

**Question:** I know that VNAs have nurses to care for you when you are sick. What other services can a VNA provide to me or my loved one at home? Submitted by K.L.

**Answer:** The services that are offered by a home care agency can vary from agency to agency. Here at Greater Medford VNA, we offer a full complement of skilled services as well as private pay supportive services.

I will further elaborate for you. Anyone receiving skilled home care services must be under the care of a physician and the services provided by the VNA must be overseen by the physician, who is responsible for not only ordering the care, but overseeing the care plan.

The skilled services that GMVNA offers include the following:

- Skilled Nursing Services: The skilled nurse can teach patients about their disease, medications, treatments etc. They can also perform procedures such as wound care, tracheostomy care, medication administration, intravenous infusions etc.
- Physical Therapy Services: The physical therapist can teach patients how to ambulate safely, how to improve strength or endurance, provide pre-operative care for a joint replacement, assist with rehab following joint replacement surgery, assess for safety adaptations and equipment that may be required in the home, teach therapeutic exercises etc.
- Occupational Therapy Services: The occupational therapist can teach patients techniques to assist with activities of daily living such as bathing, dressing and grooming etc. They can evaluate a patient's need for adaptive equipment, as well as teach a patient techniques to help improve cognitive function. They can work with patients on upper extremity therapeutic exercises, as well as energy conservation techniques etc.
- Speech Therapy Services: The speech therapist can assist patients to learn how to talk, how to communicate in means other than verbal speech (if they will not be able to speak again), they can assist with cognitive re-training, assist patients who have difficulty swallowing etc.
- Medical Social Workers: The social worker can help patients who need emotional support, organization of finances, planning for future needs, assisting with applications for housing, assisting patients with health insurance applications, access to community services etc.
- Additionally Para-Professional services, which are home health aide services are offered under the skilled services division. Home health aide services are provided by certified home health aides who assist patients with bathing and activities of daily living such as dressing and toileting. The home health aide can encourage patients to do the exercises that were taught by the therapist etc.

Some Visiting Nurse Associations, like here at Greater Medford VNA, also offer private pay supportive services. Private services are based according to your own scheduling needs and preferences. Private services include: personal care, meal preparation, medication reminders, laundry, light housekeeping, medical escort for doctors appointments and respite care. Services are available for few hours a day, or 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As you can see there is a wide range of services that a VNA can provide. It is best to be knowledgeable about the services a VNA can provide and remember you have the right to choose the VNA that will provide services to you or a loved one.

— Marie Knasas is the executive director of the Greater Medford VNA.

Comments (0)

Login or register to post a comment:

## Login

Username:

Password:

[Forgot password](#)