Dr. Sonali Wilborn on Lowering Barriers to Hospice Care

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***Dr. Sonali Wilborn**, our new Vice President, Hospice Services, and Hospice Chief Medical Officer, is Board Certified in Hospice & Palliative Medicine and Hospice Medical Director Certified. Here, she shares several benefits of referring patients to VNS Health Hospice Care.*

When a patient is referred to us for hospice care, our team moves quickly. "When a patient and a family are told their loved one needs hospice, it's a major crisis for them. Life as they knew it is never going to be the same. At VNS Health, we know it's imperative that we respond with that same sense of urgency. That's why, when that referral to our hospice is made, I'm a passionate advocate for getting a nurse to the patient's bedside as soon as possible and getting them access to care."

Our clinical expertise is second to none. "Unlike other hospices, whose physicians tend to be per diem, our physicians are full-time employees, and most are Hospice & Palliative Medicine Board Certified as well. In addition, our hospice team members—nurses, physicians, social workers, grief counselors—reflect pretty much every community of New York City. This means we are able to provide the best possible care to patients and families of all backgrounds."

We are committed to removing barriers to hospice care. "At VNS Health, we recognize the critical importance of meeting patients where they are in their end-of-life journey and walking alongside them with compassionate, comprehensive support, rather than allowing systemic and perceptual barriers to limit access to care."

We work with physicians, patients and families to facilitate hospice access. “If a patient doesn’t have a caregiver at home, we’ll look for creative ways to provide support so they can receive hospice services. If the patient isn’t ready to stop a certain medication, we will work with them to determine when it makes sense to go off that medication rather than allow it to become a barrier to admission. We also work with physicians on hospice eligibility so they can identify hospice-eligible patients and connect them with the benefits of hospice sooner—including effective symptom management and improved quality of life.”

To learn more about our hospice care services, click here.

VNS Health Enhances Its Heart Failure Care

In early March, we were awarded Home Health Heart Failure certification by the American Heart Association (AHA). The organization earned this certification by meeting the AHA’s evidence-based standards for heart failure care.

Why it matters: Heart failure continues to be the leading cause of hospitalization among older adults, and its prevalence is on the rise—which means the need for effective in-home management of heart failure patients is greater than ever. Our AHA certification, coupled with its recent Age-Friendly Care certification by Community Health Accreditation Partner (CHAP), underscores the organization’s commitment to delivering high-quality, person-centered care to heart failure patients in a home setting.

Zoom in: Our heart failure training focuses on symptom monitoring and early intervention, medication adherence, dietary and lifestyle modification, and self-management education—all with the goal of successfully managing care and avoiding hospitalizations, which is especially important for those heart failure patients with complex care needs.

Source: https://www.vnshealth.org/about/newsroom/articles/dr-sonali-wilborn-on-lowering-barriers-to-hospice-care/

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