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Partners In Care Celebrates 25 Years Brooklyn Home Health Aides Are Unsung Heroes

by Brooklyn Eagle

BROOKLYN — Partners In Care, the nation's largest not-for-profit provider of private personal and medical home health care services, celebrates its 25th year as an affiliate of the Visiting Nurse Service of New York.

Partners in Care sends home health aides (HHA) to the homes of people ranging from infants to those who can no longer care for themselves, but wish to live out the rest of their lives with dignity. They work in conjunction with RNs who supervise patient's care, but it is the home health aide who manages the day-to-day care.

A typical day for an HHA might include helping with physical rehabilitation, changing soiled linens, diapers and bedpans, as well as making sure the client takes their medications. These people are New York's unsung heroes who generally work 12-hour days, 6 days a week and are totally devoted to making a difference in people's lives.

One in particular is Jane Edwards, who lives in Brooklyn. Jane has been with Partners in Care for 25 years; the entire time it has been affiliated with the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. Each day, Jane leaves her home in Brooklyn to go tend to her clients. From shopping and cooking to scheduling and accompanying them to doctors and other appointments, Jane provides everything that healthy people would normally do for themselves.

Most importantly, though, Jane is her client's family, confidant and best friend. In one case, an MS patient whom Jane was caring for was being admitted to the hospital. The patient angrily demanded at the clerk, "Listen, I don't care what you are doing here, please send my aide for me!" Jane truly is her clients' life-line.

Jane's strength and dedication to her patients also happens to run in the family. Her granddaughter, Michelle Roberts, has now been a home health aide with Partners in Care for almost a year. While she describes her grandmother as "a very strong person," Michelle became a home health aide so that she could start building a career in health care. Partners in Care pays for her to go to college, where she is studying to be an RN. "I find my job very rewarding," says Michelle. "I feel good taking care of people who need help."

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