



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

Pediatric

CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS OF BAYADA AND FAMILY MEMBERS



BAYADA Pediatrics Nurse Mat Gunkel, RN

Our Commitment to Your Safety During COVID-19 and Government Vaccination Mandates

At BAYADA, our mission is, and always has been, *to help people have a safe home life with comfort, independence, and dignity*. This mission is the driving force behind BAYADA's Infection Prevention Program, which provides the highest standards of infection prevention practices as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Our comprehensive infection prevention strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic include the following:

COVID-19 Vaccination

Although more and more Americans have access to the vaccine, we still are seeing COVID-19 cases across the country. BAYADA fully supports and promotes the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine and prioritizes the health and safety of our employees and clients.

We also recognize and respect our clinicians' personal beliefs and preferences, however we must follow all federal, state, regional, local, and territorial mandates and executive orders regarding the vaccine. As an accredited and a regulated, certified, and licensed home health care provider, BAYADA always complies with government mandates and executive orders.

Proactive Steps to Keep You Safe

We have taken several proactive steps to help ensure you will continue to receive uninterrupted care with the highest professional, ethical, and safety standards, including:

- Informing clinicians of state and area vaccine mandates
- Promoting the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine to our clinicians
- Providing ongoing COVID-19 testing for clinicians who are unvaccinated as permitted by the state or area mandate

- Reinforcing our stance on state and area vaccine mandates with prospective new hires to help ensure we are hiring more clinicians to provide uninterrupted client care
- Continuing to advocate on your behalf with the government to identify solutions that will preserve your safety and the continuity of care you need and deserve
- Contacting you directly should we anticipate any gaps in service coverage resulting from a vaccination mandate and talking through contingency plans

COVID-19 Core Safety Strategies

The vaccine is only one component of our comprehensive safety strategies. Our unvaccinated clinicians who meet state and area requirements for unvaccinated individuals can safely provide client care by following our other safety strategies, just as they have prior to the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine. These include:

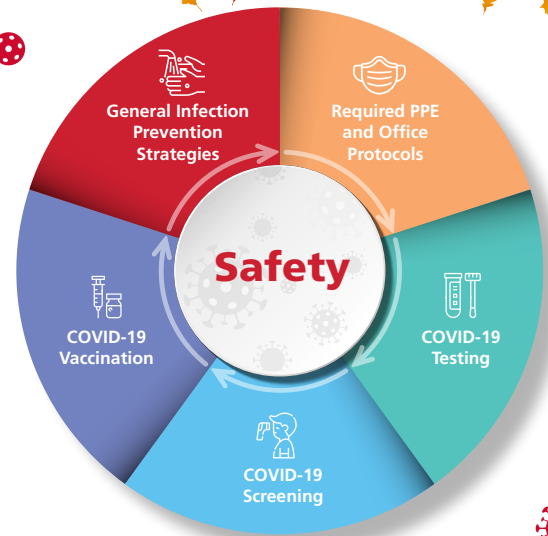
- **Training and Education:** All clinicians receive annual training on our Infection Prevention Program and education on our safety protocols throughout the year to ensure the safety of both our clients and employees.
- **Personal Protective Equipment:** BAYADA implemented personal protective equipment (PPE) standards that exceed standard precautions for the care of all clients, regardless of a client's symptoms or risk factors. All clinicians wear a surgical mask and eye protection at a minimum when entering a client's home.

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- **COVID-19 Testing:** BAYADA adheres to all state regulations related to mandatory COVID-19 testing for clinicians.
- **COVID-19 Screening:** BAYADA requires both client and clinician screening before engaging in client care, and we screen every individual before they may enter a BAYADA office.

To learn more about our efforts to keep you safe, visit bayada.com/covid19 or scan the QR code.



Champions Among Us: Fighting for Sophia



Julie C. lovingly describes her granddaughter **Sophia** as sassy. The four-year-old insists on picking out her own clothes and watching her favorite TV shows, which include *Glee* and *Descendants*. In keeping with her love of music, the toy Sophia loves most is a castle that plays a song from the movie *Frozen*. Sophia is one of only 90 known people in the world who have a rare, incurable, genetic condition called TBCK. The disease causes seizures, fragile bones, and no muscle tone, leaving her unable to walk, sit, stand, or talk. She lets Julie and her mother **Rachel** know what she wants by nodding, raising her eyebrows, and using an eye communication device. Sophia requires a tracheostomy and ventilator to breathe and a gastronomy tube to eat. Although she is authorized for 112 hours of home care nursing a week, the family has struggled to find nurses who have the skills to meet her complex medical needs.

A Terrifying Option

“In North Carolina, home care agencies receive low reimbursement rates, making it hard for them attract high-tech nurses who can make up to \$15 or more per hour in a hospital,” said Julie, who wrote a letter to every legislator in NC to advocate for higher rates. “People with medically complex children are forced to either quit their jobs or put their child in a facility, and neither option is best for the child. My job is to protect Sophia and give her the best quality life, and the only way to do that is with home care nursing.”

While Sophia has nursing coverage for most of the week,

Julie, who has a full-time job, devotes her weekends to caring for Sophia since there has not been a nurse available to do so. When they don’t have a nurse, Rachel stays up to monitor Sophia at night so that Julie can sleep and continue to work. They were able to find a nurse who can care for Sophia twice a month on Sundays, so Julie now has two days off per month which she uses to catch up on sleep.

The shortage of home care nurses is terrifying to Julie. “I am exhausted all the time, both physically and emotionally drained,” she said. “We worry daily we may miss something in caring for Sophia, which could lead to a hospitalization with poor outcomes.”

Helping to Make a Difference

In addition to writing to state legislators, Julie shared Sophia’s story with the media, started a Facebook page to find other families, and joined a Facebook parent group that helped raise money to fund a TBCK research position at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

Julie encourages families with medically fragile children to get involved in advocacy. “We have to be heard to make change, and we shouldn’t let someone else speak for us,” she said. “Let your inner lion or lioness be heard, let them hear you roar!”

There are many ways to get involved in home care advocacy, from attending meetings with legislators, to sending emails, to participating in events. For more information, visit heartsforhomecare.com or scan the QR code.



Take Care of Those Who Take Care of You By Expressing Appreciation



Recognition is the cornerstone of BAYADA's caring culture, which is why we have many ways to recognize and show appreciation for the clinicians who help you *have, a safe home life with compassion, excellence, and reliability.*

2021 Mission Possible Contest for Clinicians

If you have clinicians whom you truly value and appreciate for making a positive impact on you and your family, you can submit an entry on their behalf for the 2021 Mission Possible Contest for Clinicians.

The contest gives you the opportunity to express your gratitude, while giving your clinicians the chance to win amazing cash prizes. The contest runs through November 28. You can honor as many clinicians as you'd like as often as you'd like, provided each entry is for a distinct action. Submit an entry by visiting bayada.com/contest or simply calling your office.

The BAYADA Hero Program

The Hero Program is at the heart of our BAYADA recognition initiatives. This program honors home clinicians who exceed the highest standards of quality care and work ethic. BAYADA clients and their families can nominate any heroes on the front lines who provide direct care—from nurses, therapists,

home health aides, habilitation technicians, behavioral health professionals, and all those in between. Heroes are celebrated quarterly at the office, division, and national levels. From the quarterly National Heroes, BAYADA chooses four National Heroes of the Year to be recognized in front of nearly 3,000 employees during the company's annual Awards Weekend. To nominate a Hero, visit bit.ly/bayada-hero or bit.ly/Spanish-Hero.

Honorable Mentions

An Honorable Mention can be given to any BAYADA employee who has gone the extra mile to help, either by providing direct care in the homes of our clients or by providing support in the office. Stories are shared within the organization regularly as a source of recognition and inspiration to all.

To honor your clinicians or a member of your office team, visit bit.ly/Honorable-Mention.

In addition to our official recognition programs, a call to your office to express appreciation for your clinicians is always welcome. Thank you for considering a gift of thanks and recognition during this holiday season. Your kind words of gratitude will help those who care for you feel cared for, too!

Holidays and Your Special Needs Child: Tips to Avoid Holiday Stress



With all its magic, the holiday season has a way of becoming overly busy, even in the best of circumstances. Every year, we try to pace ourselves and remain focused on what matters most: time with loved ones, creating meaningful memories, and getting the break we need to “reset” for a new year.

This year, as there is still risk of transmission from COVID-19, is another chance to reimagine traditions that can maximize the joys of the season and minimize the holiday stress.

With a special needs child, keep it simple!

From shopping to decorating, some traditions of the past may seem difficult to accomplish during the COVID-19 pandemic. Scaling back and creating your own mix of old and new holiday traditions, and asking all of your children for input, can

be a great way to reconnect and refocus this season on the family fun, memories, and joy of giving that matter most.

Prepare your family for the holiday season

Once you have some plans for the holidays, take time to make the whole family as happy and comfortable with your agenda as possible. Informal daily briefings during mealtimes, for example, are one way to discuss what is going to happen and what to pack for maximum comfort. Color-coded calendars can visually remind children of plans and help them focus on what they can do to contribute. Photos of friends and family, with or without masks, can get children ready for the faces they will see. If a video gathering is coming up, practice among yourselves ahead of time.

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Content in this newsletter is provided as general summary information for our clients and is not intended to take the place of personalized medical guidance. We encourage you to seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care professional if you have specific questions about your care. BAYADA specialty practices include Home Health Care, Pediatrics, Hospice, Behavioral Health, and Habilitation. Services may vary by location. S0194 25885735 REV 10/21. © BAYADA Home Health Care, 2021.

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Your child's health care professionals, teachers and therapists can help you brainstorm preparations, activities, supplies, and resources that can help your extra special child get the most out of winter break.

Make arrangements early for your special needs child

Holidays are a time to catch up on the milestones of the past year. A call or holiday card to extended family members can let them know how you and your family are doing *before* a planned gathering. Reaching out also gives you a chance to share any medical or environmental considerations with your host and give loved ones some conversation starters for your children—a courtesy everyone appreciates. Consider asking for a job each child can do to feel engaged, plan to take turns giving special attention to each child, or ask what space in the home you can use for medical care or a quiet timeout, if needed.

As with most things, holidays require more time and effort with special medical considerations, but the rewards can be outsized in equal measure. Happy holidays!

For inspiration, now is a great time to listen to this holiday episode of our *Clayton's Voice* podcast. Host Shelby Myers' son Clayton was a BAYADA client; now she is a beloved family advisor, advocate, and founder of a support group. She and her mother Judy McGrath draw on personal experience as they share advice for asking extended family for support and help during the holiday season.



Listen to the episode by visiting bit.ly/Claytons-Voice or scanning the QR code.

