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Home Care Hero Eileen Baez



While the coronavirus pandemic has been a fearful and uncertain time for all of us, one Staten Island nurse, Eileen Baez, with The Visiting Nurse Service of New York (VNSNY), has played a vital role in the lives of her patients throughout the crisis with attentive care, education and perhaps the most overlooked tool of all: a smile.

Baez has been a nurse with VNSNY for more than 28 years and has seen firsthand the resilience of her New York colleagues and patients. During this unprecedented COVID-19 public health crisis, she has been helping patients as they recover and grow stronger after being discharged from hospitalization with COVID-19. Going the extra mile day in and day out, she helps quell the anxiety brought on by the pandemic with facts, compassion and highly skilled care.

Armed with VNSNY's special COVID-19 care kits, she ensures the safety of her patients — and herself — as she makes her daily home-visit rounds.

Patient and family education is paramount as the crisis continues, and is always an integral part of home care.

"I like to do one-on-one teaching," says Baez, "It's one of the reasons I chose home care. In their homes, patients are

very receptive and willing to ask questions, whether it's about drinking water, doing their exercises or taking medications."

She adds: "With COVID-19 and a possible second wave on the horizon, we make sure all of our patients, and especially those in COVID-19 recovery, know about and are practicing precautions like wearing masks, hand-washing and social distancing."

VNSNY also makes sure they know what symptoms to watch for in case there's a relapse or a family member is exposed outside the home. "There's a lot of confusion and fear out there," Baez adds. "We work to calm people and make sure they stay safe."

While in the field, Baez is also helping to educate the next generation of home care nurses.

With PPE and a smile, Baez has displayed the same kind of resilience she's seen in her own patients, all while helping New York battle the COVID-19 crisis each day with care, optimism, humor and encouragement.