



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

Pediatric

CARE CONNECTION

A PUBLICATION FOR CLIENTS OF BAYADA AND FAMILY MEMBERS



BAYADA Pediatrics Nurse Mat Gunkel, 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 your child's 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.
- **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.

- **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.

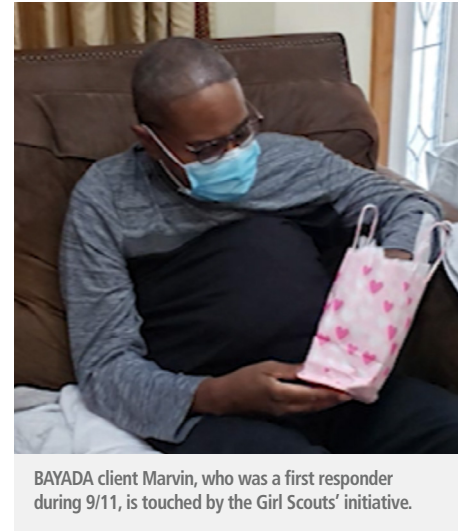
Letters with love

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 Sananyah 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.

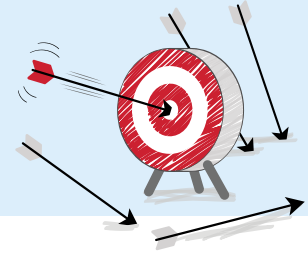
Marvin’s overall commitment to service during his childhood helped propel him to a career as a paramedic. Perhaps his most impactful day on the job was as a first responder during the tragic events of September 11. Like other heroes who served at ground zero, Marvin developed respiratory issues as a 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.

Setting Expectations with Your Child's Nurses



Whether your child is new to BAYADA or has received services for many years, the following questions can help enhance your family's relationship with your current nurses and help set expectations and boundaries with nurses who recently joined your child's care team.

- **Knock first?** Would you prefer your nurses to knock or just enter your home at the designated time their shift is scheduled to begin?
- **Parking?** Is there a certain place you would prefer the nurses park?
- **Shoes?** Do you prefer for nurses to remove their shoes upon entering your home? (Nurses will need to bring a shoe with a rubber sole for safety reasons.)
- **No-go zones?** Are there areas of your home that are off limits to the nursing staff?
- **Bathroom?** Is there a certain bathroom that you prefer the nurses use during their shift?
- **Supply room?** Is there a certain storage location for supplies (eg, paper towels, toilet paper, light bulbs, batteries), such as the laundry room or garage, that the staff can access when needed?
- **Refrigerator?** Can the nurses place food and drinks in your refrigerator during their shift or would you prefer that they bring a personal cooler?
- **Microwave?** Can the nurses warm up their meals in your microwave?
- **Dining area?** Is there a designated area that you would like the nurses to eat their meals or can the nurses feel free to eat while in the client area?

- **Laundry?** Where would you like soiled laundry placed?
- **Trash?** Would you like the trash cans and diaper pail emptied at the end of each shift, and where would you like the trash placed?
- **Pets?** Do you have any pets? Are there any special instructions related to greeting pets upon arrival?



BAYADA client Adeline enjoys time with her nurse Victoria Devorak, LPN and her mother, Deb.

- **Nighttime calls?** If there is a need to wake you in the middle of the night, how would you like that accomplished: Would you prefer a knock on your bedroom door or a call to your cell phone?
- **Non-emergencies?** Would you like to be informed in the middle of the night of non-emergency clinical changes (such as, fever, feeding intolerance, behavioral issues, pain, restlessness, need for respiratory treatments)?
- **Security blanket?** Does your child have a certain toy or security object that you would like to be offered for comfort?





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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: I Am My Son's Voice

Chrystal C. describes her son Bryan, 7, as happy go lucky. "He smiles through seizures and pain," shared Chrystal. "He makes the most and the best of everything."

Bryan has a COLA 1 Gene defect that causes cerebral palsy, hydrocephalus, kidney function issues, congenital cataracts, silent aspiration, behavior changes, and limited ability to control movement. He also suffers from a seizure disorder that requires skilled nursing to ensure he remains safe.

"Consistent nursing enables Bryan's father Mike and me to work during the day and sleep at night," said Chrystal. "Inconsistency in nursing takes away peace of mind and puts my son at risk."

Bryan is authorized for eight hours of daily skilled home care nursing, and another eight hours overnight. While COVID-19 has impacted his nursing coverage, North Carolina has had a home care nursing shortage even before the pandemic. Agencies report a 60 percent nurse turnover rate because hospitals and other facilities can offer better pay, as state funding limits what nurses can earn in home care. As a result, clients have seen much-needed nursing shifts go unfilled.

Chrystal recently shared her story as part of a feature on today.com that shed light on the problem of medically fragile children and their families coping with shortages in home nursing care. To read the article, visit bit.ly/MedicallyFragile.

"Telling my story has been therapeutic for me," said Chrystal. "I didn't realize how much I was holding it in. Bryan has opened me up to being an advocate and his voice. Parents of children with special needs struggle to make life as comfortable and safe as possible for their kids. COVID has rocked our world, and we need the state's support to make sure that families like ours can access the nursing care our children deserve."



There are many ways to advocate for you or a loved one. To learn more, visit heartsforhomecare.bayada.com.