



# Pediatric CARE Connection

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## Recognize Your BAYADA Caregivers!

*The BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers is underway*

*We believe that our employees are our greatest asset because they are the heart of home care. They have compassion, strive for excellence, provide reliable service, and most importantly, they show love. As such, the BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers has been designed to honor those field employees who love what they do.*

Many of you have asked how you can recognize your BAYADA caregivers. Here's your chance!

We encourage you and your family members to submit contest tickets (enclosed in this publication) on behalf of your BAYADA caregivers when they *show love* in the work they do. Your submission will give your BAYADA caregivers a chance to win weekly runner-up and grand prizes—ranging from BAYADA apparel to thousands of dollars in Visa gift cards!

### How to participate

To recognize your BAYADA caregivers, simply choose one of the following methods:

- Fill out and mail the enclosed, postage-paid contest tickets
- Call your BAYADA office to make a verbal entry
- Fill out the enclosed tickets and return them to your BAYADA office
- Submit a digital ticket online by visiting [bayada.com/contest](http://bayada.com/contest)

We look forward to your participation! ■



BAYADA 2017 Contest for Caregivers

### Important dates:

- Contest begins December 11, 2017
- Contest ends February 18, 2018
- The drawings for the runner-up and grand-prize winners will be held on March 8, 2018

## Your Voice Makes a Difference



In October, you should have received via email your annual *Heartbeat of Home Care Client Experience Survey*. If you have opted out of email, your survey will be mailed to your home address.

We encourage you to please take a few moments to complete the survey. This is a valuable opportunity for you to let us know what's working, and how we can continue to improve our services.

### Grand prize drawing

Each client who completes the survey and shares their contact information will be entered into a raffle to win a free, two-hour family photo shoot with a professional photographer! The package includes 10 digital prints and an 8" x 10" framed photo.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your office director. ■



## Pediatric Nurse Residency Program Earns Accreditation

BAYADA Pediatrics created a Pediatric Nurse Residency Program as part of our ongoing commitment to recruit and retain the best and brightest nurses to care for our clients. The program's goal is to prepare recent nurse graduates for their transition into a professional nursing role in pediatric home care, where they can help fill open shifts and allow BAYADA to care for more clients.

Four years since its inception, the program has earned national honors for becoming one of the most comprehensive training programs in the country. **The BAYADA Pediatrics RN Nurse Residency Program was awarded Accreditation with Distinction, the highest recognition awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Accreditation Program.**

### Parents welcome nurse residents into their homes

For parents like **Cindy M.**, this remarkable achievement comes as no surprise. She has welcomed a number of nurse residents into her home to help care for her daughter, **Hailey**, 8, who has quadriplegia and receives food and medications through a feeding tube.

"The nurse residency program gives new nurses the chance to learn from being there in a real situation and real circumstances," said Cindy. "You get quality home care by allowing the nurse residents to see what it's like in real life. I feel it makes the residents better nurses."

Thanks to parents like Cindy who opened their doors to the nurse residents, BAYADA incorporated client visits as a core component of the Residency Program's curriculum. "I was never nervous about letting the residents be involved with Hailey's care because the nurse preceptor was always with them," Cindy shared.

The 12-week, intensive program also includes:

- Simulation lab training using computerized manikins to practice assessments, develop skills, and enhance critical thinking during medical emergency scenarios



Nurse Residency Program graduate Yulisa Viera is pictured with her client Sara.



Brittany Morgan, RN, (in red) trains in the Pediatric Simulation Lab with BAYADA Clinical Manager Cristina Gomes.

- A registered nurse clinical manager who provides mentoring and one-on-one support
- Designated nurse preceptors who facilitate on-the-job training
- Clinical training on diagnoses and topics related to pediatric home care nursing

### Program graduates are reliable and committed nurses

**Allison Mantzas**, associate director of the BAYADA Pediatrics office in Passaic County, NJ, says that her office saw the Residency Program as a creative way to combat the nursing shortage. Allison, along with BAYADA Clinical Educator **Ann Bunone**, RN, and BAYADA Clinical Manager **Andrea Caoile**, RN, feel that graduates of the program show a higher level of commitment to increasing their skills and working with clients who have more complex needs.

"It's fortunate that we have a number of parents who are happy to have the nurse residents train in their home," said Allison. "They know that the residents will become reliable, committed nurses who will be there to take care of their children."

Nurses like **Yulisa Viera**, LPN, are proof positive of the Residency Program's success. Following graduation from nursing school, she jumped at the opportunity to join the Passaic County Pediatrics office as a nurse resident.

"I always wanted to do home care, and pediatrics was where I wanted to be," said Yulisa. "The program gave me really good training in the lab, classroom, and clients' homes with a nurse preceptor. The parents were really welcoming."

Today, as a Residency Program graduate, Yulisa cares for clients during the overnight shift and goes to school during the day to

become an RN. "I love what I am doing now," she said. "It makes me feel accomplished in the career I have chosen for life."

**Brittany Morgan**, RN, a graduate of the Residency Program in Providence, RI, also wanted to work with children and considers BAYADA a perfect fit. "The program really appealed to me because I like to learn and expand my knowledge. It gave me the skills and confidence to be on my own and to handle any situation," she said. "I had great nurse educators who trained me to be the nurse who I wanted to be."

In fact, Brittany's training inspired her to explore nurse mentoring and leadership opportunities. She is in the process of transitioning to the office-based clinical associate role, and eventually would like to become a clinical manager so that she can help train new nurses to also become the best they can be.

### Exceeding our greatest expectations

BAYADA Director **Ashley Sadlier** gives credit to BAYADA Clinical Manager **Cristina Gomes** from our Rhode Island office for successfully implementing the Residency Program in her office and sparking the passion of nurses like Brittany.

"Cristina develops a one-on-one personal connection with the nurse residents," said Ashley. "She also gives the parents a chance to meet them and get to know them. When the nurses graduate, the parents get to see how highly skilled and committed they are to their child. Now, families openly welcome new nurse residents into their home to train. It's a win-win situation for both the nurse residents and the clients."

In Rhode Island, graduates of the Nurse Residency Program are now filling open shifts, something that Ashley never thought would be possible. "Our nurses are meeting and exceeding our greatest expectations!" ■

# BAYADA Pediatrics Care Connect Electronic Documentation

## *What you need to know*

In the last issue of *Pediatric CARE Connection*, you read about the launch of our new electronic documentation system. Branded as BAYADA Pediatrics Care Connect, the new system provides you with the latest technology available for patient care documentation.

BAYADA Pediatrics is in the process of rolling out the new technology in phases to pediatric offices throughout the country. The new system will include a user-friendly tablet that the home health care professionals will use to document care for your child.

Understandably, many families of our pediatric clients have questions about the new system. The following FAQs are intended to respond to your questions and concerns. If you have any additional questions, please call your office director.

### **Q. How will this system improve care for my child?**

**A.** The accuracy of clinical documentation improves significantly when completed at the point of care. Implementing electronic documentation for our pediatric clients will further ensure that our employees complete their documentation while they are performing care. Completed documentation is essential to ensure that your insurance continues to authorize care.

Further, client experience surveys completed by our pediatric families have told us that your main concern and priority is continuing to ensure reliability and coverage for your child's authorized hours. Similarly, our nurses and home health aides report on their employee satisfaction surveys that their job satisfaction has significantly improved due to the use of electronic documentation in the field.

We believe that the use of this cloud-based mobile application will continue to improve employee job satisfaction, further ensuring that we are able to provide your child with the consistent and reliable care that you expect.

### **Q. Will I have access to the information that is stored on the tablet?**

**A.** Yes. Your family will be provided with a login to the mobile device, which will give you access to a minimum of the last 20 document submissions, and a maximum of 60 days' worth of documentation at any time.

### **Q. Who else will have access to the information that is stored on the tablet? Will the system ensure that my child's records are kept private?**

**A.** Your tablet will be kept with your child at all times. Only those employees or your family who have access to the physical tablet will have the ability to document or view what is on it. No protected health information (PHI) of yours or your child's will ever be stored on the tablet. BAYADA also provides mobile security management (Mobi) on every tablet that allows us to access and shut down, lock, and clear the mobile device in the event that the tablet is ever lost or stolen.

Your confidentiality and privacy are of utmost importance. BAYADA's tablet meets the privacy requirements detailed in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In addition, the tablet is password protected and all transmission of information is encrypted.

### **Q. Are the tablets difficult to use? Is training available to learn how to use the tablets?**

**A.** To ensure a smooth transition from paper to electronic documentation, ease of use was a priority in designing and configuring BAYADA Pediatrics Care Connect to be as simple as possible to use for both our field employees and clients. During the six-month pilot, users rated BAYADA Pediatrics Care Connect highest in the categories of "ease of use" and "easy to adapt." Your service office will help you orient to the use of the tablet and viewing your child's documents once you begin using the tablet in your home.

### **Q. How will this system improve communication between my child's service office and me?**



Clinical Manager Alexis Lockard with the BAYADA Pittsburgh, PA Pediatrics office, uses the new tablet as she cares for her client, Sully.

**A.** BAYADA Pediatrics Care Connect will ensure that your child's care documentation will be typed and completed at point of care and submitted by our employees at the end of their shift, allowing your service office team (clinical manager and client services manager) to review the documentation in a much more timely and efficient way than on paper. Timely reporting of infection, respiratory issues, and incidents in the home has already resulted in more intervention from our clinical support team, when needed.

### **Q. How will this system help to fill more nursing shifts for my child?**

**A.** The nurses and aides who were involved in the pilot study were overwhelmingly positive about this user-friendly tool. It is our hope that this new technology will help us attract and retain more of the best and brightest nurses and aides to meet your child's staffing needs.

### **Q. What if the tablet is broken, lost, or stolen? Is my family financially liable for the tablet?**

**A.** The tablet is an important part of your child's care. You are responsible to care for and secure the tablet at all times, just as you would with your child's personal health records. **Please report any and all damage or loss of the tablet to your BAYADA service office immediately.** If the tablet is damaged by a member of the family, BAYADA does reserve the right to request payment for the costs to repair or replace the tablet. However, this always will be discussed and reviewed with you on a case-by-case basis. ■

# An Ordinary Family, Extraordinary Challenges

*Two years after her birth, Adeline and her family celebrate life at home*

When it came time to plan a party to celebrate her daughter **Adeline's** second birthday, **Deborah (Deb)**

**A.** didn't take long to decide on a theme. It had to be, without a doubt, a Tinkerbell party.

"Adeline watches the *Tinkerbell* movie at least once a day, and she has to watch it through the credits because she likes the music that they play," shared Deb. "She absolutely loves it. She has Tinkerbell toys, Tinkerbell everything!"

For Deb and her husband **Tom**, something as ordinary as having friends and family to their home for a birthday party for Adeline was something they never thought would be possible. Born with a rare disorder that created a large hole in her diaphragm, causing all of her internal organs to migrate into her chest cavity, Adeline's tiny body left no room for her lungs to form properly. The baby spent the majority of her young life in the hospital. Today, thanks to her home care nurses from BAYADA Pediatrics, Adeline can live safely at home, where she is thriving.

## A rare and unexpected diagnosis

The couple first learned of their daughter's condition during Deb's pregnancy, when an ultrasound at 20 weeks revealed some troubling news.

"The doctor told us that Adeline appeared to have a congenital diaphragmatic hernia," Deb explained. "They only gave her a 60 percent chance of surviving. Our hearts sank."

A few weeks after her birth at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), Adeline had surgery to repair her diaphragm and move her internal organs where they should be. However, the baby continued to face challenges. "Her eyes couldn't focus on anything, and she had extreme feeding difficulties which required a feeding tube," said



Deb enjoys a quiet moment with Adeline



BAYADA Nurse Victoria (Torie) Devorak engages Adeline in therapeutic play

Deb. "We consulted with the CHOP genetics team, and that led to another diagnosis of Coffin-Siris syndrome. It's very rare; there have only been about 200 documented cases since the 1970s."

Adeline spent the next 10 months in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at CHOP. When they were finally told that their baby could be discharged, the couple was excited, but worried about the unknowns of what life would be like at home.

## Discovering the world of home care nursing

"It wasn't until she started getting closer to her discharge that we even started talking about home care," said Deb. "It just never even crossed our minds. I never knew about nurses in the home. I never knew that this whole world even existed."

Deb and Tom signed on with a home care agency, but unfortunately, Adeline stayed at home for only five weeks because ongoing complications led to another hospital admission, which lasted about six months. This time, Deb and Tom were better educated about home care, and they insisted on using a different agency when the time came to bring Adeline home again. They chose BAYADA Pediatrics.

Before Adeline's discharge, BAYADA Transitional Care Manager **Mary Simrell**, RN, worked with the local

BAYADA Pediatrics office to ensure the baby would have a smooth transition from the hospital to home. Deb, who sat in Adeline's room all day, every day for months, appreciated Mary's visits.

"Mary stopped by pretty much every day to check in," shared Deb. "She really cared about not just Adeline, but about Tom and me. Her constant presence made me more comfortable with the decision to choose BAYADA."

## Advanced training brings peace of mind

Once they were home with Adeline, Deb and Tom welcomed the BAYADA nursing team into their home 16 hours a day. Deb was so impressed with their high-tech skills, she was reassured that she made the right decision in choosing BAYADA.

She recounted how a frightening incident on the way to a therapy appointment was calmly and expertly handled by one of Adeline's nurses: "We were in the parking lot ready to take her out of the car when one of her oxygen tanks malfunctioned," shared Deb. "Adeline is very dependent on oxygen, so it could have been a huge emergency. But the nurse knew what to do, and Adeline was ok. When I asked her later how she knew how to handle the situation, she said she had done it multiple times in her training at BAYADA."

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## An Ordinary Family, Extraordinary Challenges

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### The gift of family time

Home care also has given Deb and Tom a priceless gift: the ability to just be a family. “While the nurses focus on keeping Adeline safe and healthy, Tom and I get to be typical parents, playing with our daughter and watching her grow and learn.”

Throughout their journey, Deb and Tom have learned to be patient and give themselves the time needed to adjust to their new normal. “When you have

a sick child, you are adjusting to a life that you never knew existed. A life where you never thought there would be nurses in your home all of the time,” said Deb.

Fortunately, Deb and Tom have developed close relationships with Adeline’s nurses, and they are grateful that the care team from BAYADA has allowed their daughter to come home, instead of spending her life in the hospital.

“She needs the type of care that can only be provided by a nurse,” said Deb. “And her nurses are the reason she can thrive at home.”

They also bring a sense of normalcy, so Adeline and her family can enjoy the simple pleasures of life—like a Tinkerbell party to celebrate her second birthday. ■

## Why Client Advocacy Matters | Champions Among Us

### *The importance of legislator education*

In 2002, **Kathy P.**, an active and healthy woman, received devastating news that would change the course of her life—she was diagnosed with a brain tumor. Unfortunately, the cancer treatment to shrink the tumor caused two strokes that left her with a traumatic brain injury and paralysis. Today, Kathy, 65, is wheelchair bound and requires help with her personal care needs such as bathing, dressing, and eating. Working as a team with her husband **Mike**, Kathy’s home health aides (HHAs) provide for her care needs.

Mike credits BAYADA, along with the government-funded programs Medicaid and Medicare, for allowing Kathy to remain at home, where she wants to be. But, he acknowledges that these government programs don’t come without their challenges. Many BAYADA clients, from infants to seniors, rely on Medicaid or Medicare for their home health care nursing, therapy, or home health aide services. Decisions regarding these programs, such as care and safety regulations and reimbursement rates, are made by state and federal legislators.

### A husband, a caregiver, an advocate for change

While Mike is grateful for Kathy’s care, he worries about the future. He has seen exceptional caregivers who love what they do leave the profession because of

low pay. They have left a career in caregiving that they love, not because they wanted to, but because they could make more money working in retail than caring for a person.

“When home care agencies receive better reimbursement rates and are able to offer better pay and benefits, more capable and caring people will choose caregiving as a career,” said Mike, who could not sit idly by and risk losing the care that he and Kathy have relied upon for years. He devotes his spare time to advocacy groups dedicated to giving home care a brighter tomorrow, has met with elected officials, and has authored a book about advocacy titled *From Death’s Door to Disney World*.

“Our elected officials are in the best position for solving these challenges, but they can’t help if they don’t know what we, as caregivers, are dealing with every day,” said Mike. “I encourage clients and their family members to reach out to educate their elected officials. It has been my experience that they are eager to help.”

### The need for pediatric home care nurses

**Angela O.** couldn’t agree more. Her daughter **Ayla**, 4, has a rare genetic



New Jersey Senator Dawn Marie Addiego visited the home of Kathy and Mike to learn more about the benefits of home care. Pictured standing (from l to r) are CM Mary Adekanye, BAYADA Senior Communications Associate Linda Hughes, Senator Addiego, Rick Hynick, BAYADA Home Health Aide Lucy Villalona, and Director Ed Callahan; sitting (from l to r), Kathy and Mike.

disorder called Townes-Brocks syndrome, which causes malformations in many parts of the body.

“Until someone is invited into our world, caring for a child with complex medical needs is an invisible reality to most. It’s imperative for us parents to move outside of our comfort zones and connect with our legislators frequently, in hopes of opening their hearts and minds to the issues that matter most to us and the daily struggles we face,” said Angela, founder of the Massachusetts Pediatric Home Nurse Care Campaign, which is fueled by parents who are struggling to find and keep skilled home care nurses for their children with

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A BAYADA Home Health Care specialty practice

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CARE Connection is a publication for BAYADA clients and their families.

## Why Client Advocacy Matters | Champions Among Us

continued

complex medical needs. “With more awareness and education come informed policymakers who can effectively advocate for and better protect this vulnerable population. We must always, now more than ever, be a steady voice for our medically fragile children to safeguard their care in all settings. The real impact and power lie within sharing your lived experience.”

### Education plays a critical role

Legislator education will play a critical role in many states where government reimbursement rates for home care are lower than the rates for hospitals. In many cases the rates have not been increased in years, making it difficult to offer a more competitive salary and impacting BAYADA’s ability to attract more staff to care for our clients.

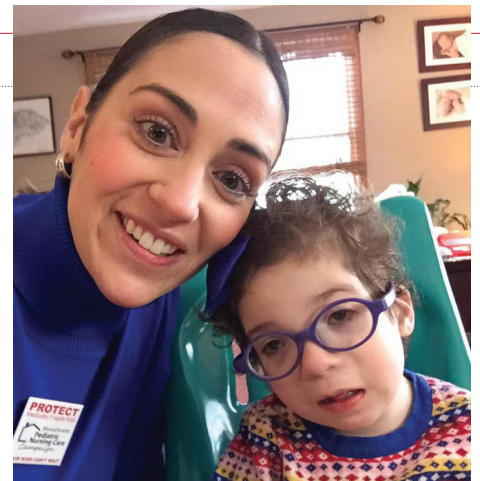
As the Baby Boomer generation continues to age, the demand for home care services will increase to allow people to live in the comfort of home instead of

a facility. Yet, projections indicate that the nation will continue to experience a shortage of home health care professionals, due in part to low wages caused by low reimbursement rates. We also have seen a trend toward nurses choosing employment in other health care environments that are able to pay more competitive wages.

### Now is the time to get involved

Our representatives who are elected at the state and federal levels make and control these decisions based on limited knowledge of the health care system. With each new election comes the risk of sweeping health care policy changes that can result in drastic cuts to government-funded programs.

In November, our nation went to the polls and elected new representatives at the local and state levels. Now is the perfect time to reach out to these newly elected representatives to educate



Angela is pictured with her daughter, Ayla.

them about the importance of home care. Hearing directly from clients who have first-hand knowledge of how the Medicaid and Medicare programs are working and what can be done to improve them will help educate our representatives so that they can make the best decisions for their constituents, and for you.

Please email BAYADA Director of Government Affairs, Client and Family Advocacy **Rick Hynick** at [rhynick@bayada.com](mailto:rhynick@bayada.com) to learn more about how you can participate in client and family advocacy at BAYADA, and start fighting for change. ■