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VNSNY Names Dan Savitt as Next CEO

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The Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY) announced Thursday that its board of directors has selected Dan Savitt to take over for current CEO Marki Flannery when she steps down at the end of January 2021. Savitt has served as VNSNY's CFO and an executive vice president since early 2018.

Founded more than 127 years ago, VNSNY's offerings include home health, hospice and palliative care, plus mental health services and more. VNSNY also delivers private-pay care management and home health aide services through its Partners in Care business.

It additionally operates a selection of health plans through its managed care affiliate, VNSNY CHOICE.

The transition of the CEO title from Flannery to Savitt had been in the works since last fall, the organization noted in a press release announcing the news. In searching for a new CEO, VNSNY's board specifically prioritized finding somebody who was already in-house.

"We sought a proven leader who had been in the trenches with our staff, working daily to ensure VNSNY's continued place as the country's most effective not-for-profit home and community-based mission-driven organization," Dr. Andrew N. Schiff, chairman of the VNSNY board, said in the press release. "Dan Savitt is the perfect fit to lead our organization forward as we seek to grow and expand our ability to serve the most vulnerable."

Since March, VNSNY and its team of in-home clinicians have "been in the trenches" battling the coronavirus.

When the virus initially began spreading across the United States, New York quickly emerged as the world's epicenter. The state has had more than 409,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 overall — and over 32,000 deaths.

VNSNY became one of the first home health organizations to care for large numbers of COVID-19 patients.

In early April, VNSNY announced it had started accepting COVID-19 referrals from area hospitals. By the end of May, it had cared for more than 2,000 COVID-19 patients, all the while burning through costly personal protective equipment (PPE) and managing sudden drops in admissions — challenges that also plagued the home health industry at large.

VNSNY leadership [discussed the impact the coronavirus had on its operations](#) during an April HHCN webinar.

“Every one of us — at either a leadership level or throughout the organization — is online working from home, answering emails, having conversations virtually and in meetings that are specifically related to COVID-19,” VNSNY Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer Michael Bernstein told HHCN at the time.

Flannery has been at the helm for all of it — and more. She has spent close to 39 years running various parts of VNSNY's business portfolio.

After a brief time away from the organization, she returned in April 2018 to assume the CEO position, originally agreeing to stay on for one year. At the board's request, Flannery extended that timeline to Jan. 31, 2021.

Apart from its COVID-19 response, VNSNY has aggressively pursued new business opportunities under Flannery's leadership, including the launch of VNSNY's new care management offering, VNSNY Care360° Solutions.

“Marki's leadership since her return as CEO has been nothing short of inspirational,” Schiff said. “She has delivered results well beyond our wildest expectations, before and during the pandemic, and we are certain she will continue to do so for the next seven months.”

In his EVP and CFO roles, Savitt has mostly focused on finance, technology and business-intelligence decisions.

Prior to joining VNSNY, Savitt served in leadership positions with United Health Group, Landmark Health and U.S. Acute Care Solutions.

“Dan has passion for the VNSNY mission coupled with a deep understanding of the drivers of our business and the needs of the people we serve,” Flannery said in the release. “I look forward to working with Dan and my executive team to ensure a smooth and seamless transition.”