

## VNSW + WCAH NEWS

*The “latest & greatest” about our two affiliated agencies*

### Putnam Officials Select VNSW As County’s Home Health Care Provider

For well over a century, Visiting Nurse Services in Westchester (VNSW) has been Westchester County’s choice for the provision of home care services. And now, VNSW has expanded to create Visiting Nurse Services in Putnam (VNSP) – by community choice. Based on agency integrity, quality of services and fiscal stability. VNSW has been selected by Putnam County officials to provide the home health care services previously provided by the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH).

VNSP operates a local office in the Putnam community, retaining the previous PCDOH staff of nurses, rehab specialists, social workers, home health aides and clerical staff. The agency’s comprehensive array of home health services includes nursing, rehabilitation (physical, occupational and speech therapy services), social work and home health aide services to start; of VNSW’s Specialty Programs, the Putnam office will immediately offer two – Medical-Surgical Care and In-Home Mental Health Care – while working toward rolling out others in the future, including Cardiac and Diabetic Disease Management, TeleHealth Monitoring, Pain Management & Palliative Care, Advanced Wound & Ostomy Care, Orthopedic Services, Joint Replacement Rehabilitation, Dysphagia (Swallowing Disorders) Rehabilitation, Lymphatic Therapy and Tobacco Cessation.

Visiting Nurse Services in Putnam is located at 979 Route 22, Brewster, NY 10509, phone (845) 278-2550, toll-free 1-855-4-PUTNAM, fax (845) 279-4370.



### VNSW Awarded 5-Year Contract by Westchester Dept Of Social Services (DSS)

Selected from a pool of more than a half dozen applicant agencies, VNSW has been awarded a five year contract with the Westchester County Department of Social Services to provide nursing assessment/supervisory visits to 2,300 Medicaid recipients in need of Personal Care Aide home care services. For many years, this service was provided by the Westchester County Department of Health Nursing Services. The contract involves VNSW hiring a team of 7-9 Registered Nurses and a Nursing Supervisor to administer the program, which will be reimbursed on a fee-for-visit basis by Medicaid for each nursing visit made to a DSS client. In making the announcement, VNSW President/ CEO **Carol L. Weber** explained that “many of the County nurses currently working in this program are very interested in being employed by VNSW. Plus, this is a fantastic opportunity for VNSW to expand our services to this extensive, in-need, patient base!”

## We get letters!

*“Patients very satisfied with your professionalism!”*

**Francis B., MD**  
Hawthorne, NY

*“No improvement necessary – very effective & efficient care.”*

**Barbara G., MD**  
Yonkers, NY

*“Excellent service! Excellent nurses!”*

**Erin F., MD**  
Harrison, NY



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#### Affiliations

Member: Visiting Nurse Associations of America  
Member: National Association for Home Care  
Member: Home Care Association of New York State

#### Accreditation

Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP)

#### Board of Directors 2010

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*On The Home Front:*  
*Editorial/Design/Production: Dott Communications*



home care providers in the U.S. This review from Outcome Concept Systems (OCS), a prestigious benchmarking company, names the Medicare-certified agencies whose performance measures in quality, improvement and financial performance are among the top providers nationwide.

Agency performance in each of these three domains was compared against the performance of other organizations in their state and in the country. The three domains were combined into one overall score, using a weighting methodology that gives the greatest importance to quality of care. The top agencies in each region, both facility-based and free-standing, were identified and added to the national list.

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

##### VNSW Rocks – AGAIN!:

Billy Vera + Vincent Pastore delight at Nov. 18th Benefit Event!

**VNSW + WCAH News:** The Latest & Greatest

**Preventing Falls In The Home**

**Feedback From Westchester Doc's**

#### AND MORE!



*Dr. Hooker with Event Co-Chair/VNSW Board member Anne Sweazey...*

*...receiving Proclamation from Senator Andrea Stewart Cousins...*



*...receiving honor from VNSW President/ CEO Carol L. Weber...*



*.... and receiving congratulations from Event Co-Chair /VNSW Board member Ann Smith*



*Billy Vera & (some of) The Beaters*

## BENEFIT EVENT CELEBRATES 109 YEARS OF VNSW SERVICES!

November 18th dawned an exquisite Fall day over the C.V. Rich Mansion in White Plains, as VNSW prepared to host its annual benefit event. And what an evening it was! 5:30PM rang in the gala cocktail reception and silent auction, till the clock struck seven: show time! The crowd settled into the grand ballroom for a video tribute to the evening’s honoree, **Dr. Olivia J. Hooker**, legendary 95-year-old civil- and women’s rights activist, former VNSW Board member, and 45-year resident of White Plains (not a dry eye in the house).

Next, a welcome from **Carol L. Weber**, VNSW’s President & CEO, who introduced emcee **Jay Michaels**, host of the Wake Up Westchester morning show on WFAS-FM 103.9. Jay brought on TV star **Vincent Pastore** (Sopranos, Celebrity Apprentice, etc.) who in turn brought on Hartsdale-raised **Billy Vera** and his 8-piece band, the Beaters, for a rousing 90-minute concert. Finally, dessert, as Billy and Vincent posed with guests, signed CD’s and pictures, and wound down yet another remarkable evening in VNSW Annual Benefit Event history.

(Conversations are already underway for the fun next year!)





*l-r: Golden Harvest Honorees: Dr. Arnold M. Wald (Rye Radiology), Lois Bronz (former County Legislator), VNSW's Carol Weber and County Executive Rob Asterino.*

## VNSW Honored with Corporate Award By Westchester Public/Private Partnership

VNSW was honored at the 19th annual Golden Harvest Awards breakfast at Abigail Kirsch at Tappan Hill in Tarrytown on Oct. 7, 2010. The prestigious award, accepted by **Carol L. Weber**, VNSW President/CEO, was presented by the Westchester Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services to recognize outstanding and lasting contributions by individuals and corporations to Westchester seniors. The partnership is a coalition of government, business and voluntary service agencies that develop resources and services so seniors can remain independent and active members of the community. The event was attended by 200+ community, civic and business leaders.

## WCAH Expands To New Facility, Adds Van Pickup Service

For many years, Westchester Care At Home (WCAH), VNSW's affiliated agency – providing certified Home Health Aides – has occupied space on the upper level of VNSW headquarters at 360 Mamaroneck Avenue in White Plains. But, growing demand necessitated an expansion and, so, on August 1st, WCAH began offering services from a much larger space, with direct public access from the building's street level. This expanded presence includes a separate reception area to comfortably accommodate WCAH applicants for service, and a state-of-the-art Home Health Aide inservice and orientation classroom.

In a further initiative to provide the most meaningful and convenient home health care service to Westchester, WCAH has begun providing Van Service – transporting certified Home Health Aides to the patient's door, at no additional cost to the family. The current WCAH Van Service area includes all towns and villages along the Route 9 Corridor, from the Tappan Zee Bridge to Peekskill, with plans for future expansion. Call (914) 997-7912 to arrange for service.

WCAH services private pay clients, third party reimbursement (such as long term care insurance), as well as contract service for other Medicare Home Care Agencies.



## Stephanie Diable, "Nurse Of The Future" 2010 Award Winner, Graduates Nursing School



Last issue, we shared a note from **Michelle Purville**, one of our past "Nurses Of The Future" scholarship winners, proudly proclaiming her graduation from nursing school, as valedictorian, no less! And, here, more exciting news from Stephanie Diable, one of this year's awardees. We are grateful to see this scholarship making such a meaningful impact in the "real world."

"I am writing to update you on my progress toward becoming a registered nurse. After much grueling study, on July 2, 2010, I passed my NCLEX-RN examination and now proudly carry the title of RN at the end of my name. I am now in full job search mode, but I wanted to take this time to thank you all once again for meeting with me and for being such wonderful examples of the kind of nurse I hope to soon become."

Best regards,  
Stephanie N. Diable, RN, BSN

## VNSW'S Mary Gadomski Joins Senator Suzi Oppenheimer at Announcement of New Law to Control Healthcare Costs



On July 15th, Senator **Suzi Oppenheimer** (D-Mamaroneck) joined with healthcare and consumer advocates, including **Mary Gadomski**, VNSW's Director Of Community Education, to announce a new law that will protect New Yorkers from out-of-control health insurance premiums. At a press conference at Burke Rehabilitation Hospital in White Plains, the Senator outlined the new safeguards, which will make health insurance coverage more affordable for individuals, families and small businesses. Under the law, insurance companies will be required to seek prior approval from the state Department of Insurance before they can raise rates. The Insurance Department then has 60 days to determine whether the rate increase is justified. The law covers small employer and individually purchased plans, which insure approximately three million New Yorkers. Previously, insurance companies were permitted to increase premium rates by simply meeting minimal state filing requirements. Seen here, l-r, are **Mark Hannay**, Director, of Metro New York Health Care for All Campaign; **Heidi Siegfried**, Director of New Yorkers for Accessible Health Care Coverage; Senator Oppenheimer, **Mary Gadomski**; and **Rachel Estroff**, Lead Organizer of Westchester for Change.

## Smoking Cessation Clinic At VNSW White Plains HQ

On four consecutive Tuesdays, Nov. 30 – Dec.21, 2010, VNSW conducted a public smoking cessation clinic at its Mamaroneck Avenue headquarters in White Plains, facilitated by **Sara Oppenheim-Somerville**, CHt, the agency's Tobacco Cessation Specialist. "Are you tired of being a slave to a cigarette?," asked Sara as she began her presentation. "Tired of the health worries and the cost of smoking? This workshop will help you say goodbye to this unhealthy, destructive and expensive habit for good. No more excuses, no more failed attempts. If you are 100% committed to quitting and have an open mind, you will achieve success." A frequent speaker and workshop leader for groups and corporations, Sara combines the power of hypnosis with personal counseling and uses her expertise to help individuals overcome their smoking addiction. "This workshop was very enthusiastically received," says Sara, "and we'll be sure to do this again in the future." Stay tuned...



## Preventing Falls In Your Home



*By David Jagoda, VNSW Director of Rehabilitation Services*

Falls can occur to anyone at anytime. From a tiny baby running across the room, to an older adult who losing

balance, falls can range from a simple bruise to a fracture and, unfortunately, can even result in death. Falls usually are non-threatening, yet, as we age, falls become a common occurrence for those 65 and older. Studies show that 30 percent of people over the age of 65 fall each year and the incidence increases to 50 percent for those over the age of 80. Each year at least 10 percent of older people have a serious injury such as a fracture, joint dislocation or head injury (requiring hospitalization) as a result of a fall. Since most falls occur in the home, ideally we would like an environment that is safe & sound. Yet accidents will occur. With shorter days and earlier darkness, or a pair of shoes left in the middle of a room, or autumn leaves that have gathered outside our door, or rushing around in preparation for holiday meals and events, and, perhaps most impactfully, with the oncoming ice and snow, we're all at increased risk for a fall.

Many falls can be prevented. Assessing your home, and establishing a safety checklist, can keep you and your family safe to enjoy not only the holiday season – but keep you functional and independent in your home year round.

*Following are some suggestions to "fall-proof" your home to make it a safer place for all:*

### GENERAL HOUSEHOLD

- Have adequate lighting, especially around stairwells. Having a nightlight in the bedroom and in the bathroom helps vision. Consider using higher watt bulbs for better lighting.
- Have handrails on both sides of stairways. Have non-skid treads or carpeting on stairs.
- Keep floors clutter free. Remove items that you can trip over (papers, books, shoes). Ensure that there are clear paths for moving throughout your house.
- Rugs should be firmly fixed. Use double-sided tape to keep rugs from slipping. Small throw rugs by doorways can easily move and should be secured.
- Wear proper footwear, slippers and shoes in the home.

- If you have a device (walker or cane), follow the directions that were set up by your therapist or doctor. Make sure the height of the device is correctly adjusted for your needs.
- Use a cordless phone and keep it by your side. It is easier to have a phone readily available than running for a phone call when ringing.
- Make sure that there are no loose wires or extension cords that you can trip over.
- Wear your glasses to help you see better.
- Consider an emergency response system for emergencies.

### KITCHEN

- Avoid highly-polished or waxed kitchen floors.
- Keep frequently-used items within reach, minimizing the use of a stepping stool.
- Place items used more frequently on shelves that are lower.

### BATHROOM

- Install grab bars on the bathroom walls, especially by the toilet and shower.
- Use assistive devices as a shower seat or tub bench for bathing.
- Consider a raised toilet seat for safety and independence when sitting or standing. Consider a bedside commode if nighttime toileting is an issue.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub or on shower floors.

### OUTDOORS

- Salt icy driveways or sidewalks.
- Clean paths for easy access. Remove snow and ice.
- Remove wet leaves as they are very slippery.

For further information, contact David Jagoda, (914) 682-1480 Ext. 660, or e-mail [OrthoRehab@vns.org](mailto:OrthoRehab@vns.org).



**"Studies show that 30 percent of people over the age of 65 fall each year and the incidence increases to 50 percent for those over the age of 80."**

## VNSW Nurse Claudia Weiner Creates Wound Care Display for Regional Conference



At the WOCN (Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses Society) Northeast Annual Fall Conference on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 22 and 23, 2010, at Atlantic City's Sheraton Center, VNSW Nurse **Claudia Weiner**, RN, BSN, presented one of her cases as a mounted display of images. Titled, "Healing Of A Diabetic Foot Ulcer: A Nursing Story," the display generated a great deal of interest at the event. This was, according to Claudia, "because the display represented the essence of what nurses do, the best of nursing care, i.e., working holistically in partnership with our patients/families in order to achieve optimal outcomes." VNSW offers a Specialty Program in Advanced Wound & Ostomy Care ([wound@vns.org](mailto:wound@vns.org)).