

## HOUR PROFESSIONALS

# Assured Home Nursing Services

*Professional, Compassionate Care*



When it comes to the care of a loved one, everyone wants the best. Many assume that means that a family member — a daughter, son, mother, or brother — should stay home to provide that care. But too often, the physical demands and the emotional stress are more difficult than anticipated, leaving family members feeling inadequate in their ability to provide care.

Josiane Prantera, a registered nurse of 25 years who has invested 10 years of her career as the co-owner of Assured Home Nursing Services, believes that the best way to care for your loved one is to first know your own strengths and limitations, and then to be able to rely on others for additional care and support.

“Too often, family members try to do it alone, and it just wears them out to the point where family dynamics suffer,” says Prantera, who, along with Deborah Shea, founded Birmingham-based Assured Home Nursing Services.

“It’s important to know that keeping yourself healthy throughout your loved one’s recovery is every bit as important,” adds Shea, also a 25-year registered nurse.

Both Prantera and Shea have worked in enough medical care facilities to know that, although there’s nothing inherently wrong with them, they’re not always the best place to recuperate from an illness or injury. They point out that the likelihood of contracting a nosocomial infection (an infection acquired during a hospital stay) is estimated at one in 10 hospitalized patients, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The best place to recover is at home, surrounded by the familiar things that give comfort. This is true whether the care is for someone recovering from a surgery, such as a hip or knee replacement, or for more chronic or debilitating illnesses such as a stroke

or cancer. For elderly family members with dementia, providing care at home helps maintain a link to the past and present, and can even extend the individual’s ability to be more independent in their home environment.

Assured Home Nursing Services is a private-duty agency offering professional care in the home setting. The company specializes in caring for clients with Alzheimer’s/dementia, strokes, traumatic brain injury, and Parkinson’s disease, as well as those who need hospice care, among other things. Caring and qualified nursing assistants provide help with activities of daily living — dressing, grooming, and bathing — and can also prepare meals, provide transportation, perform light housekeeping, and dispense medication. RNs and LPNs are also available to assist with IV therapy, ostomy care, wound care management, ventilator care, and catheter care.

Having professional, compassionate caregivers to rely on may be the most helpful resource of all for the loved one and his or her family. Prantera and Shea point to letters of gratitude they frequently received as examples: “It has been quite a journey. ... I am so grateful for the faithful nurses who became our extended family during dad’s care.” And, “You have always been warm and kind to me.” Or, simply, “Thank you for the wonderful care you provide our mother.”

“When people take the time to write and thank us for the care we’ve provided, we know we’re doing something right,” Prantera says.

When a registered nurse from Assured Home Nursing Services makes an initial visit, Prantera or Shea determine a care plan based on individual needs. Care plans range from four-hour shifts, to around-the-clock care, to live-in programs.

With a staff now numbering 150 nurses and nursing



assistants, Assured Home Nursing Services takes great effort in matching personnel to the needs of the family. “We aim for the perfect fit between the patient and caregiver,” Shea says.

The home care professional can also help family members address ongoing health care questions by serving as a liaison between patients and doctors.

Not all private-duty agencies are created equal, and in the state of Michigan, no regulations exist. That’s why it’s important to ask about an agency’s policies and procedures, as well as its hiring practices — including background checks and references. It’s also particularly important to know how the agency would handle an emergency situation with your loved one. “Our staff is trained to handle emergencies and contact the proper assistance when needed. For peace of mind, a registered nurse is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to handle after-hour concerns or emergencies,” Prantera says.

No one better understands the importance of customer service than one of Assured Home Nursing Services’ patients, a retired corporate executive, who said: “Debbie and Josie have a very professional agency. I have complete faith in their ability to find qualified caregivers.” The former CEO has seen, firsthand, how the pair won’t stand for things that are amiss, and he’s grateful for his ability to continue to live independently.

Assured Home Nursing Services honors private pay, commercial insurance, and Workman’s Compensation. Evaluations are free. Care is available 24 hours a day, or as needed.

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