
Hospice Nurse at Visiting Nurse / Hospice Atlanta Brings Personal Experience to Her Role of Helping Others

Aisha Dioubate, R.N., has experienced hospice care from both sides – as a nurse and as a mother. One of her children suffered from spino cerebellar ataxia, type 2, a progressive genetic disease, and spent three months on Visiting Nurse /Hospice Atlanta's home hospice program when she was a just six years old.

"I didn't know anything about hospice; I just knew Andrea was declining and that I needed help," admits Dioubate, 31, who was in nursing school at the time.

After graduating from the Clayton State University Department of Nursing, Dioubate launched her career on the neuro ward at Northside Hospital. She moved to North Fulton Regional Hospital to work in rehab, and later transitioned into home health.

Now she has come full circle, returning to Visiting Nurse/Hospice Atlanta as a hospice nurse. It is giving her a chance to give back to an organization that gave so much to her. When she took the job, however, she didn't realize she would be reporting to the same nurse who cared for



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Andrea before she died – Nina Leonard, RN, MSN. Leonard now oversees the nursing staff in both the pediatric and adult programs.

"I was very uneducated about hospice when Andrea was first on the program," Dioubate admits, "but I remember how much Nina did for us. Now I've learned more about hospice and I love it. It's a wonderful thing to be able to do. I love being there for the patients, caring for their needs when they are dying, their families too. The families are sometimes more demanding than the patients are because no one wants to lose a loved one. We care for patients in every way we can, especially pain control, and educate the families about what's going on and what to expect."

Says Leonard: "People say 'I know how you feel' when counseling a family whose child is dying, but they don't really. Aisha truly knows. It's a different level of compassion."

Dioubate now lives in Alpharetta with her husband and their three children, none of whom carries the gene for spino cerebellar ataxia.