



GARDNER VNA

# •Your Home Connection•

## Gardner VNA Hosts Third Annual Symposium for Well-Being

On November 12th, the Gardner VNA hosted the third Annual Symposium for Well-Being at Mount Wachusett Community College in Gardner. The program was entitled “Chasing the Light” and was presented by photographer and Gardner native Kevin T. Gilbert. According to Elaine Fluet, CEO, the Gardner VNA was thrilled to have Mr. Gilbert speak and share his moving images with the residents of Gardner and the surrounding communities. “The response to our annual symposiums has been



*Elaine Fluet, CEO & Kevin T. Gilbert at the Gardner VNA Third Annual Symposium for Well-Being.*

nothing short of amazing and we are glad to be able to offer these educational opportunities to so many people,” she said. “We have had such strong support for these programs due to our ability to offer this unique educational opportunity at the affordable cost of \$10.00 per ticket,” she added.

The 2008 featured speaker, Kevin T. Gilbert, is a 24-year veteran photojournalist based in the Washington, DC area. He has covered superpower summits, professional sports, national political campaigns, as well as the news of Washington and the world. Six years ago Kevin pursued his love of television by becoming a contract photographer for Discovery Channel. This led him into the world of reality TV where he has shot 14 shows for Mark Burnett, creator of *The Apprentice*, *The Contender* and *Survivor*.

“Flagship Bank was our premier sponsor for the third year in a row and we are glad to partner with them and bring this symposium to the community on an annual basis,” said Fluet. “We are pleased to announce that since the start of our symposium, over 1,000 people have enjoyed the opportunity to hear well-known speakers so close to home,” she said.



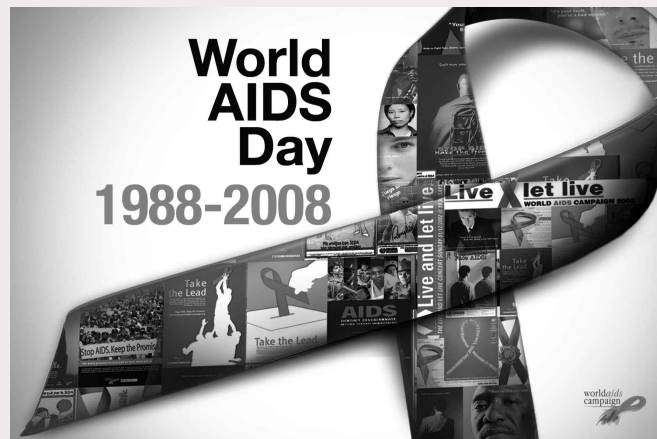
## Gardner VNA Takes Lead Role in Preparing the Community for Flu Season

The Gardner VNA has been providing flu vaccination services to the towns of Gardner, Westminster and Winchendon for over 10 years. According to Public Health Nurse, Murielle Conway, RN, the Gardner VNA provides public flu clinics in each of these towns on a yearly basis, as well as clinics that are held in area housing developments in Gardner and Winchendon. “We also offer yearly flu clinics on site at the Gardner VNA to make sure that all community members who are interested in being vaccinated have every opportunity to do so before the flu season officially begins,” she said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), every year 5% - 20% of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications, and; about 36,000 people die from the flu. The CDC states that the best way to prevent this illness is by getting a flu vaccination.

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# Educational Fair in Recognition of World Aids Day



On December 1, the Gardner VNA hosted an educational fair in recognition of World Aids Day at the Gardner VNA. “This was the first year the Educational Fair was offered in Gardner during the evening,” according to Gail Dorval,

Director of Community Services

at the Gardner VNA. “Our ongoing goal is to help break the silence around the conversation of AIDS and share our knowledge with the community,” she said. “AIDS does not discriminate and we are hoping people will take the time to get informed and get tested,” she added.

The educational displays included information on HIV, STD’s, Hepatitis A, B & C, Hepatitis C case management & treatment options, health insurance enrollment and WIC on Wheels. Free testing was provided at the Fair, which included anonymous HIV testing and Chlamydia Testing (by a urine sample).

The event sponsors included the Gardner VNA, Action Health Services, MOC Nutrition & Wellness—including Care Services & Family Planning Clinic and Community Health Connections.

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## Gardner VNA Participates in State-Wide Preceptor Project

The Gardner VNA implemented a mentoring program and are part the preceptor project organized by the Home Care Alliance in Boston, according to Fran Champlin, RNC, MSN, Director of Clinical Services. “This initiative consists of 23 agencies across the state,” said Champlin. “There is a statewide effort focused on retaining new nurses in homecare and reducing turnover rates, so in response to this effort, many agencies are starting with the orientation of new nurses in order for them to be fully prepared for the job,” she said.

The Gardner VNA’s mentoring group has been working on the development of two distinct programs, the first, a Mentor Training Program and the second a Nurse Orientation Program.

The Mentor Training Program, consisting of 5 two-hour sessions, covers topics such as teaching adult learners, various learning styles, giving constructive feedback, role-modeling the role of case manager and conflict resolution. The course last Fall was taught by Deb Orre, RN, Doctorial Candidate and the following Gardner VNA nurses successfully completed the program: Dawn Chapman, Doris King, Cathy Peck, Jessica Roberts and Pam Saulnier.

“As a result of this training, our nurse mentors have come together twice a month to develop a homecare Nurse Mentoring Program,” Champlin said. The group has accessed data from other agencies, sent out a survey to Gardner VNA staff about

their orientation experience, evaluated current nursing literature regarding orientation programs, consulted new nurse hires to our agency, and worked with the Gardner VNA Staff Educator to develop a Core Orientation Program.

New nurses at the agency are now teamed up with one of the Nurse Mentors for documentation training, case management training, time management training, one-on-one conferencing and joint visits. Currently, Melody LePage, Kelly Fitzpatrick and Lindsey Mann are the first new nurses to benefit from this mentor training.

“The mentors meet on a regular basis to evaluate employee progress, case load and to determine ongoing educational needs,” said Champlin. “Each new employee comes to the agency with a different set of clinical skills and a different capacity for learning,” she said. “Our goal is to meet the individual learning needs of each new nurse, as well as orient them to the role of a homecare nurse for the Gardner VNA,” she added. “We are very committed to the success of our new nursing staff and anything we can do to make their learning experience more beneficial is our priority,” she said. “We also feel that our new nurses being mentored should have input into the development of their orientation experience,” said Champlin.

For more information about the Gardner VNA or employment opportunities, please call (978) 632-1230 or visit us on the web at [www.gardnervna.org](http://www.gardnervna.org).

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# New CoaguChek System for Athol/Orange Community

The Gardner VNA recently received an anonymous donation to purchase a CoaguChek System for the Athol/Orange area, according to Fran Champlin, RNC, MSN, Director of Clinical Services. "The system is a small, portable, hand-held machine; capable of precise measurements of the time it takes for a blood sample to coagulate," said Champlin. "This allows our nurses to provide in-home testing of blood samples for our patients who are taking oral anticoagulant medication and whose blood levels must be monitored frequently," she said.

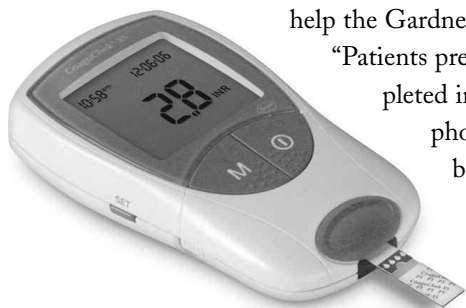
Champlin noted that there are multiple advantages to this form of testing that help the Gardner VNA achieve our goal of providing high quality services to our patients.

"Patients prefer a fingerstick to a venipuncture, as it is less painful and results are completed in a matter of minutes, right in the patient's home," she said. "The result is phoned directly into the patient's doctor and recommendations about medication adjustments can be made while the nurse is still in the home," she added.

"We are very grateful to have received this donation and feel fortunate to have the ability to purchase this additional system to be used specifically in the Athol/Orange area," said Champlin. "The fact that we will be able to serve our clients in a more efficient and time effective manner only adds to the quality of service we provide at the Gardner VNA," she said.



*CoaguChek XS System*



*Left to Right: Rena Hemlock, MSN, RN, Staff Educator, Lindsey Mann, BSN, RN, Case Manager, Ann Marie Dolimpio, BSN, RN, Case Manager, Vera Moraes, Physical Therapist, Agatha Dexter, RN, North Quabbin Adult Day Health Center, Dale DelleChiaie, Director of Human Resources*

## Welcome Reception for New Employees

On Wednesday, January 7th, the Gardner VNA hosted a special breakfast reception to welcome new employees to the agency. "I feel it is very important for new employees to have an opportunity to meet their peers in a relaxed setting and help them feel welcome and supported by our agency," said Elaine Fluet, CEO. "We are an agency that truly believes in our team of professionals and want our new employees to feel they are part of the team from day one," she said.

For more information about employment opportunities at the Gardner VNA, please call (978) 632-1230 or visit us on the web at [www.gardnervna.org](http://www.gardnervna.org).

## Donor Recognition Event Held at NQ Adult Day Health Center

A donor recognition event was recently held at the North Quabbin Adult Day Health Center in Athol. The event was held to honor and thank those who have supported the "Home Away from Home" Campaign over the past year. As part of the Celebration, the plans for the memory garden that will be created this Spring were unveiled. Several donors were in attendance and enjoyed touring the new center and hearing what will be up and coming in 2009.

## Flu Season

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“The Gardner VNA is very committed to doing our part in preventing the spread of the flu virus,” said Conway. “Not only do we provide flu vaccines at public clinics, we also are available to area businesses to provide flu shots for their employees,” she added. “Companies have contacted us every year, through our Corporate Wellness Program, to come to their facilities and provide this service with very little disruption to their daily business activities,” she said. “It is rewarding for us to be able to partner with local companies and provide them with a clinic that helps their employees stay healthy through the flu season,” said Conway.

“Individuals who have the flu are generally contagious one day prior to getting the symptoms themselves and remain contagious for up to seven days after getting sick,” said Conway. “For this reason, it is very important for individuals to seriously consider receiving a flu shot, because they can be spreading the virus to co-workers or family members without even knowing it,” she said.

For information about our Corporate Wellness Program, please contact Laura LaBrack at (978) 632-1230, Ext. 3092.



## Gardner VNA Services

Adult Day Health Services – *Gardner, Fitchburg & Athol*

Community Education Programs

Corporate Wellness

Healthy Families®

Home Assisted Living™ – *Group Adult Foster Care*

Homecare Services

- *Community Health Nursing*
- *Maternal/Child Health Services*
- *Wound, Ostomy & Continence Specialist*
- *Rehabilitation Therapists– Occupational, Physical & Speech*
- *Medical Social Services*
- *Home Health Aides*
- *Telehealth Program*

Hospice

Lifeline

My Home Connection™ – *A Private Duty Service*

Public Health-Flu & Blood Pressure Clinics

Support Groups

- *Caregiver's Support Groups– Fitchburg & Gardner*
- *Bereavement Support Group*
- *New Beginnings Support Group*

## Community Outreach Programs

Gardner VNA Community Services Center:

- *HIV Prevention & Education*
- *HIV Counseling & Testing*

## Gardner VNA Mission

We build healthy communities by delivering high quality health and social services in a fiscally responsible manner in the homes and neighborhoods of North Central and North Quabbin areas of Massachusetts.

## Gardner VNA Customer Service Standards

- We value our employees and their commitment to our customers and the agency.
- We believe that health and well-being are an individual's most valuable possessions.
- We value the trust placed in us by our customers.
- We provide excellent service.

## Donations

The Gardner VNA is grateful for the generous support of our donors. If you are interested in making a tax-deductible donation to the Gardner VNA or if you have any questions regarding how to make a donation, please call (978) 632-1230, ext. 3080.

*“We want to thank you for all the wonderful nurses, physical therapists and health aides you have sent to us.”*

*If you would like to share any thoughts with our CEO, Elaine Fluet, please drop us a line at 34 Pearly Lane, Gardner, MA 01440 or email her at [elaine.fluet@gardnervna.org](mailto:elaine.fluet@gardnervna.org).*

*For any other questions about the Gardner VNA or our services, please call 978-632-1230.*