multi-denominational chaplains and spiritual advisors and trained volunteers, caring experts provide help along the way.

Working together, this care team helps patients carry out their wishes which often are to live their remaining days in comfort, with dignity and respect.



Coping, comfort and strength

The best way to deal with the loss of a loved one isn't a "one-size-fits-all" answer. That's why Merrimack Valley Hospice offers a range of programs, groups, and resources to help people of all ages find ways that are helpful to them to cope and gain strength in moving forward.

From support groups in local communities, to workshops during the year, professional bereavement counselors are a resource for those families who have received care from Merrimack Valley Hospice as well as the general public. It is part of a 120 year mission of caring and is available to all. For a listing of support groups and programs, visit MerrimackValleyHospice.org or call 978-552-4510.

Volunteers

Volunteers are important to the work of hospice. They offer their time, talents, and compassion to patients and families as an additional resource. An extensive training program prepares volunteers to help with a variety of roles including:

- Visiting with patients in homes, nursing homes, residential communities, hospitals and Merrimack Valley Hospice House
- Providing a variety of specialized services
- Providing patient companionship, such as listening to their hopes, fears, feelings and memories, reading, playing games or listening to music
- Providing respite for caregivers, which may include taking a patient on a walk, assisting with child care, running errands or performing light housekeeping

For information on volunteering, call 978-552-4000 and ask for the volunteer department, or email VolunteerManager@homehealthfoundation.org.

Comfort for symptoms of advanced illnesses

Those with chronic conditions such as advanced cardiac and pulmonary disease, dementia and memory impairment, and advanced cancer can benefit from the medical and emotional support of hospice. When illness advances and curative treatment is no longer effective, hospice can dramatically reduce anxiety and symptoms of distress, keeping patients more comfortable and able to enjoy greater stability and quality of life.

Merrimack Valley Hospice

Merrimack Valley Hospice offers comfort care and palliative services for patients nearing the end of life.

- Pain and symptom management
- Palliative care
- Social work services and counseling
- Assistance with personal care
- Grief and bereavement support
- Multi-denominational spiritual support
- Expressive therapies

To arrange for care, call the Merrimack Valley Hospice Referral Department at 978-552-4444 or 800-333-4799. Their helpful referral team is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help answer your questions and begin the process of arranging the proper care.

Merrimack Valley Hospice House. Experience. Treasured Moments.



Hayleigh (above, with her father, Louis) shared this story and photos to carry out her father's wish to help others know about the positive experiences that hospice and Merrimack Valley Hospice House can bring. A special ring ceremony (top right) imparted good wishes and prayers, by her father, mother, and those in attendance that Hayleigh and her husband Aaron hold with them in the wedding rings they wear. Witnessing the marriage (bottom right) brought Louis joy and comfort in knowing she would have her partner in life by her side.

Celebrating life's most cherished moments

A wedding is one of life's most celebrated moments. For Hayleigh Smith, having her father at her marriage ceremony is a treasured memory that holds even greater meaning.

Hayleigh's father Louis had been living with pulmonary fibrosis, a degenerative lung disease, for years. She oversaw his care when his condition advanced to the point that he could no longer live alone – something her dad worried would burden his daughter. Hayleigh knew that hospice was going to help him receive the care and comfort he needed as his health deteriorated, but what happened on the first visit by Merrimack Valley Hospice would completely change him.

"My dad thought that going onto hospice meant he was 'out

the door' but as soon as the care team came in, he began to see that the professionals of Merrimack Valley Hospice would be a resource to me as well as him," Hayleigh explains. "He began to understand that this was part of his life and that he was not alone in facing it; there were people who could help both him and me. Knowing that, he took steps toward enjoying the time he had."

When Louis needed a higher level of hospice care, he went to Merrimack Valley Hospice House. Hayleigh knew she wanted her dad to be part of her wedding, but also that he would not likely make it to a later date she and her fiancé Aaron planned. So Hayleigh quickly planned to make that happen in a way

her father could be part of. The next day, she had everything ready – a volunteer hairdresser did her hair, a photographer arrived as she was getting ready to capture those moments of joyful anticipation with her mom, and the Justice of the Peace was waiting in the Sanctuary space, overlooking the courtyard garden at Merrimack Valley Hospice House.

"To have my father with me for this and the memories of our time together, as well as the two weeks he spent at the Hospice House, I will treasure forever. The trust that he had in hospice, the nurses, aides and all the staff at Merrimack Valley Hospice House, allowed him to enjoy the time he was being cared for. For me, his time on hospice was a special gift that we both had."

Specialized care in a place like home

Most hospice and palliative care is provided to patients in their own homes. But when it is no longer possible for someone to remain at home for advanced care, Merrimack Valley Hospice House provides a comfortable, welcoming, home-like alternative.

Merrimack Valley Hospice House is a place that brings trained hospice professionals together – physicians, registered nurses, nursing assistants, chaplains, social workers and volunteers – to provide highly specialized care to patients with advanced illness as well as support for their loved ones.

One of only two inpatient facilities in Massachusetts to care for children as well as adults, Merrimack Valley Hospice House addresses specialized medical needs of those with advanced illness, with compassion and dignity. Patients may come to Merrimack Valley Hospice House after being cared for by a hospice provider at home or in an assisted living or skilled nursing facility. They may not have had any type of hospice care before coming, or perhaps they have been receiving only palliative services. Some families turn to Merrimack Valley Hospice House for respite, a break from care giving.

Patients who may need more intensive pain management for a short time or require the oversight of a physician to help address complex symptoms, may turn to the specialized care at the Hospice House and then return home. Every patient is unique and an experienced admission team guides the transition to or from the Hospice House.



Merrimack Valley Hospice House offers a place of care and comfort, with services and support for patients and their families along the hospice journey.



Friends of Merrimack Valley Hospice

The *Friends of Merrimack Valley Hospice* is a group of volunteers that is committed to raising awareness and support of Merrimack Valley Hospice House and hospice in the community. For more information about how to join them, please call 978-552-4927 or visit MerrimackValleyHospice.org/friends.

The Compassionate Journey continues

The need for subsidized care is ever-present as patients are accepted requiring inpatient levels of care at Merrimack Valley Hospice House. Charitable support helps ensure the Hospice House is and remains available to all. For more information about the impact of donations to Merrimack Valley Hospice House and ways you can help, please call 978-552-4525.

HomeCare, Inc. Experience. Independence.



As a home health aide, Cheryl serves as an extension of Jack's family during the workday, providing an extra set of hands and assistance with daily living in his own home. HomeCare, Inc. provides staff for light housekeeping, personal care, companion visits, meal preparation and other services to keep someone you love comfortable and safe in their own home.

“She is an inspiration to me every day.”

With more than 30 years of experience as a nurse's aide, Cheryl has seen and done it all, but each day, she arrives to Jack's home brimming with energy to get him ready for the day. Whether the day holds a monthly gathering of his former colleagues, a walk outdoors with the family dog, or a visit to the doctor, it always includes his daily exercise routine.

Cheryl provides in-home personal care, light housekeeping duties and transport to medical appointments with such comfort and ease that it might appear that she is one of

the family. But it was less than a year ago that she first came to provide non-medical support and a watchful eye on Jack's wife Dolores and him. Physical limitations had made his mobility more difficult, so having someone to provide assistance in the family home they had enjoyed raising their family in, supported their independence and comfort.

When Cheryl arrived one morning and noticed Dolores was experiencing a serious health complication, she immediately called for emergency services and assisted the family in making

sure Jack was taken care of during his wife's hospitalization. That level of trust and partnership carried on following Dolores' peaceful passing at home, and continues today as Cheryl makes sure Jack is healthy, comfortable, and has the details of his home in order.

“She is an inspiration to me every day,” says Jack, as he counts out the arm presses he does to stay strong and healthy and remain independent in his home.



Renee has provided home care assistance to HomeCare, Inc. clients like Mary for more than 28 years.

Supporting independence and peace of mind

Needing assistance with daily tasks doesn't mean a person needs to give up independence or go into a nursing care facility. It may just mean you or someone you love needs a helping hand with home care.

A change in routine behaviors may be a sign that assistance in the home would be helpful. You may notice that your loved one is not as attentive to things they once were or see clues such as:

- House clutter, dirty laundry
- Missing important appointments
- Skipping medications
- Decline in personal grooming

There may be signs that relate to well-being, including but not limited to:

- Weight loss
- Sleeping more than usual during the day
- Experiencing confusion or forgetfulness
- Appearing socially isolated or lonely

As a caregiver, you may recognize some changes in your own life. You may find that the relationship

with your aging parent has turned into that of a caregiver instead of a son/daughter. Or you may find it difficult to take a break or tend to your own needs, such as a long-awaited vacation or attending a wedding or special event. Your own personal life may feel “neglected”.

“Kind Connections,” a program of HomeCare, Inc., helps with practical aspects of daily living and tasks, and it also can bring a positive new relationship to your loved one. The companionship a home care provider brings with regular visits can also brighten the day no matter the weather.

If you or someone you know would like help in setting up services, a home care agency that is connected to a home healthcare agency can help determine how needs are best met. HomeCare, Inc. offers support independently or as part of a home healthcare plan. Either way, you can count on a trusted leader – an agency of Home Health Foundation.

Setting up “Kind Connections”

Kind Connections offers dependable and affordable in-home solutions to enhance recovery, ensure safety, and increase independence. Home health aides provide personal care and support services to help individuals of all ages remain in their own homes. Compassionate care is blended with time-honored principles of service for the client's peace of mind.

Kind Connections begins with an initial discussion with home care staff to review all available support services, followed by a no-cost, in-home assessment conducted by a staff nurse. A customized “plan of care” is then provided that is unique to the client's needs and wishes. Services are available by the hour, by the day, or around-the-clock.

More than assistance, watchful care

As partners in home care, the staff of HomeCare, Inc. ensure clients' safety and independence, while providing comfort and daily living support.

Trained paraprofessionals, such as home health aides and even homemakers, help to manage care of people who may not be receiving medical care at the time. This staff often becomes the person closest to a senior's daily life, a trusted set of eyes on progress. They ensure that medication routines are being followed and help communicate changes or concerns to family members and/or care team members. By watching for changes in conditions or identifying risks, they can alert an agency nurse who can arrange proper intervention or communicate the need to the person's physician.

HomeCare, Inc.

Kind Connections, a program of HomeCare, Inc., provides services such as:

- Homemaking
- Personal care assistance
- Companion visits
- Transportation
- Other private assistance to help you or your loved one remain living at home

For more information, call 800-933-5593.

Delivering the right kind of care for every step along the way

Caring, commitment, quality, and compassion. Since 1895, these have served as cornerstones for the agencies of Home Health Foundation. We have been connecting people to the care they need for a long time, and today, our three not-for-profit agencies, Home Health VNA, Merrimack Valley Hospice and HomeCare, Inc., are bringing expert health, hospice and home care to patients and their families in the places they call home.

Serving the community's needs has always been our mission; how we do that has advanced by leaps and bounds. Our years of experience give us a strong foundation, with the ability and insight to look forward and develop innovative programs and leading-edge solutions to keep pace with an ever-changing healthcare landscape. We are at the forefront of the evolution in home care, demonstrating our true leadership.

Our reach has expanded from Greater Lawrence to more than 110 cities and towns. More than 700 staff now deliver in-home care to patients facing more serious and complex medical needs than ever before. And the level of expertise and types of medical care we now provide were undreamed of even as recently as 20 years ago.

We are honored to be a part of this community and to serve as your expert guide in receiving the care that is right for you and your family.



John G. Albert, MBA, FACHE
President and CEO, Home Health Foundation



The Leaders in Home Health and Hospice Care

Founded in 1895 to provide care to families who worked in the local textile mills, we are now one of the largest home health and hospice agencies in the region. Our trained professionals and paraprofessional staff provide the highest quality, compassionate medical and supportive care to more than 3,500 people on any given day from our main office in Lawrence and from offices in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine, and at our hospice house in Haverhill, MA.

Main Office

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Merrimack Valley Hospice House

360 North Avenue, Haverhill, MA 01830

www.HomeHealthFoundation.org | 800-933-5593



TO BECOME INVOLVED, BE A SUPPORTER, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT HOMEHEALTHFOUNDATION.ORG.

OUR AGENCIES ARE NOT-FOR-PROFIT, WITH CARE AVAILABLE TO ALL THROUGH THE CHARITABLE SUPPORT OF OUR COMMUNITY. LEARN MORE BY CALLING 978-552-4525.

GREAT PEOPLE MAKE US A GREAT "HOME TEAM"! LEARN ABOUT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ON OUR CAREERS PAGE ONLINE.