



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

# CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS OF BAYADA AND FAMILY MEMBERS

BAYADA Clinical Manager Pam Compagnola, RN

## Establishing the Best Working Relationships with Your BAYADA Clinicians

Whether you receive nursing, therapy, habilitation, or personal care services, your BAYADA clinicians are there to ensure you remain safe in the comfort of home. While some families easily adapt to the changes in routine that come with home care services, for others, it can be quite challenging.

By setting clear expectations and developing good communication with your BAYADA clinicians, you can help build a level of trust and respect that will lead to a positive working relationship.

### A welcoming introduction to your home

Carolyn Paschal no longer worries about leaving her husband, Seth, alone when she's at work as a musical director of a local church. Now that BAYADA Home Health Aide **Scott Wickes** is there to provide personal care support, she knows Seth, 72, who has muscular dystrophy, is in the most capable hands.

The "boys," as Carolyn lovingly calls them, talk about cars and motorcycles or watch movies. And Scott, a Navy veteran, enjoys hearing about Seth's father and uncle who also served.

"When Scott first came to our home, I made a list of our daily routine and I labeled all of the cabinets and doors in the bedroom and bathroom so he didn't have to search for anything," says Carolyn, who also leaves plenty of food and fresh coffee for Scott to enjoy.

For Carolyn, it was important to set clear expectations up front so that Seth's routine wouldn't change, he could better adjust to having care in the home, and Scott could more easily



BAYADA HHA Scott Wickes, center, who was honored as part of the company's Hero Program, is pictured with Carolyn and Seth during his recognition ceremony.

assimilate to Seth's environment. "It helped to create that immediate bond between the boys," she shares.

### Creating a pleasant work environment

While labeling doors and cabinets may not always be possible, there are other simple things clients and their families can do to create a pleasant workplace for their BAYADA clinicians. These include setting the thermostat at a comfortable temperature, indicating which bathroom to use, providing drinking water, and keeping the house clean and free of clutter.

If there are pets in the home or if a member of the family is a smoker, clients and families can make accommodations as appropriate, such as keeping their a pet in a crate or in another room or smoking outside while the clinician is in the home.

### Clear communication

Donna Helm credits good communication with helping her son, Ricky, 53, develop

a strong bond with his nurses. Ricky, who has cerebral palsy and relies on a feeding tube and a tracheostomy and ventilator, receives 56 hours of skilled nursing care a week.

"I go over the schedule with the nurses," says Donna. "I tell them how I give Ricky his medication and how he likes his pillows on his bed. If there is a problem with the pump, I tell them what works for me."

BAYADA Home Health Aide **Theresa Wood** also supports an open, honest approach. She has provided personal care support to her client, Ralph, who is paralyzed from the neck down, for 17 years. And while she considers him like family, she admits they can have their moments.

"Now he is good about letting me know what he wants and how he wants it, but in the beginning, it was stressful for him, and he raised his voice to me," says Theresa. "When that happened, we talked about it in a respectful way, worked through it, and moved on."

Theresa understands that clients can become frustrated with their situation. "I'm not there to change things for my clients, I am there to care for them. If clients get upset, I give them a moment to relax and get through it, but if they raised their voice all the time, I couldn't work with them."

### When conflicts arise, office mediation can help

While the goal is to encourage good communication between the client and clinician, sometimes conflicts arise. "I

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encourage clients or their families to call their clinical manager (CM) or client services manager (CSM) who can help to problem-solve in a safe, non-threatening manner," shares BAYADA CSM **Barbara Wiseman**. "It helps to take the burden off of clients or their families to have those difficult conversations."

In most cases, problems or misunderstandings can be successfully resolved to the satisfaction of both the client and the clinician. However, if the clinician is

simply not the right fit, then the CSM and CM can work with the client to ensure appropriate changes are made.

### Fostering trust and respect

BAYADA clinicians undergo training that is specific to each client's unique needs. Yet, understandably, it can be difficult for clients or family members to step back and allow someone to provide their care.

"I know the nurses are there to make life better for Ricky. That's why I give

them a chance and trust them to do their job," says Donna. "When you treat the nurses with kindness and respect, you get it back tenfold."

Carolyn couldn't agree more. "BAYADA does background and qualification checks, so I had peace of mind knowing they would match Seth with the best possible aide," she says. "I feel so blessed to have Scott here to lessen my load. You can't put a dollar amount on that support." ■

## Setting Expectations: Questions to Consider

Whether your clinicians have been with you a long time or they are new to your home, the following questions are helpful for setting or clarifying expectations:

- **Knock first?** Would you prefer your clinicians to knock, ring the doorbell, or just enter your home at the start of their shift?
- **Parking?** Where do you prefer the clinicians park?
- **Off-limit areas?** Are there areas of your home that are off-limits to the clinicians?
- **Bathroom?** Is there a certain bathroom you prefer the clinicians use?
- **Supply room?** Is there a certain location where supplies are stored?
- **Refrigerator?** Can the clinicians place food and drinks in your refrigerator?
- **Microwave?** Can the clinicians warm up food in your microwave?
- **Dining area?** Is there a certain area where you prefer the clinicians eat their meals?
- **Laundry?** Where would you like soiled laundry placed?
- **Nighttime calls?** As a family member, if there is a need to wake you during the overnight hours, do you prefer the clinicians knock on your bedroom door or call your cell?
- **Non-emergencies?** As a family member, would you like to be informed during the overnight hours of non-emergency clinical changes, such as a fever, feeding intolerance, pain, or restlessness?

## Tips to Prevent Falls in Cold Weather

Accidental falls are a serious health risk for seniors and people with disabilities year-round, but the winter months demand extra caution.

### Here are some tips to prevent falls during the winter:

- **Improve exteriors:** Clear any obstructions or trip hazards from outdoor entrances. Test banisters to make sure they're sturdy enough to provide support.
- **Identify your easiest entrance:** The ideal entrance will have a roof, a table to put things down, and automatic lighting. Ensure that gutters are clean and working to prevent slippery puddles.
- **Clean up indoor entrances:** Clear all clutter and trip hazards. Avoid throw rugs and instead, use a non-slip, absorbent mat to keep ice and snow from making floors slippery. Remove shoes at the door, and set-up an absorbent or contained storage area for footwear and umbrellas that isn't a tripping hazard.
- **Beware of the risk of space heaters:** While space or kerosene heaters provide extra warmth, they can pose a fire risk. Also, watch out for electrical cords that could cause a tripping hazard.
- **Plan for leaf, snow, and ice removal:** Recruit someone to do outdoor maintenance. Spread salt or ice melt before storms. Stock up on salt or ice melt, a shovel, sand, or kitty litter for traction.
- **Winterize your mobility:** If you must venture out in bad weather, make sure you have sturdy, rubber-soled boots with good traction and new rubber tips (or even ice pick tips) on your cane or walker. Consider using snow tires for your wheelchair. Keep a charged cell phone in your pocket. Ask for help getting in and out of cars, step slowly and carefully, and avoid any surface that looks wet. ■

# Champions Among Us | State Legislator Fights for Client's Nursing Coverage

When Jim Davies received a notice in the mail last year that his insurance would be transitioning to another carrier, he tried not to panic. After all, the letter stated there would be no change, he would still receive coverage for his home health care nursing and personal care home health aide services from BAYADA.

However, Jim was not convinced. The 66-year-old, who has received care from BAYADA since his spinal cord injury 20 years ago, is nearly paralyzed from the neck down. He relies on his nurses for his complex medical needs, which include wound care, range of motion exercises, mechanical transfers to and from bed, medication administration, catheter care, and care to prevent a serious complication called autonomic dysreflexia, which can lead to seizures, stroke, or even death.

As a former sheriff and local fire commissioner, Jim is used to working collaboratively with others to make things happen. That's why he immediately called a case manager at the insurance company, who confirmed what was explained in the letter—his home health care coverage would not change.

## Coverage denied

Fast-forward to the end of the year when Jim received another letter, this time from the new insurance company. Despite written and verbal assurance that his coverage would not change, the new company denied his home health care services, insisting Jim was stable enough and no longer needed nursing care.

Jim reached out to his BAYADA Mercer County, NJ Adults office Director **Meghan Hansen** and Clinical Manager **Sharon Wheelock** who appealed the decision on his behalf, to no avail. That's when they turned to BAYADA Government Affairs Area Director **Louise Lindenmeier**, who suggested Jim reach out to New Jersey Assemblyman Daniel Benson, a member of the state Health and Senior Services Committee.

## Legislative home visit leads to positive change

"When I called Assemblyman Benson's office, I wasn't sure what the response was going to be, but I was pleasantly surprised," says Jim. "The assemblyman made me feel that as his constituent, my problem was a major concern, and he owned it."

Assemblyman Benson visited Jim and his wife of 40 years, Rosemary, at their home to witness, first-hand, the critical role home care nurses play in Jim's health and well-being. During the visit, Assemblyman Benson also learned about the catastrophic medical consequences of stopping Jim's nursing care and BAYADA's unsuccessful efforts to appeal the denial from the insurance company.

Following the visit with Jim, Assemblyman Benson jumped into action. He joined BAYADA Managed Care Director **Pamela Soni**, BAYADA Managed Care Area Director **Stephanie Perna**, and Louise for a meeting with the NJ Department of Banking and Insurance to discuss Jim's case. In addition, he personally contacted the insurance company to advocate for Jim, resulting in a reversal of the denial. Thanks to his efforts, the issue was resolved within two weeks.



Pictured sitting (from l to r) are Legislative Director for Assemblyman Benson Kate Bradley, Jim Davies, and BAYADA Clinical Manager Sharon Wheelock; and standing (from l to r) are BAYADA Managed Care Senior Associate Cynthia Kolby, Assemblyman Benson, Rosemary Davies, BAYADA Director Meghan Hansen, BAYADA Managed Care Director Pamela Soni, BAYADA Client Services Manager Eric Elliott, and BAYADA Senior Clinical Manager Cynthia Cumbo.

"It is really important to educate politicians on how insurance changes can impact their constituents," says Jim, who encourages others in similar situations to reach out to legislators who may be more than willing to help. "Assemblyman Benson should be recognized for his prompt and professional response to my needs."

Assemblyman Benson considered it a privilege to play a role in helping Jim. "It was my honor to work with Mr. Davies to ensure that he received the care he needs and deserves," he says. "As legislators, it is our sworn duty to represent our constituents, and that means lending our assistance whenever possible, whether by simply cutting through red tape or elevating a situation to a higher level so that it is promptly addressed. **I would encourage those in need to reach out to their elected representatives to learn what they can do for them.**" ■

## Want to Help Make a Difference? Register for Hearts for Home Care

Whether you can give a minute, an hour, or a day, there are many ways to get involved in advocacy. It can be as simple as sending a pre-written email to your local legislators, hosting a legislator in your home, or attending an event at a legislator's office or your state capitol. To learn more, consider becoming a "Heart for Home Care" advocate by emailing [advocacy@bayada.com](mailto:advocacy@bayada.com).



# Hearts for Home Care



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

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BAYADA specialty practices include Home Health Care, Pediatrics, Hospice, Behavioral Health, and Habilitation. Services may vary by location.  
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## Thank You for **Showing Love** during the **2019 Contest for Clinicians**

The **BAYADA 2019 Contest for Clinicians** is just one of the many ways we show love and appreciation to our field staff throughout the year. This year's contest ended on November 24, with more than 39,000 submissions! That means our amazing clinicians—from therapists and home health aides to nurses, social workers, and others—were recognized more than **39,000 times** for demonstrating *compassion, excellence, and reliability*—the core values of *The BAYADA Way*.

Thanks in large part to the many submissions from our clients, families, and community members, our clinicians were rewarded with chances to win gift cards and prizes for the vitally important work they do. Your stories are sources of inspiration and make them feel valued and more closely connected to those they serve. It is no wonder our clinicians love what they do!

Thank you to all who participated in our contest by sharing how your clinicians exemplified *The BAYADA Way*. Your stories are sources of inspiration that help us *build and maintain a lasting legacy as the world's most compassionate and trusted team of home health care professionals*. ■

*"Kyle is the best! Dad feels very comfortable with him. Dad is very anxious when transitioning, but Kyle gives him the confidence and clear instructions necessary to get around safely. He shows a genuine interest in Dad's life as a younger man. We are so fortunate that Kyle has been called to this line of work."*

*~on behalf of Media, PA Home Health Aide **Kyle Reid***

*"Ally is great! She doesn't make me feel bad for helping me. She's a lot of fun and she makes me feel comfortable in my situation. I was super scared of being in college and all, but she makes everything okay."*

*~on behalf of Pittsburgh, PA Pediatrics Home Health Aide **Allison Gaines***

