

Newsletter
Fall 2022

VNA | Visiting Nurse Association
Easterseals Nebraska



Their Stories . . . Our Mission



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From VNA President and CEO, James Summerfelt

Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) provides care to adults and children who are our community's marginalized. In other words, we care for those outside of mainstream society who are highly vulnerable and face significant barriers to accessing quality healthcare. The majority of our clients have poorer health status than the general population because they haven't been receiving preventive care. They are uninsured, under-resourced, and don't know where to turn for help.

VNA is the source of that help. We bring healthcare, supportive services, resources, and education directly into our clients' homes, no matter their station in life or ability to pay. It's a unique privilege we have to meet individuals and families, wherever they call home, and create spaces for healing, caring, and growth.

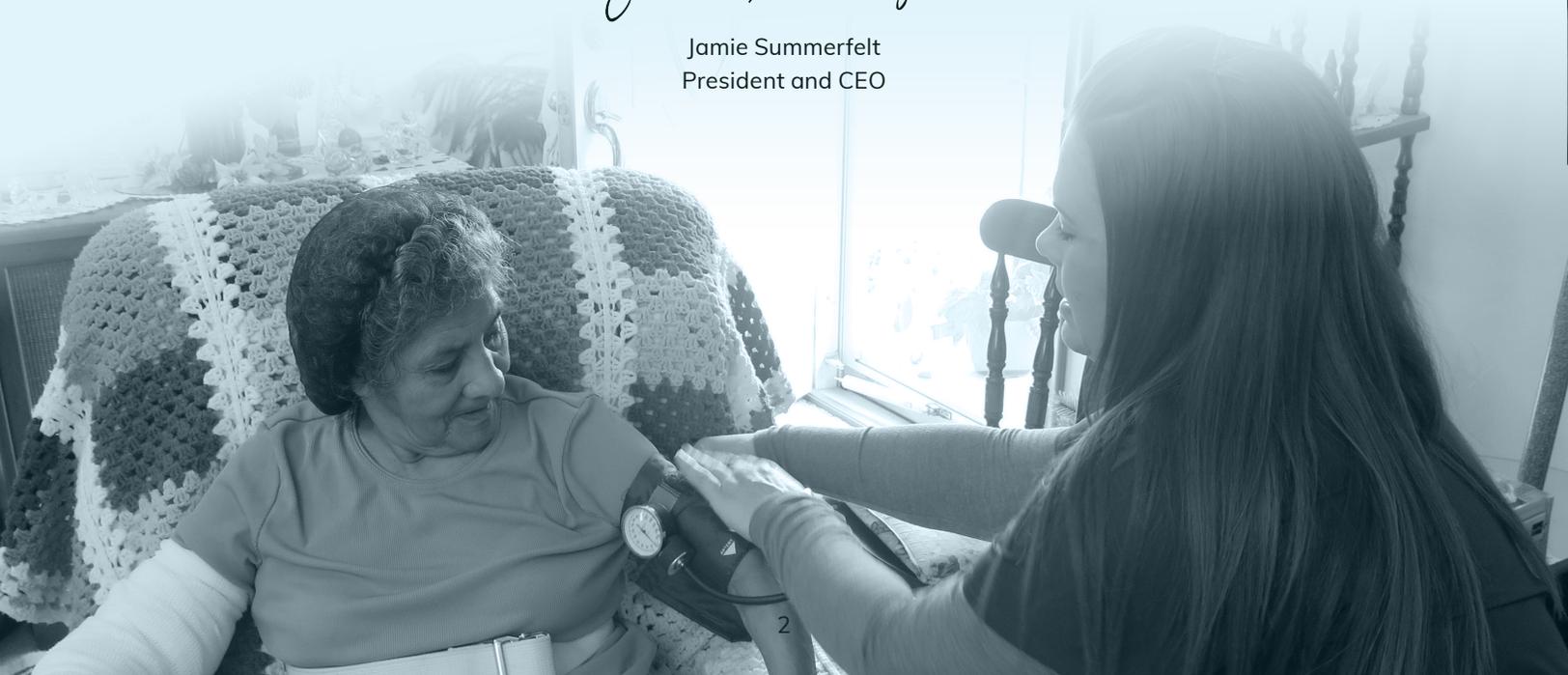
Placemaking is a current buzz word focused on the ability to help others develop a sense of home and place. It creates experiences within communities where people can gather and connect, or it helps them transform the places they already call home into nurturing spaces where they can flourish.

Placemaking is a new way of describing what VNA has been practicing for 126 years – meeting people where they are and creating space for healthcare, education, and supportive services so the underserved people in our community can thrive. You have helped us make it possible for people to transform from feeling marginalized to feeling worthy. And we need your support today more than ever.

I hope your hearts are touched by the stories of those we serve in homeless shelters, parenting programs, personal care assistance, and through Easterseals Nebraska. And as we approach the end of the year, please support our transformative work by donating generously using the attached remittance envelope or online at www.vnatoday.org/donate. With your help, lives are changed!

With gratitude –

Jamie Summerfelt
President and CEO





The Power of Their Stories

If you entered the homes of VNA clients with us, you would be immersed in our mission. You would meet adults and children who are our community's marginalized; in need of healthcare, education, and supportive services, but going without because they lack insurance and resources.

Since we can't take you into those homes, we share the stories of those who deserve quality care and support. VNA meets them where they are, and their homes are a reflection of their needs.

This is VNA. This is who we serve. These are the lives you impact.



Physician-Ordered Maternal/Infant Services: Susie

Susie is a new mother whose baby was born premature and placed in the newborn intensive care unit (NICU) for almost a month. When it was time to go home, Susie's doctor referred her to VNA's Maternal/Infant Services.

During the initial visit with Susie and her baby, she told the nurse that she was enrolled in VNA's early childhood home visitation program with another baby nine years earlier. She appreciated all that she had learned from VNA with her first child, and how it was helping her with her newborn nine years later.

Even though her baby was in the NICU, Susie felt more calm and able to use the coping strategies she learned while enrolled in the program nine years earlier. She can recall information taught to her on infant care, breastfeeding, and calming techniques, among many other things. Susie credits her past services from the VNA with the success she is having with her new baby today.



VNA helped 1,760 clients last year through Physician-Ordered Maternal/Infant services.



Camp Easterseals: Quinn

Many individuals with disabilities can't attend summer camps or recreational activities. Most camps don't have the knowledge or resources to include people with developmental, emotional, learning, medical, mental, social, or physical conditions.

Camp Easterseals Nebraska (Camp ESN) is unique because it is the only overnight recreational camp in the state of Nebraska that accepts everyone: regardless of age or level of disability.

That means Quinn participates in camp activities that are adapted to her ability. Camp ESN focuses on what people CAN do, not what they can't. The only limitations are based on physician's orders. And Quinn's two siblings also participate in the fun, because Camp ESN values the importance of family, offering the only camp experience for the entire family, no matter their abilities.



Many of our campers need financial assistance to attend Camp ESN. You can donate toward camp scholarship funding by using the remittance envelope or online at vnatoday.org/donate





VNA partners with every homeless and domestic violence shelter in Omaha and Council Bluffs. **Last year, VNA shelter nurses had 5,465 face-to-face visits with adults and children in local shelters and made 1,673 referrals to other services and community partners.**



Shelter Nursing: Marlis

Marlis Soltani is a true success story! Marlis was born and raised in California. She moved to Omaha in 2011 to live with her brother and his wife because she was struggling to make rent in California, and she lacked adequate healthcare and insurance. But after several years in Omaha living in unsanitary conditions with bedbug bites, rodents, and roaches, Marlis' doctor helped her reach out to Stephen Center. At Stephen Center, she has thrived and made strides with her healthcare. Since 2018, she has lost 89 pounds. The VNA nurse monitors her medication, blood pressure and weight weekly. Marlis is proactive with her exercise program, occupational therapy, and craft class. "I am very grateful to the collaboration of VNA, nurse Lesa, the Stephen Center staff, and programs that got me on the right path."

vna INFUSION Pharmacy : Jenna

Thank you VNA and the community of caregivers who are bringing healing and hope to those of us dealing with the life-altering, everyday challenges of chronic illnesses. Not so many years ago, I was a busy mama working 40+ hours a week, running half marathons, volunteering, and living the life I had dreamed of. Fast forward four years, I've spent 18 months straight vomiting nearly every day, crashing for days after going for a long walk, developing hives from just sitting at a ball game, and passing out in the shower. My life was ROCKED. Welcome to Dysautonomia.

Dysautonomia is a general term for chronic disorders in which the autonomic nervous system does not work as it should. Dysautonomia can affect nearly any organ or system of the body, leading to tachycardia, brain fog, dizziness, nausea, sweating, exercise intolerance, sleep disturbances, incontinence, and more. It can seriously limit a person's ability to work, socialize, and take care of typical day-to-day responsibilities, like preparing a meal or going to the grocery store.

While there is not (yet) a cure for Dysautonomia, I am blessed with a host of caregivers who help me maintain my health and well-being – including VNA's infusion pharmacy. Omaha's VNA pharmacy provides me with the supplies and education I need for home infusion in Columbus, Nebraska. I receive my weekly 2-to-3-hour restorative infusions in my own home, rather than traveling to a less comforting medical facility. Not only does this preserve my energy, reduce the stress on my body, and cost less; home-based infusions bring me more normalcy and peace of mind – both of which I cherish now more than ever.

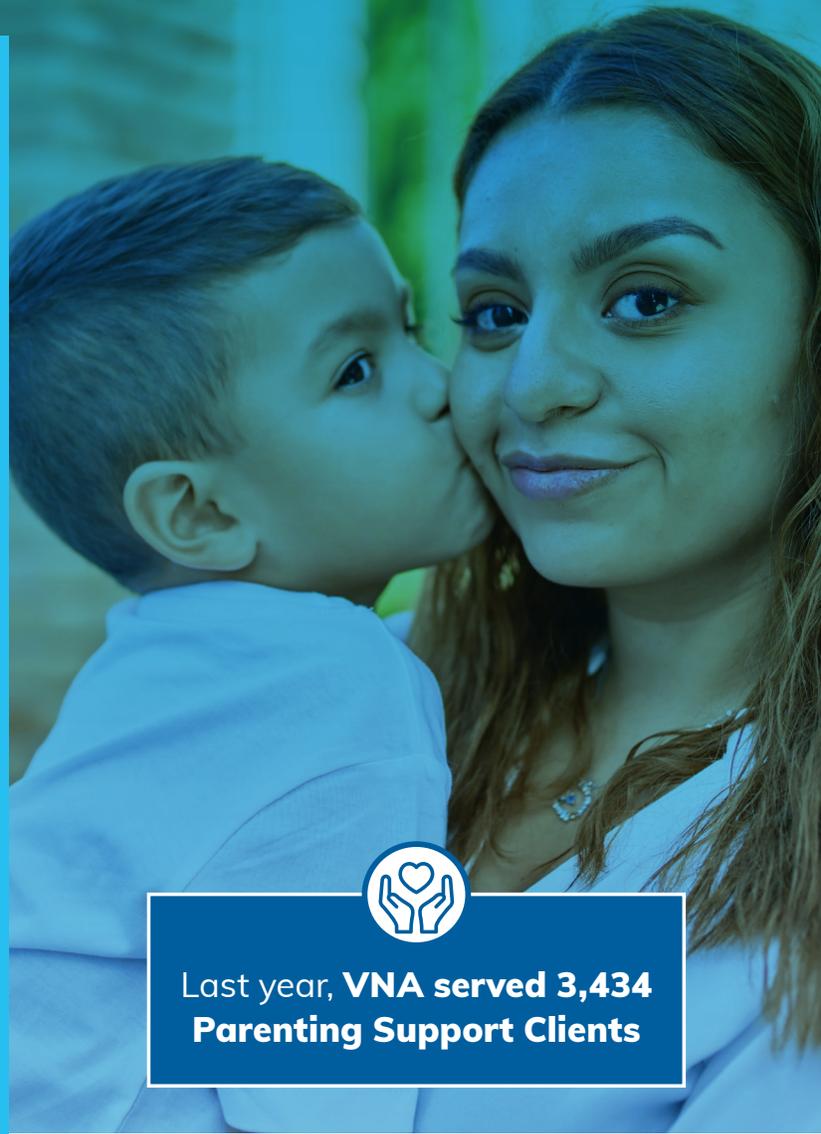
October is **Dysautonomia** Awareness Month



Healthy Families America: Kara

Kara is a single mom participating in VNA's Healthy Families American program who initially struggled with finances, depression, and bonding with her child. She didn't realize that her mental health condition and stressors negatively impacted her interactions with her child and affected his brain development. VNA helped her navigate community resources to seek mental health treatment, overcome other barriers, learn ways to cope with her depression, and bond with her child. Kara recently shared that she is less stressed and has more time to do parent/child activities. One of the things they enjoy doing together is reading, and Kara has learned from the Healthy Families America team how important reading can be to her child's development.

Kara recently re-entered the workforce and her son goes to a quality licensed daycare. She has also saved up money to pay for a lawyer with the goal of becoming a U.S. citizen. With support and expert assistance from VNA's Healthy Families America team, Kara believes she has learned many things that have increased her self-confidence and allowed her to be a better mom.



Last year, **VNA served 3,434 Parenting Support Clients**

VNA Home Health Aide services provide peace of mind, quality of life, and independence to many vulnerable older adults.



Home Health Aide: Sam

Sam is 102 years old. He was admitted to the VNA bathing program last year because gout and rheumatoid arthritis hindered his mobility, and he had a history of falls. He experiences chronic pain, has cardiac issues and a pacemaker, and has visual impairment due to macular degeneration. He uses a walker for stability and safety.

Sam lives in an independent living facility and VNA supports his goal of remaining in his own apartment without requiring a move to a higher level of care. His family provides support and assistance with medications, doctor appointments, and groceries. His meals are provided at the facility.

With Sam's fear of falls, VNA bath aides assist him with safe transfers for showers and dressing. They remind him to participate in his home exercise program to build his endurance and functional strength. Sam has developed a trusting and supportive relationship with his bath aides, and their time together provides some of the social interaction he needs as well as the bathing and personal care that is so important to his well-being.

Proud 2B a United Way Agency!



**United Way
of the Midlands**

Visiting Nurse Association has proudly partnered with United Way of the Midlands for 99 years! United Way Campaign funding helps to support VNA programs in public health nursing, parenting support, and shelter nursing.

If you donate to this year's United Way Campaign, consider designating Visiting Nurse Association as a recipient.

Golf Fore the Cause

Visiting Nurse Association hosted its inaugural Golf Fore the Cause fundraiser on Monday, September 12th at Quarry Oaks Golf Club. The outing raised over \$21,000, ensuring mothers receive pre-natal care and support for their families up until their children are 5 years old.

Stay tuned for more information on next year's Golf Fore the Cause date and location. We hope you can join us!



Art & Soup 2023

SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, APRIL 16

Art & Soup returns to the Omaha Design Center for our 26th annual fundraiser on Sunday, April 16. Please join us for this one-of-a-kind event!

- **EAT SOUP:** prepared by our community's best restaurants
- **BUY ART:** participating artists donate at least 50% of sales to VNA
- **CHANGE LIVES:** all proceeds assure there are VNA nurses in every local homeless and domestic violence shelter

Giving Tuesday is Gobbling Your Name

 **November 29, 2022**

We can't invite you to a fancy Thanksgiving meal, but we do invite you to impact the lives of individuals and families who are marginalized by donating to Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) on Giving Tuesday, November 29, 2022.

Every dollar you donate supports individuals and families who are uninsured, under-resourced, and otherwise lack access to healthcare, supportive services, and education. Whether you Gobble 4 Good on Giving Tuesday or make a donation to VNA by the end of the year, your donation will change the lives of people we serve – and we are truly grateful!

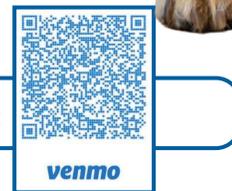
Because of you, we can serve those who deserve quality healthcare and support, even when they can't afford it.

Ways to give:

 Use the enclosed remittance envelope

 Donate online at vnatoday.org/donate

 Donate using Venmo @vnatoday or using the QR code:



Guidelines on 2022 tax deductible donations

- Individuals may deduct qualified contributions of up to 100% of their adjusted gross income.
- A corporation may deduct qualified contributions of up to 25% of its taxable income.
- Anyone 70.5 years of age or older can give up to \$100,000 as a tax-free gift in the form of a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), from their traditional IRA account. If you have check writing features on your IRA, please be aware that your check must clear your account by December 31 to count toward your required minimum distribution for the calendar year.
- Consult your tax advisor for guidance.
- If you have questions for VNA related to this information or making donations via Donor Advised Funds, Charitable Gift Annuities, or Planned Giving, contact Lisa Bradley at 402-930-4225 or lbradley@vnatoday.org.