

JANUARY 2026

# Highland Park

N E I G H B O R S



**They Never Miss A Shift**  
**Steve Wilneff & Mike Glickman:**  
*Highland Park's Home Care Experts*

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 Missing: Cristina C. Kate W. AnDenice M. Skip F.



# North Shore Compassionate Care: A Promise Kept in Highland Park

By Paul Clements | Photos Courtesy of North Shore Compassionate Care

The holiday season in Highland Park often brings more than just festive gatherings and reunions; it brings a moment of reckoning for many families. Adult children return home to find that a parent is not doing as well as they claimed over the phone. The house is a little less tidy, the mail is piling up, or a routine walk has become a shuffle. It is in these quiet, often worried conversations between siblings that the search for help begins.

For Steve Wilneff and Mike Glickman, co-founders of North Shore Compassionate Care (NSCC), this scenario is not just a business trend; it is the entry point into a relationship built on trust, dignity, and a refusal to compromise on quality.

"Holidays are a big time for us because the kids come to visit, they haven't seen Mom or Dad for a while, and they find out the folks aren't doing quite as well as they say they are," says Glickman, the company's co-founder and COO. "We see an increase in business around Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Hanukkah. Any time when

there's a family gathering, we see families realizing they need help."

Since founding the agency in 2015, Wilneff and Glickman have built their homecare agency, North Shore Compassionate Care, into a pillar of the Highland Park community. Located on Old Deerfield Road, the agency has grown rapidly by adhering to a simple yet rigorous philosophy: stay independent, pay caregivers more, and never let technology replace the human touch.

## THE "WHY": A PERSONAL MISSION

To understand the ethos of NSCC, one must look past the business metrics and into the personal histories of its founders. Both men are long-time residents of the North Shore—Wilneff grew up in Wilmette and has lived in Highland Park for 35 years; Glickman grew up in Glencoe and has been in the area for 45 years. They were high school classmates at New Trier West, graduating in 1975. But their paths to home care were markedly different.

Wilneff, the company's President, spent his career in sales and marketing. The

economic downturn of 2008 caused a cut in marketing budgets and Wilneff began to explore other options. It was his observation of the changing demographics that sparked the idea for NSCC.

"I'm a student of history, and would watch cable news in the afternoons. Every other commercial was for homecare," Wilneff says. "I know that we're an aging population. I kept thinking about the biggest demographic, the Baby Boomers. They're living longer, their medical care is better, and connecting the dots helped me understand the huge need for quality homecare."

For Glickman, a CPA and attorney who served as general counsel for a subsidiary of Prudential, the motivation was deeply personal. His brother, Alan, had cerebral palsy and was married to a blind woman, Roberta, for 36 years. Watching them navigate life together was a lesson in resilience, but as Alan's health declined, the need for outside help became undeniable.

"I'm good at what I do, but I'm not a good caregiver," Glickman admits candidly. "I was bathing him and doing the transfers, and it became a real dignity issue. Alan didn't want his siblings attending to his personal care. It was painful for everyone."

The family hired a caregiver, first for a few hours a week, then eventually for 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The impact was transformative.

"The dignity issue went away. They were getting better care. My life got better because I didn't have to worry if Alan was getting the care he deserved," Glickman says. "So when Steve originally approached me about starting this agency, knowing the effect it had on my family is primarily why I agreed to get into the business. That, coupled with my desire to give back to our community made this a perfect business opportunity."

### THE INDEPENDENT ADVANTAGE

In an industry dominated by national franchises, Wilneff and Glickman made a critical decision early on: they would remain independent. This choice was not merely about control; it was about quality.

"We investigated the franchise route, and it was not for us," Wilneff says. "Being independent means no territory restrictions so we can accept clients wherever they live. Independence frees our agency from paying inordinate royalties to a franchise. That factor allows us to pay our caregivers more. Further, at interviews, we turn away approximately 40 percent of the people that come to interview. By setting a higher standard and increasing compensation allows us to hire the best people."

The agency's hiring process is rigorous. In their Highland Park office, they have built a dedicated training facility equipped with



a hospital bed, wheelchairs, walkers and even an old easy chair to train caregivers in helping dad up from his favorite spot.

"We actually have them demonstrate their skills," Wilneff says. "The interview team will take the candidate down to the training area. There are very standard and appropriate ways to do the necessary assistance such as transferring, turning and changing the bed." The time in the training area gives NSCC a real look at the skills and techniques of a potential hire.

### "WE NEVER MISS A SHIFT"

The home care industry is notorious for scheduling reliability issues. A flat tire or a sick child can leave a senior alone and vulnerable. NSCC combats this with a proprietary, hands-on scheduling system and a motto that they take literally: "We Never Miss a Shift."




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"We currently have over 5,000 hours a week of service, and we never miss a shift," Wilneff states proudly.

To achieve this, they have built a redundancy system that is virtually unheard of in the industry. They employ an on-call team—caregivers paid to be available on weekends and holidays even if they aren't called in. If a scheduled caregiver calls off, a backup is ready. If all else fails, one of the agency's nine field supervisors will step in.

"This system evolved because the pressure on us was so dramatic to get these shifts filled," Wilneff says, recalling the early days of the business. "My awful sounding text alert would go off at two in the morning. Mike and I had to respond immediately to every message. We would run to our computers and begin dialing for the appropriate substitutes for a 7am shift. It was tough. Now, we have 15 people standing by that can go at a moment's notice. To us, it's a godsend."

This obsession with reliability extends to how they match caregivers with clients. In an era of predictive algorithms and automated staffing, NSCC remains steadfastly analog in its decision-making.

"We were actually approached by a company that is very heavy in predictive software that would allow them to place caregivers simply by activating a shift," Wilneff recalls. "We said no. We don't do that for the business we founded and nurtured. It's very important for us to be sure that we match the caregiver that will do the best job for our client."

Instead, the office team gathers around a kitchen table to discuss every new case.

"We will sit together and go through our pool of caregivers to find the right person," Glickman says. "It takes a lot of time, but it's a much better result. It's a giant puzzle. We have to take into consideration the physical and mental issues of the client, the matching skills of the caregiver and then we have to look at availability and the geography. At that point we start

dialing until the shift is filled with a qualified caregiver."

### THE DAILY PULSE

The hands-on management style of Wilneff and Glickman is not just a marketing talking point; it is a daily ritual. Every morning at 8:30 a.m., the entire office staff, including the founders, convenes for a conference call to review every single active case.

"We go through each case," Glickman explains. "It can be 'Mr. Smith is fine, Mrs. Jones has a manicure at 11am, Mrs. Williams is having new issues with her memory problems, we need to alert the family for a consultation with the doctor, or 'this happened last night at Levin, this new case is happening, and we have to be aware of this.' It's an excellent and tough way to start the day because you're going through everything that needs to be done, but it just gives us the ability to run this company the way it should be run."

This level of scrutiny ensures that no detail is missed. If a client's condition changes—perhaps a decline in mobility or a new medication—the team knows immediately. They utilize a unique structure where every client is assigned a three-person supervisor team.

"Nobody else does this," Wilneff says. "The lead supervisor is typically the person that goes on the initial assessment, and then we assign two additional supervisors to be in charge of the case. They communicate with the client, the caregivers, and the family."

This structure provides a safety net for families who are often overwhelmed by the complexities of care management. It also allows NSCC to bridge the gap between home care and facility care. Wilneff notes that about 30 percent of their clients actually live in assisted living facilities but require more attention than the facility staff can provide.

"The average person thinks that when their loved ones go into a facility, they ring the buzzer and somebody comes

running to help them," Wilneff says. "Even in the best places, that's no longer the case. When the family finds out that Mom rings that buzzer and no one comes for an hour... it's a terrible feeling. We're there to assist and offer companionship and we do many of the same things we did for our client at home."

### A COMMUNITY CONCIERGE

Beyond the logistics of care, NSCC strives to bring a level of concierge service to their clients, particularly those suffering from dementia. The agency continuously trains its staff on how to engage with clients who may have diminished cognitive abilities but still retain a rich emotional life.

Glickman shares a story about the "Life Memories" printed deck of cards. A tool they provide to help caregivers interact with clients and to spark conversation.

"We have these decks of cards with questions that stimulate memories and emotions," Glickman says. "Questions like, 'Tell us about the old neighborhood, what activities did you participate in in high school,' or 'Tell us about your favorite dog.' It just gives people the idea of what to communicate."

Glickman recalls a personal experience with a family friend who had severe dementia. She didn't recognize him whenever he would visit, but he noted that she loved talking about dogs, so on his next visit, he brought his own family dog with him. Again, she didn't remember him, but she really enjoyed having the dog there.

"Three weeks later, I went over for another visit. She looks at me and says, 'Where's the dog?' She still had no idea who I was, but she remembered me bringing the dog, which tells you that certain stimulations can stir wonderful memories and feelings. Helping our caregivers understand how to communicate with those kinds of clients is essential and very rewarding."

This deep understanding of the human element of aging is what sets NSCC apart. It is why they are deeply embedded in the

Highland Park community, sponsoring local events and charities like Gather for Good.

"Being from the community and being so connected is a huge motivation for us to succeed and excel with care for our clients. These are our people, our friends and our family. We can't let them down."

### THE LAST GIG

For Wilneff and Glickman, North Shore Compassionate Care is the culmination of their professional lives. It is a business, certainly, but it is driven by a desire to leave a legacy of care in the community they love.

"I think for Steve and for both of us, a lot of this is about our last gig," Glickman reflects. "Yes, it's a great business, but we also like giving to people. We are making a difference in the community. It's a big, overall picture for our last gig."

Wilneff agrees, noting that the satisfaction comes from seeing families find peace of mind.

"When our care changes the quality of someone's life, when someone can get back some of the relationships families have enjoyed, it makes a huge difference," Wilneff says.

As the holidays approach and families across Highland Park face the difficult decisions that come with aging parents, Steve Wilneff and Mike Glickman stand ready. They are not just a service provider; they are neighbors, experts, and partners in care.

"We are very happy with the innovations we employ and the compensations we offer our team members in order to make sure that the experience for the client is always the best," Wilneff says.



"And if there's a problem, we fix it fast. At NSCC truly, We Never Miss a Shift!"

In a world of automated solutions and corporate franchises, that simple promise—backed by two local business owners who answer their own phones—might be the most comforting gift a family can receive.

### ABOUT NORTH SHORE COMPASSIONATE CARE

*North Shore Compassionate Care (NSCC) is an independent, boutique private duty home care agency founded in 2015 by Steve Wilneff and Mike Glickman. Located in Highland Park, Ill., NSCC provides comprehensive home and facility care, specializing in support for dementia, Parkinson's, and stroke recovery. For more information, visit their office at 1510 Old Deerfield Road, Suite 222, or contact them at 800-882-3838 or [www.northshorecaring.com](http://www.northshorecaring.com).*

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