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Clarkson Receives 2015 HPNA Vanguard Award

Brenda Clarkson, the executive director of the Virginia Association for Hospice & Palliative Care, was presented the award during the 2015 American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM)/HPNA Annual Assembly in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

PITTSBURGH (March 3, 2015) – Brenda Clarkson, RN, the executive director of the Virginia Association for Hospice & Palliative Care, is the recipient of the 2015 HPNA Vanguard Award, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association announced today. The award, formerly the HPNA Leading the Way Award, recognizes a nursing leader who has uniquely led the way in palliative nursing specifically related to HPNA. The HPNA board of directors selected Clarkson for her pioneering spirit and long-term, continuous leadership in the field of palliative nursing.

During her career, Clarkson has made numerous professional contributions, including serving as a founding board member of the Hospice Nurses Association (now the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association) and as the second president of the association, as well as being a founding board member and the first president of the National Board for Certification of Hospice Nurses (now the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center).

Clarkson has served in numerous clinical and administrative positions, including hospice nurse, clinical manager, and administrator. She founded the first hospital-based inpatient hospice unit in Virginia and has developed, marketed, and implemented a comprehensive range of consultative services for hospice and home health agencies. She has developed and implemented numerous innovative programs and services that have improved the delivery of hospice and palliative care services to patients and their families, such as a virtual quality improvement department with hospice clients, an orientation program for hospice nurses and a system-wide project to integrate palliative care into a catholic health system.

Clarkson has presented at state and national conferences on topics ranging from compassion fatigue, improving nurse retention through mind/body technologies, communication skills, documentation for compliance, developmental stages of hospice team members, and regulatory compliance and clinical excellence. She recently co-authored a book, *The Heart of Hospice: Core Competencies for Reclaiming the Mystery*, with the intent of preventing the heart of hospice from being lost in the midst of challenges currently facing hospice programs.

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About HPNA

With more than 11,000 members, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association is a national non-profit organization of nursing professionals specializing in the specialty of palliative nursing across the life span continuum. With a mission to advance expert care in serious illness, it is the only nursing organization of its kind. HPNA and its two affiliated organizations, the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Foundation and the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center, have a vision to transform the care and culture of serious illness. To learn more, visit HPNA at hpna.advancingexpertcare.org.

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