

## **CEO GUIDES HOSPICE WITH BIZ SMARTS**

Atlanta Business Chronicle - July 21, 2006

by Karen Dean

Contributing writer

The world of capital market investors and stock options seems a long way from nonprofit organizations and fund-raising. But Mark Oshnock thinks the differences are negligible.

"Donors look for the same thing profit investors do," he says. "Are my funds being used wisely, and are we seeing favorable results and outcomes?"

As CEO of Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta since 2004, Oshnock is providing those favorable results. The landmark Atlanta health-care operation has one of the best track records in patient care among home health-care providers in Georgia.

Started in 1948, the nonprofit Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta may certainly be the oldest. From an initial staff of two nurses to the current staff of nearly 500, it serves an expanded metro area of 26 counties and provides a variety of home health services including nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, Alzheimer's care, pediatric home health care and home hospice care. It also operates Hospice Atlanta Center, the state's largest nonprofit hospice.

Although Oshnock has assumed a new role as CEO, he is no newcomer to the health-care field. He is a recognized expert in the industry and currently serves on the board of the Georgia Department of Community Health and the Atlanta Health Services CEO Forum.

A certified public accountant, Oshnock began his career at accounting firm Arthur Andersen. He eventually began working with the company's health-care clients and in the early '90s launched Andersen's healthcare consulting practice.

When Oshnock left Andersen in 2002, he and several former Andersen employees formed a consulting group. In 2004, when Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta began a nationwide search for a new leader, Oshnock was asked to serve as interim CEO. But the position was a good fit and organization leaders offered him the job on a permanent basis.

The numbers show he's doing well. Tracked by Medicare statistics, Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta has one of the lowest rates of hospital readmission for patients. Readmission rates are widely viewed as indicative of the level of care patients receive from the home health-care organizations. According to Medicare statistics, Georgia's average readmission rate is 29 percent. Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta averages just 21 percent.

Piedmont Hospital has a successful relationship with the organization that spans more than 30 years.

"They stand alone on the service delivery and quality," says Adrienne Feinberg, director of patient care coordination at Piedmont Hospital. "It says a lot that they've been able to maintain their reputation for so many years and still stand out as a leader in home care and hospice services."

Piedmont refers about 170 patients a month for health-care services and closely tracks the results. Feinberg says patients who have used Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta frequently request it for continuing care.

Many for-profit companies have become strong competitors, meaning Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta has to differentiate itself.

Oshnock has a clear vision for doing that: providing exemplary patient care. To that end, he's already made several major changes expected to significantly improve patient service.

"As health care evolves over the next five to 10 years, I believe technology will be a driving factor," he says. "It makes clinicians more efficient, which in turn makes their jobs more appealing."

Of course, technology does not come cheap, and spending is always a concern for nonprofits. Oshnock credits the longtime support of Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta's donors as instrumental to the development of these services. In 2005, donors contributed about \$3.8 million.

---

[Home](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Directions](#)

[Site Map](#)

(c)2004, Visiting Nurse | Hospice Atlanta - All Rights Reserved

[Contact Webmaster](#)