

Monday, May 3, 2004
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And
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About Bayada Nurses:

Start of operation: January, 1975 – almost 30 years.

Services provided: Nursing, Nursing Assistant and Companion services in the client's home; ranging from 1 to 24 hours/day.

Geographic territory: A total of more than 100 offices, ranging in the east from Maine to Florida; and also in Missouri, Arizona, Colorado and Utah. We have 21 offices serving adults throughout The Commonwealth.

Clientele served: Individuals with illness or disability, ranging from infant to geriatric in age. All of our adult offices have the opportunity to care for clients with Alzheimer's Disease.

Testimony

Good Morning. My name is Michele Lucas. My colleague, Megan Miller, and I are with Bayada Nurses, which is a home care agency that has been in operation for almost 30 years. Megan has been a social worker for 13 years and I have been a nurse for 29 years. Each of us is the director of an office which provides home care services to adult clients; Megan in Philadelphia and I in Willow Grove. Our home care services include nursing, nursing assistant and companion care.

As we all know, Alzheimer's is a dreadful disease, which starts as a loss of memory and progresses to a loss of physical function. The toll that it takes along the way is devastating – to both the client and especially, to the caregiver.

What do we see when we go to the home of an Alzheimer's client for the first time to admit them to our service? We typically see the client living with a loved one, usually their spouse. There is a sense of chaos in the home and exhaustion on the face of the caregiver. The client is confused and has had significant changes in behavior – and is not “the same person I married”. He or she is often like a child --- but in an adult body!

Some with Alzheimer's are very active and need to walk for hours. Most need constant supervision or they can be in real danger. How then can the caregiver attend to their own daily activities, such as grocery shopping and showering, and watch their loved one at the same time? It is simply not possible. People in these situations need help!

Bayada Nurses is one of the home care agencies that is available to provide this help. What is typically needed is assistance with bathing, dressing and most importantly, supervision of the client's safety. The caregiver is then enabled to perform the daily activities they would otherwise be unable to do. They are both also more likely to remain healthy for a longer period of time, thereby decreasing the expenses that their medical care would bring.

However, this type of assistance does not come for free. Charges are from approximately \$18.00 to \$22.50 per hour. How many elderly on fixed incomes can afford this? Many people do not have the ability to pay out-of-pocket for our services.

This is where the AOA program has been a godsend. It has allowed individuals with Alzheimer's Disease to stay in their homes longer, where they are in familiar surroundings. This becomes very important for someone who is confused. It has also given their caregivers the needed assistance to carry on with some normalcy in their lives. Perhaps most importantly, it has provided the caregivers with some peace of mind, in knowing that they have done their best to maintain their loved ones' quality of life for as long as possible!

Thank you!