As the population continues to age rapidly, the need for home health, hospice, and supportive services will only increase. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly one-third of NH residents will be over the age of 65 by 2030. At the same time, the available workforce is shrinking. This “perfect storm” requires us to dedicate significant resources to recruit, retain, and compensate quality staff to care for our community in this highly competitive environment.

From the Concord Monitor, October 2018: “The NH healthcare industry has been ravaged by nursing workforce shortages in recent years: 1,309 openings exist for RNs across the state. Numbers suggest the demand is likely to persist: the State is estimated to have 1,169 open positions for LPNs annually through 2026. And long-term projections 2016 – 2026, based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Employment Statistics (OES), show an increase for positions including community health workers (22.2%) and home health aides (37%).

Our Fund for Excellence will help secure additional resources for ongoing staff education and professional growth as listed below. Doing so not only promotes retention, it also is an important recruitment tool.

- LNA Scholarship Fund
- Certifications in specialty areas including IV Therapy, Hospice, Wound Care, Palliative Care and more
- Continuing education including conferences, workshops and webinars
- Tuition reimbursement for approved coursework
- Staff wellness and self-care programs
- Ongoing competitive staff benefits

“Continuing education is so very important to clinicians because it builds and fine-tunes skill sets that allow us to find the ‘just-right’ tool to help our patients achieve their goals. One single approach cannot meet the needs of all patients. Each client presents with unique problems, histories, strengths and personal goals that require a little something different every time.”

- Tammy Astle, Occupational Therapist

“Being a hospice nurse allows me the blessing of providing patients with an optimal quality of life and learning what is important to them. I am their nurse and advocate. Having the ability to further one’s knowledge and expertise promotes excellence in patient care. At LSRVNA we achieve this excellence by attending educational seminars and professional conferences, and by securing advanced certifications in specialty areas. The active hospice care provider requires continuing education to understand evolving standards of practice medically and holistically.”

- Sonya Kay kendall, RN

“Lake Sunapee VNA & Hospice is without a doubt the greatest asset to our ill and aging community. The professional and compassionate care given to every client is beyond compare. I could not be more proud to be part of such an exceptional team!”

- Donna Newton, Personal Care Service Provider
Letter to the Community

Compassion, Community, Empowerment, Excellence ... these are the core values that the organization has identified as being reflective of who we are and what we do. The process of revisiting our values engaged our entire team over the past year through surveys, events and special team meetings. These values are the touchstones that truly define how we provide care to every person, how we work with our communities and, most importantly, how we work together. They help define our culture.

Home care and hospice is hard work. In addition, the number of people who need home care and hospice services is slowly, but very surely, beginning to surpass the ability of healthcare organizations to find thoughtful, qualified staff to meet the community need. With this in mind, it’s crucial that LSRSVNA continues to promote a culture where we are the place that home care and hospice staff choose to work, where we create an atmosphere of professionalism and support in which staff feel valued in what they do and how they do it. The culture of an organization is what drives success. We recognize this, celebrate this and invest in our culture to ensure continued strength.

Jim Culhane, President & CEO

HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS... because every moment matters

Volunteers are an essential part of the hospice team, providing compassion and support for hospice patients and their families. Volunteers engage in patients' hobbies and special interests, sit and talk, listen to patients and family members in need of a caring ear, provide respite for full-time caregivers in need of a break and more. Because of the deeply personal and often complex issues at end-of-life, hospice volunteers are required to complete at least 16 hours of training so that they understand and are well-equipped to help make every moment matter for patients and families.

Topics Covered at the Hospice Volunteer Training:

- What is hospice
- What does a hospice volunteer do
- Patient symptoms and the comfort kit
- Boundaries
- Family dynamics
- Spirituality
- Bereavement
- Self-care

"I wanted to thank you for making every class so enjoyable. I’ll be the first to admit that the last thing I want to do after working all day is to go back out during the evening. However, never once have I complained about going to your trainings. I love your enthusiasm, compassion and understanding. I am so sad that our classes are over soon. Yes, it means I can get started but the bond I feel we have all made is amazing. How did that happen? – The emotions I feel towards this whole experience thus far is beyond words." - Andrea Wilson, Hospice Volunteer Trainer

Other volunteer opportunities:

- Flu Clinics
- Good Day Respite Program
- Office Support
- The Renaisance Shoppe

For more information contact Lori O’Connor, Volunteer Manager 603-526-4077 • loconnor@lakesunapeevna.org

STAFF NEWS

Meet Our New Hospice Team Leaders

Jen Taylor, MSN, APRN, AGNP-C joined our team in June 2019 as Hospice & Palliative Care Program Director. As a nurse practitioner with a certification in adult-gerontology, Jen brings a great depth of knowledge and passion to this role. Jen received her bachelor’s degree in nursing from Colby-Sawyer College and began her career in the cardiac unit at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. She continued her education to obtain both a master’s in nursing and a nurse practitioner certification from Duke University, and during that time worked at LSRSVNA as an RN case manager for home care and hospice patients. After finishing school, Jen taught in the nursing program at Colby-Sawyer College. She then returned to LSRSVNA as a staff educator and nurse practitioner in the hospice and palliative care program. Most recently, she was a nurse practitioner in Neurology Associates at Concord Hospital, caring for patients with multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer’s disease. “When the opportunity came up to join LSRSVNA again, I was thrilled to return to home hospice and palliative care. I am very excited to be working with a highly skilled and compassionate team.”

Lori Richer, MD came to Lake Sunapee Region VNA & Hospice in July 2019 as Hospice and Palliative Care Medical Director. Dr. Richer grew up in Newport and returned to the area after earning her medical degree at the University of Utah. She completed her residency with the NH Dartmouth Family Medicine Residency program and was a primary care physician (PCP) in the New London area from 2006-2018. As a PCP, Dr. Richer was drawn to taking care of patients in the last phase of life in conjunction with their hospice caregivers. That led her to pursue a fellowship in Hospice and Palliative Care at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and transition to that specialty. She says, “I am really excited to be back in the community caring for people in this capacity,” she says. Hospice focuses on physical, emotional and spiritual comfort, so individuals with a life limiting illness can live their last phase of life to the fullest wherever they call home. Dr. Richer works closely with the entire LSRSVNA hospice team – nurses, therapists, social workers, aides, spiritual counselors and volunteers – in the care of hospice patients. Palliative care focuses on the conversation and navigation of serious illness. Dr. Richer can assess palliative patients in the home setting, working closely with other medical providers to achieve optimal symptom control and other goals of care.