

HAPPY DOCTOR'S DAY!

On March 30, we recognize our local physicians in appreciation for your expertise and dedication to the well-being of those in our community. Thank you for your partnership to provide the highest quality of care for your patients.

in the NEWS

HNA Private Duty Home Care Repeats for Fifth Year with National Award

HNA Private Duty Home Care has earned Home Care Pulse's "Best of Home Care" distinction for the fifth straight year and is the only non-medical home care provider in the region to be recognized. Private Duty Home Care helps clients - from seniors needing assistance with daily routines to individuals with chronic illnesses - safely remain in the comfort of home.



in the COMMUNITY

Mercedes Moment Tickets Now Available

Mercedes Moment, the HNA Foundation's signature fundraising event, is officially underway with \$100 tickets now available for a 1 in 1,000 chance to win a 2017 Mercedes GLA250 4MATIC Coupe or a \$30,000 cash prize (taxes not included). Winner is based on the first 3-digit PA Lottery on Thursday, May 18 at 7 p.m. To purchase a ticket or learn about sponsorship options, call 1-877-GIVE-HNA. Download a ticket order form at www.homenursingagency.com. All proceeds benefit patients, clients and communities served by HNA.

The official registration and financial information of Home Nursing Agency may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. To be removed from our mailing list, please contact Home Nursing Agency at 1-800-992-2554.



in the COMMUNITY



Home Nursing Agency Recognized

Home Nursing Agency was selected as a Top 100 Organization by *Pennsylvania Business Central*. Companies and organizations were selected based on three core components: consistent growth, commitment to honest business practices, and community giving.



HNA Home Health was recently selected as the Readers' Choice Best Home Health Service Provider by *Huntingdon Daily News*.

in the INDUSTRY

National Healthcare Decisions Day Provides Opportunity for End-of-Life Conversations, Observed Week of April 16

Encourage your patients to consider their desires for end-of-life care by having these critical conversations loved ones and documenting their wishes. The PA Advance Health Care Directive can be downloaded for free at www.homenursingagency.com.

Things can happen at any time, to any of us, and it's important to be prepared. Without the conversation, there can be confusion, conflict, and guilt in a situation that's already very stressful. With a plan in place, patients can focus on the things that matter.

*Data Source: The Conversation Project National Survey (2013)

90% of people say that talking with their loved ones about end-of-life care is important.

27% have actually done so.*

in the INDUSTRY

When Are Cardiac Patients Considered “End of Life”?

by Christopher Hughes, MD, Family Hospice Medical Director, Mt. Lebanon office



As a Hospice Medical Director, one of the most challenging aspects of my job is determining when a person is “hospice eligible,” which is another way of saying whether or not I think the person has a likely prognosis of six months or less. This is true for many of our patients because we want them to have available the many benefits of hospice earlier in the course of their illness rather than later.

Many illnesses, such as heart and lung disease, are so variable in their course and presentations, it makes it challenging to know when the time is right. As physicians, we tend to be optimistic in our assessment of our patients’ prognosis. The closer we are to the patient, the more optimistic we tend to be – physicians routinely overestimate our patients’ lifespans by two or three times!

So how do we figure it out? One way is the surprise question: **“Would you be surprised if this person died within the next year?”** Answering “no” does not mean the person has a prognosis of six months or less, but it should make us step back and investigate more.

A recent scientific publication has collected evidence from many studies to help us figure out which factors in an individual patient makes them more likely than not, to have a six-month prognosis. To be clear, many patients live far longer than that even when they meet these criteria, but these findings help us determine in a reasonably objective way, that a person may be at this point in their illness.

For heart disease, the authors found that persons with symptomatic heart failure, with shortness of breath on exertion, for example (NYHA Class III or IV), and with **3 or more** of the following more likely than not had a prognosis of six months or less:

- Age > 70 years
- Left ventricular ejection fraction < 20%
- Serum B-type natriuretic peptide > 950 pg/ml
- Cardiac troponin I > 0.4 ng/ml
- C-reactive protein > 3.5 mg/L
- Systolic blood pressure < 110
- Serum sodium < 135 mEq/L
- Dependency of 3 or more activities of daily living or need for home care
- Serum creatinine > 2 mg/dl or BUN > 40 mg/dL
- Malnutrition (weight loss or serum albumin < 3 g/dL)
- History of cardiogenic shock, arrhythmia, cardiac arrest, CPR, or mechanical vent
- Fourth hospitalization, or repeat hospitalization in 2 months
- Cardiovascular disease (ischemic or cerebrovascular)
- Other comorbid illness (cancer, dementia, COPD)

As you consider your patients, you may be thinking that you have more than a few patients like this. If so, they should be considered for evaluation for admission to hospice. Our prognostic decisions are based on our best clinical judgment, but tools such as this help us to better serve our patients by guiding us to better decision making.

Salpeter, et al, Systematic Review of Noncancer Presentations with a Median Survival of 6 Months or Less; Am J Med. 2012 May;125(5):512.e1-6. doi: 10.1016/j.amjmed.2011.07.028

in the AGENCY

Local Medical Directors Provide Oversight for Hospice Care

Dr. Hughes is part of a physician team that provides clinical oversight for the care of Family Hospice patients in the western nine counties of our expanded service area.

Locally in our traditional Home Nursing Agency service area, a team of six physicians provides this vital oversight and specialized knowledge regarding end-of-life care.

Our team includes the following:

Dr. Amy Swindell, DO, HMDC
Lead Medical Director
Huntingdon County

Dr. Beth Clark, DO
Bedford County

Dr. Joseph Hines, MD
Centre, Mifflin, and Juniata Counties

Dr. Anthony Maniglia, MD
Blair County

Dr. Thomas Mextorf, DO
Blair County

Dr. Stephanie Young, DO
Cambria County

For more information about our medical directors or hospice services or to make a referral, please contact your account representative or call the Customer Contact Center at 1.800.445.6262.

ANYONE CAN MAKE A REFERRAL.
24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.

1.800.445.6262 | www.homenursingagency.com