



Advantages of Home Health

There are a few options that Medicare offers beneficiaries who need skilled care for recovery from illness. Patients can stay in a hospital, they can go to a rehab facility, they can receive outpatient physical therapy, or they can even self-manage at home. Patients who are homebound and require skilled interaction on a once daily basis or less make good progress with home health. As doctors, nurses, and discharge planners consider the options for individual patients, please consider some of the advantages that home health offers patients and healthcare providers.

Greater Improvement of Skills & Independence:

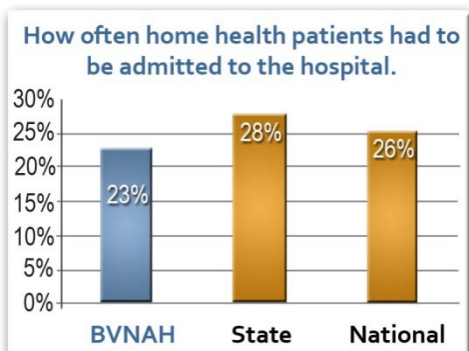
When older patients receive physical or occupational therapy at inpatient facilities or at outpatient practices, they are often trying to learn skills that will be applied at home. Often times, the best course of action is to complete therapy with Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (BVNAH). BVNAH therapists teach skills applicable to the home setting in the actual home setting. For example, combining the results of 11 different trials, Langhorne et al showed that discharging patients from the hospital early and providing home-based rehabilitation made stroke survivors six percent more likely to regain independence.¹ Research also shows that completing rehabilitation efforts with supervised exercise in the home improves adherence to home exercise programs and improves physical activity long-term.²

Better Surveillance of Home Safety: Many geriatric health care situations present a home safety concern, such as gait training, home oxygen, fall injuries. Home health uniquely positions therapists and nurses in the home for safety surveillance and intervention.

Better Compliance with Diet & Medication: Multiple studies have shown that the most successful efforts toward diet and/or medication adherence have involved multiple training sessions spread over a period of weeks or months.^{4,7} The elderly, especially, benefit when healthcare providers spend more time and provide more repetition. In addition, a study published recently in the *Journal of Nursing Care Quality* demonstrates how home visits identify 62% more medication discrepancies over and above in-hospital and telephonic reconciliation efforts.⁸ Home health is designed for teaching at the pace of geriatric patients and for verifying compliance with physician instructions. BVNAH nurses can go through kitchen cabinets and medicine cabinets with your patients to get an accurate picture of your patient's dietary and medication adherence and to provide specific, personalized education. In matters of patient education, trust BVNAH to make repeated visits patiently, to diligently verify understanding and adherence, and to concisely report any problems to the physician.



Cost-Effective Quality Care: Home health can be used to help shorten hospital stays and reduce costly readmissions while enabling patients to have a smooth transition to the home. Home health can also be ordered directly by the physician to help patients avoid the hospital. Patients have zero out-of-pocket expenses since Medicare pays 100% of allowable charges from BVNAH. Medicare also reimburses physicians for their time in managing home health patients through Care Plan Oversight.



Helping Your Patients Avoid Rehospitalizations

Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (BVNAH) leads the other home care agencies in the Pioneer Valley in minimizing how often their home health patients have to be admitted to the hospital, and continues to excel in comparison to the state and national rates (see chart). With a staff of more than 175 caring professionals spanning several disciplines (including case managers, nursing, wound care certified nursing, hospice care certified nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietitians, and medical social work), our size and depth of experience prepares us well to respond efficiently and be able to manage even your most complicated cases.

Consider Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice for your patients.

References

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