

How VNS Health is Shaping the Home Care Industry in 2025

President and CEO Dan Savitt recently sat down with Home Health Care News and discussed how VNS Health is leveraging its size and capabilities to expand home care services to all New Yorkers. Dan talks about the organization's strategic vision for the future, accomplishments in 2024, and ongoing initiatives to address workforce challenges and improve quality of care.

Our real challenge is, how do we leverage the large number of programs and services we already offer to ensure a seamless journey through the most difficult times in a person's life.

– Dan Savitt, President and CEO of VNS Health

2024 Highlights in Home Care

When asked about wins in 2024, Dan spoke about how the organization continues to help vulnerable individuals with complex needs throughout their care journey. The ways the organization is providing quality care is also expanding and improving.

He noted the health plan expansion into Upstate New York,

acquiring four upstate managed long-term care plans with over 3,000 members. This expansion aligns with the vision to provide improved care for vulnerable communities across the state. VNS Health's dual eligible LTSS health plan received a five-star quality rating, the only plan in New York to achieve this.

The organization also significantly decreased turnover rates among clinical workforces. The turnover rate for home care nurses in their first year dropped from 14% to 6%, and overall clinical team turnover lowered from around 20% to under 12%. These efforts contributed to a 5% to 7% growth in provider service lines.

Expanding Behavioral Health Care

VNS Health has been designated as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) in the South Bronx. The organization was granted \$4 million from the federal government to build the CCBHC and provide more behavioral health resources for underserved communities in the area. Dan said how this designation allows the organization to provide mental health and substance use treatment, with plans to expand CCBHCs in the future. This initiative helps home health patients with significant behavioral health needs get the appropriate care they need.

Address Workforce Challenges

Dan explained that while working in home care is rewarding, it can be challenging. The organization aims to alleviate these challenges by hiring clinicians fit for the role and providing the tools, resources, and support for them to grow.

One of the ways the organization does this is through the [Nurse Residency Program](#) which supports new home care nurses by pairing them with seasoned nurses as RN preceptors. The program has been instrumental in reducing turnover rates among new hires. There were also new partnerships with area nursing schools, including a special program with Touro University. This program covers tuition costs and includes home care-specific courses, with graduates committed to working with VNS Health for two years.

Dan also emphasized the importance of frontline managers in retaining and supporting clinical staff. Managerial roles have been redefined to focus on clinical teams and patients, reducing administrative burdens and enhancing recruitment and retention efforts.

Optimizing Value-Based Care and Analytics

Dan spoke about optimizing outcomes and quality metrics for patients, members, and clients. The organization leverages [technology and analytics](#) to integrate information into workflows, improving overall patient outcomes and providing high quality care at a lower cost. Analytics in general play a larger role by identifying home care patients with late-stage conditions for enrollment in advanced illness management programs.

These data points can help better determine the appropriate time to transition patients to hospice care or which health plan members benefit from intensive care management.

Health Care Research and Innovation

In 2024, VNS Health research led by Director of the Home Care Policy and Research Center Dr. Kathryn Bowles contributed to the [CDC adding a new diagnostic code](#) for sepsis in the ICD-10 list.

Kathryn's team reviewed 165,000 sepsis survivors' records across the country and found only 7% of admission assessments noted their sepsis history. Dan highlighted how this initiative aimed to improve the quality of care by ensuring clinicians are aware of patients' sepsis history during home care admissions.

Growth in 2025

VNS Health is on the path to expansion and Dan focused on key points that will help drive growth. Acquisition and growth of health plans in the Upstate region is one crucial part of the organization's growth. Positioning VNS Health to be the top choice for potential clinician hires is another major focus. 2024 programs like the CCBHC are expected to grow and improving connections across various lines of business across the organization.

Dan also mentions how advocacy for increased home health care funding and reimbursement rates continues to be a priority. The organization is also monitoring policy decisions under the new administration to guide advocacy efforts.

VNS Health will continue to drive forward with its strategic priorities in 2025. The organization and all team members remain committed to providing high-quality care to all New Yorkers.

Read the full interview [here](#).