

# HOME HEALTH MONTH

**“PRESERVING HEALTH INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM”**

*The National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) celebrates National Home Care Month, National Hospice Month, and Home Care Aide Week each November to honor the caregivers who make such a difference in the lives of the patients and families they serve.*

## WHAT'S NEW IN HOME HEALTH CARE?

Approximately 7.6 million individuals currently receive home health care from 17,700 providers because of acute illness, long-term health conditions, permanent disability, or terminal illness, with annual expenditures of over \$53 billion.

The current Administration's FY 2008 budget includes reductions in Medicare home health payments by more than \$8.6 billion over five years, despite their desire to prioritize health care in the home as a cost-effective alternative to institutional care. These cuts follow up ten years of substantial reductions in Medicare home health spending.

According to Yvonne Santa Anna, Director of Government Affairs for the House of Representatives, stated that there are approximately 6,000 home care providers out of 8,659 that are considered small business, with an average Medicare reimbursement of just under \$1.5 million per year. She stated “If the proposed cuts are implemented, 51.8% of the nation's home health agencies' Medicare margins will drop below zero by 2011.”

If you have concerns about how these cuts may impact your access to home health care, please contact your legislators or call Panhandle Home Health for more information.



*The people who work at Panhandle Home Health are committed to our community and greatly appreciate the support the Eastern Panhandle provides. It's more than just commitment to an idea ... it's a commitment to the community.*

# MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

As we celebrate National Home Care and Hospice Month, I would like to thank all of the dedicated home care and hospice workers for their important contribution to the community. Their dedication and compassion allow home health agencies and hospice to provide patients and their families with high quality care.



Lisa Bivens, RN

Because a large portion of Panhandle Home Health's revenue is through Medicare reimbursement, the proposed cuts to the Medicare Home Health benefit are critical. The Agency relies heavily on Medicare funding to cover operating expenses. We are preparing for this potential reduction in a variety of ways.

If you've been down Old Mill Road in Martinsburg recently, you've certainly noticed our new office facility. This new facility is being constructed in an effort to help control our expenses, to improve efficiency in the work environment, and to make better use of our funds. We want to ensure that our Agency remains the preferred referral source for home health care needs in this community.

We are a non profit, United Way agency, meaning that we accept donations in addition to private insurance, Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements. If you would like to make a donation to Panhandle Home Health, please use the enclosed envelope. The Agency has a limited number of tax credits offered by the State of West Virginia which significantly reduce the cost of your donation. You can call our offices at 304-263-5680 or visit our website for more information. Thank you for your support of Panhandle Home Health and the home health industry!



[www.PanhandleHomeHealth.org](http://www.PanhandleHomeHealth.org)



*Our mission is to provide the community with high quality home health services and to link individuals with available resources.*

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