



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

# CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS OF BAYADA AND FAMILY MEMBERS

BAYADA Clinical Manager Pam Compagnola, RN

## COVID-19 Safety Strategies

Although more and more Americans now have access to the COVID-19 vaccine, we are still seeing cases across the country. BAYADA remains committed to providing home health care services with the highest professional, ethical, and safety standards. Part of this commitment includes following all state executive orders in addition to BAYADA's comprehensive Infection Prevention Program that provides the highest standards of infection prevention practices as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

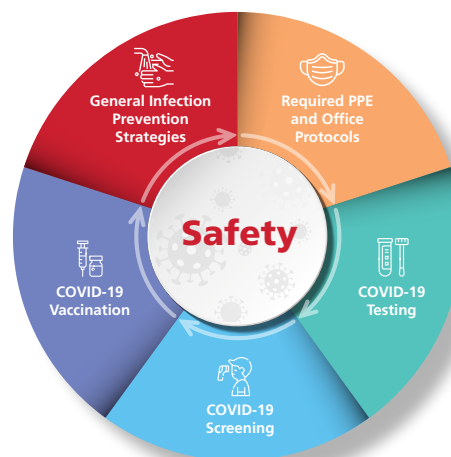
### Standard Infection Prevention Reminders

- Wear a mask per CDC and state/local guidelines, stay at least 6 feet apart, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often. The more steps you take, the more you are protected against COVID-19.

### BAYADA's COVID-19 Core Safety Strategies

- **Comprehensive Infection Prevention Program:** We train our clinicians annually on our Infection Prevention Program and reinforce our safety protocol throughout the year to ensure the safety of both our employees and clients. Read about our Infection Prevention Program at [bayada.com/staying-healthy.asp](http://bayada.com/staying-healthy.asp).
- **Required PPE and Protocols:** BAYADA implemented required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) standards that exceed standard precautions for the care of all clients, regardless of a client's symptoms or risk factors. When entering client homes, BAYADA clinicians wear a surgical mask and eye protection at a minimum, as part of our safety protocol. Note that a change is coming that will no longer require eye protection for behavioral health clients.
  - Our clinicians follow our PPE standards based on client/household scenario per our PPE Standards-at-a-Glance, which you can read by visiting [bit.ly/bayada-standards](http://bit.ly/bayada-standards).

- **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.
- **COVID-19 Vaccination:** BAYADA strongly recommends but does not require the COVID-19 vaccination for our clinicians and clients. We provide ongoing evidence-based education from the CDC to clinicians about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine and communicate opportunities to receive the vaccine.
  - The vaccine is only one component of our safety strategies. Clinicians who are not vaccinated can still safely provide all client care by following our other safety strategies—just as they have prior to the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine.



# How BAYADA Clients and the Girl Scouts Became Great Pals



“Growing up I was always very much involved in community service—it was an important part of my life and who I wanted to be,” said BAYADA Client Services Manager **Lindsay Majewski**, who works in the Garden City, NY office. When her daughter entered kindergarten, Lindsay decided to pass on that spirit of service by founding a Girl Scout Troop to better connect to their community. This way, they could give back together while influencing others to contribute, just like Lindsay did when she was a Girl Scout.

## The Impact of COVID-19

Unfortunately, 2020 will be remembered mainly for the tragic COVID-19 pandemic that enveloped the globe. A key aspect of the response to slow the spread of the virus involved various forms of isolation and social distancing.



BAYADA client Sanayah, 9, looks forward to letters from her pen pal.

While necessary, the prolonged isolation took its toll. It also made interacting with and serving the community very difficult, but Lindsay had an idea.

Determined to find a way to continue serving the community in the face of physical restrictions, Lindsay and her Girl Scout co-leader devised a plan for a pen pal program between the Troop and interested BAYADA clients.

Lindsay’s strong commitment to community service intersects with BAYADA’s, so the partnership was a natural fit. While the aspirations for the program were modest, it quickly blossomed into something more than its modest beginnings. “When we started the pen pal program the intentions seemed very simple, but it wasn’t long before we realized the depth of the impact of it was so much more than we anticipated,” said Lindsay.

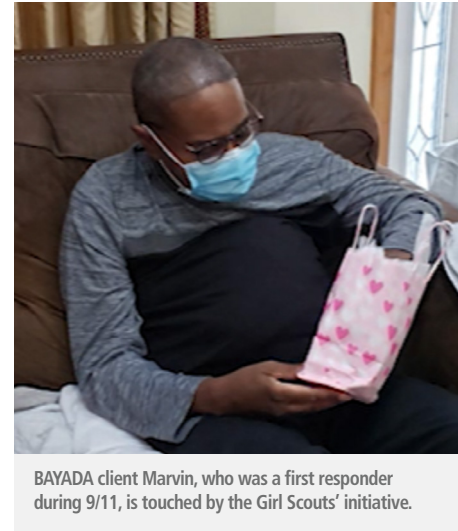
## Letters with love

One of the meaningful bonds forged as a result of the program is between BAYADA client **Sanayah P.** 9, and Lindsay’s daughter **Charlie**, who is also 9. Sanayah has paraplegia and uses a wheelchair due to a spinal cord injury she sustained in a car accident. She receives 12 hours of home nursing per day. “We’ve had a couple letters and we really seem to have a lot of things in common, and it’s really fun to meet her,” said Charlie. “Some of the things Sanayah likes are blue sharks—and she likes to dance, swim, sing, and draw.”

Sanayah’s Client Services Manager, **Roza Petrosyan**, witnessed the positive impact their friendship had on her client first-hand. “I got the opportunity to visit her and to give her the gift for Valentine’s Day that Charlie made,” said Roza. “I was very surprised how excited she was when she opened the gift and when she read the letter. And she got so emotional—especially the part when Charlie said ‘I love you’—it really melted my heart.”

## A Cub Scout too

The pen pal program also includes a former Scout, BAYADA client **Marvin B.**, 61, who receives 24/7 care. It’s one reason he’s so touched by the initiative. “This thing with the Girl Scouts—I’m absolutely thrilled. When I was a little young man I was a Cub Scout myself, and that was one of the reasons why I became a paramedic,” Marvin said.



BAYADA client Marvin, who was a first responder during 9/11, is touched by the Girl Scouts’ initiative.

Marvin’s overall commitment to service during his childhood helped propel him to a career as a paramedic. Perhaps his most impactful day on the job was as a first responder during the tragic events of September 11. Like other heroes who served at ground zero, Marvin developed respiratory issues as a result of working in the toxic environment. Regardless, it hasn’t dampened his positive view of service. “Volunteering is very important, and we all should give back if you can,” he said.

## Paying it forward

Now that some time has passed, Lindsay has been able to reflect on the positive impact of the program. “I think the thing that hit me, which has also been vocalized by a number of our clients, is the impact of feeling like you can be a person without a diagnosis,” she said. “The girls have absolutely no idea that on the other end of their relationship is somebody who is really struggling. Someday they’ll understand the positive impact they’ve made and how their support helped make those struggles a little easier!”

Lindsay knows that she and her Girl Scouts are impacting the world as best they can right now, which she feels is directly connected to *The BAYADA Way*. “Give back and do everything that you can with love,” she said.

# How to Prepare for a Doctor's Visit: Tips for the Empowered Patient

## TIPS

These tips are helpful for anyone preparing for a doctor's appointment—in a medical office, via telehealth, or as an in-home visit (house call).

- **Be picky when conducting your doctor search:** Every patient is different: some like straightforwardness, others seek kindness and softness. You may want to understand every detail, or you'd rather trust the doctor's orders. If a friend or family member recommends a doctor and you don't care for their recommendation, go ahead and make a change.
- **Take an Active Role.** Before the appointment, keep a diary of your symptoms, feelings, contributing factors (diet, sleep, exercise, medication compliance, etc.) and questions to ask your doctor. Remember that how you feel emotionally—such as stressed, depressed, overwhelmed, irritable, or anxious—is as important to discuss as how you've been feeling physically.
- **Bring a list of your medications, dosages, and how frequently you take them.** Any herbal, vitamin, supplement, or family remedy you use also should be included.
- **Bring someone with you!** It is always a good idea to bring a trusted relative, friend, or care manager with you to appointments. Have you ever nodded in agreement, even though you didn't understand what was being said?

Sometimes hearing loss or the doctor speaking too quickly or not explaining clearly can contribute to confusion or misunderstandings. A second set of eyes and ears can elicit better information and bring comfort and clarification after the visit.

- **Be honest.** Do not leave out details or feel embarrassed. Doctors have heard it all. If you want to discuss something privately, ask your companion to temporarily leave the room.
- **Keep an open mind, and do not self-diagnose.** Sometimes when we research our own symptoms on the internet, it can have a negative effect and send your health care provider down the wrong path. For example, don't request a specific test because you "read about it online." Describe your symptoms and trust your doctor's expertise. However, if you feel your doctor is not listening to you, find one who does!

BAYADA has created an easy-to-use, free checklist to help you or your loved one remember what needs to be prepared, talked about, and asked when visiting the doctor. Download the free checklist by visiting <http://bit.ly/doc-visit>.

## Champions Among Us: Fighting for Home Health Aide Services

BAYADA client **Grant W.** learns by touching, feeling, speaking, and being integrated into his community. He loves going to the library and the aquarium, but the closures caused by COVID-19 put a stop to those visits. Fortunately, Grant's home health aide (HHA) found alternate activities such as hikes in the woods, and trips to the Dollar Store to find items to stimulate him, such as coloring books.

Grant, 26, was born with a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and has autism and cerebral palsy. "When he finished school a few years ago, he was enrolled in a full day program, which was the perfect place for him," said his father, Bob. "But when COVID hit and the day program shut down, Grant became eligible for home health care services through New Jersey's Personal Care Assistant (PCA) program."

The state-funded PCA program allows qualifying adults to remain at home with assistance from HHAs who help with activities of daily living. But finding HHAs for those who

qualify for the PCA program isn't easy.

### A thinning workforce

"Aides who love their work tend to leave the industry to find work in hospitals and nursing homes, which offer higher rates," said Bob. "Grant has had a revolving door of aides which impacts his ability to learn. The workforce is thinning out because aides can't make fair wages in the home care field."

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Bob W. celebrates his son Grant's 26th birthday.



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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.

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## Champions Among Us: Fighting for Home Health Aide Services

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Bob hopes that NJ will consider expanding access to home health care and services designed for autistic and other developmentally delayed individuals. The PCA program is fully funded by the state. And—as the state population continues to age and more people recognize the health, safety, and cost-saving benefits of home care—it is important for the government to ensure that a sufficient workforce can provide the care residents need to stay safe in their homes.

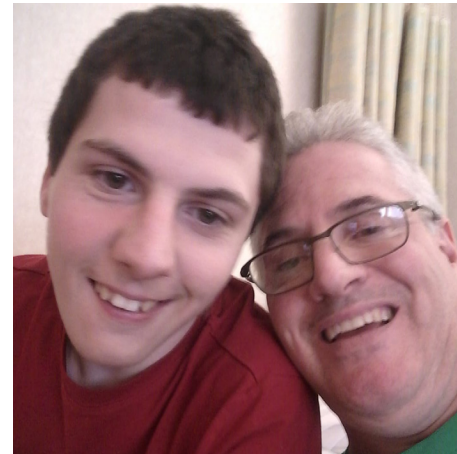
### An advocate for his son

Bob is no stranger to navigating the system to help those with disabilities. As a former parent coordinator for the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), he helped families access the care they needed. He draws on his experience with SPAN to be an advocate for Grant and was recently interviewed by Scripps National News.

To view Bob’s interview on Scripps National News visit [bit.ly/Scripps-HHA](http://bit.ly/Scripps-HHA).

### Our Fight for Needed Services

Bob encourages others to fight for the services that they deserve. “You can do almost anything if you fight for it,” he said. “If you’re not comfortable speaking out, make connections with BAYADA and other community organizations who can speak out for you and help you get the resources you need.”



Grant with his father, Bob.

There are many ways to advocate for you or a loved one. To learn more, visit [heartsforhomecare.bayada.com](http://heartsforhomecare.bayada.com).