

Spring Issue
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House
Making A Difference In
Our Lives

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From The Desk of Steve Rosedale...

The Presidential elections are underway, there's a war in Iraq, terrorism haunts us, and closer to home the Governor of the State of Ohio and his department that administers the Medicaid Program (ODJFS) are gunning for us again! In addition to a 4% cut in reimbursement that we received last year, July 1st, we are expecting an additional cut of 7% this July 1st. We are combating this on two fronts. On the political side we are directly involved in both developing alternatives to the current cuts and in lobbying for these alternatives. You can help too! Contacting our State Representatives works. Invite them to our facilities and tell them we can't afford more cuts!

The other front is doing more with less. Medicaid costs have increased 8% every year while general revenues increased only 4%. As an industry and as an organization, we need to do more with less. I have no doubt that our teams of talented creative superheroes can accomplish what is necessary. ***As partners we will do what strong people must do in tough times, get tough!***

Famous Quotes

"Optimism is essential to achievement and it is also the foundation of courage and true progress." – *Lloyd Alexander*

"There is no such thing as can't, only won't. If you're qualified, all it takes is a burning desire to accomplish, to make a change. Go forward, go backward. Whatever it takes! But you can't blame other people or society in general. It all comes from your mind. When we do the impossible we realize we are special people." *Jan Ashford*

"When a man you like switches from what he said a year ago, or 4 years ago, he is a broad-minded person who has courage enough to change his mind with changing conditions. When a man you don't like does it, he is a liar who has broken his promises." -- Franklin P. Adams (1881-1960), American journalist, humorist, "Nods and Becks"

"In youth we learn; in age we understand." –*Marie von Ebner Eschenbach (1830-1916)*, Writer, author

Focus On...

“Proud To Be Part of CommuniCare”

By Kena Minnick, Executive Vice President and COO

I've had both writers and a mental block lately on what I want to write for this issue of the CommuniCator. I have wanted to find the words to express my gratitude to my fellow CommuniCare employees for working together to create the kind of homes and company we can all be proud to work for. Not many companies have a true environment of caring for and about each other. I see that type of caring every day and especially during the tough times. Each day CommuniCare is attracting and retaining the best and the brightest people in Long Term Care because of this rare and special quality. I am sincerely proud to say I work for CommuniCare and the following letter to me says it all. Thank you Marjorie Engle for sharing your thoughts and thank you to the staff at OECC for making a difference in the lives of others.

I am writing to you in hopes of having the staff at OECC recognized for their outstanding care and treatment of my mother, my father, and my family. My mother was Julianne Turner, a resident of their “Harborside Unit.” She had resided there for the past few years. I am convinced she could not have been in a better facility with better staff. My mother past away on 4-18-04, due to complications with a recent pneumonia. No matter what time of day or night, when my father or members of my family visited, she was obviously well cared for. She was always dressed, clean, dry, hair brushed, and free of any odor. She always smelled fresh. And this can pose to be very difficult with those that are incontinent. Her skin remained soft and of good color. With being immobile and medically compromised, I would not have been surprised if I were told she had skin breakdown. However this never occurred, because of the consistent and diligent care she received from her caregivers. She wasn't the easiest to feed either, yet the staff took the extra time needed to get as much intake into her as they possibly could. My father visited frequently and was very happy with her being there. He couldn't say enough good things about OECC. I took great comfort in knowing where my mother was and who was caring for her. The last two weeks of her life were very difficult for my family, especially the last two days. The staff at OECC knew this and was very, very attentive, from the front office and receptionist, to housekeeping, dietary, activities, nursing assistants, and nurses. Not one person would walk by without saying a kind word; always asking "is there anything I can get for you?" I was very touched by the staff's response when she passed. Some of them cried with us, passing hugs to me in the hall, even downstairs that evening with an aide that must have floated to the unit at some time. They should all be very proud of what they do day after day for the residents and families of those living at the facility. I can say wholeheartedly, not only as a recipient of their outstanding care and devotion, but as a fellow employee of Communicare, I am very proud of them! Thank you all...for my mother, my father, my family, and most of myself...from the bottom of my heart!

Marjorie Engle, LPN, Aristocrat Berea ICF/MR Nurse Manager

Calendar of Events

MAY

4-6th – OHCA Convention, Columbus, Ohio *An Invitation to Joining our Symphony of Better LTC Living*

6th – Nurses Day

9th – Mother’s Day

6-12th – National Nurses Day (6th) and Week www.nursingworld.org

15th – Armed Forces Day

9-15th – National Nursing Home Week – Embracing Our Heritage www.ahca.org

10-16th – National Hospital and Healthcare Week www.healthshare-tha.com

11-17th – National Hug An Elder Week www.GenAmericaServe.com

19th – National Employee Health and Fitness Day www.physicalfitness.org

26th – National Senior Health and Fitness Day www.fitnessday.com

31st – Memorial Day

JUNE

9th – Cancer Survivor Day www.cancer.org

1-17th – Nursing Assistants’ Day (1st) and Week www.can-network.org

14th – Flag Day

20th – Summer Starts

20th – Father’s Day

National Safety Month www.nsc.org

Benefit Spotlight

Healthy Living For A New You

By Rachel Stevens, Corporate Benefits Manager

Spring has officially arrived and it has me thinking about all the things that come with the warmer weather...evening walks in my neighborhood, fresh produce at our local market, swimsuit season (oh no)! Healthy living is something we can all strive for any season of the year. Not only will you feel better, it will combat illness, prevent disease in some cases, and decrease trips to the doctor or hospital. In fact, fewer insurance claims can lead to a smaller percentage of increase in yearly renewals, which in turn can lead to savings for you!

Each of our insurance carriers offers some great programs which you can utilize to better your health.

Qualchoice teams with Weight Watchers and provides members a \$46 savings on the 12-week prepayment package and a 10% savings on the Weight Watchers at Work program. You can visit www.qualchoice.com as well for personalized newsletters and tips for healthy living.

United Health Care has a great website, personalized to your situation, called www.myuhc.com. You can register and get instant access to a medical library and health and wellness newsletters and tips. You can also call the Care24 support line for help with medical, financial, and emotional issues.

Anthem BCBS offers discounts with Jenny Craig weight loss at up to 50% discounts, Global Fit savings at national health clubs,

Butt Out program that saves you up to 25% on smoking cessation programs as well as their personalized health page. Go to www.anthem.com and click on MyHealth@Anthem.

Here are 10 ways to live healthier, starting today:

Don't Smoke! If you smoke, your risk of heart disease and cancer go up. Watch out for second-hand smoke too. Constant exposure can increase your risk.

Watch your cholesterol. High cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease. Try to maintain a low-fat diet and avoid using oils when cooking. Olive oil is a great alternative!

Watch your weight. Extra fat puts you at risk for diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Try to avoid overloading on carbs, sweets and fatty foods.

Eat your veggies! A diet rich in vegetables and fruits has been linked to lower cholesterol. Some studies show a link to reduced cancer risks. Focus on variety, be adventurous and try new foods each time you visit the grocery store. 5-9 combined servings of fruits/vegetables each day is what is recommended by the Food Guide Pyramid.

Exercise! Any form of exercise will help you live a healthier lifestyle. I like to take the stairs, rather than the elevator at work. Park farther away from the building when going to work or the store. Play tag with your kids, work in your garden or dance in your living room! Even a simple change in your daily routine can lead to lasting health benefits.

Unwind. Relax, meditate, and try deep breathing or a bubble bath! Read, take a nap. It's all good for your mental health and overall well-being.

Get your blood pressure checked and don't skip on your yearly physicals. Many places offer free blood pressure checks. High blood pressure can be unaccompanied by any physical symptoms. Higher blood pressure can lead to heart disease. Don't skip those yearly physicals and trips to the OB just because you feel fine! Early detection and prevention are great medicine.

Drink lots of water! Try to avoid soft drinks and other drinks loaded with sugar.

Take things slowly, the best way to lose weight and make lifestyle changes is to go a few steps at a time. Fad diets and rapid weight loss may feel good in the short term, but usually the weight comes back, plus some extra. Focus on healthy living and feeling good versus a rapid weight loss.

Finally, remember that it's ok to have a day of indulgence.

Eating a slice of cheesecake and a pizza dinner, and not exercising for a day is okay. It's better to give in to your cravings now and then, than to be consumed by the thoughts of them.

Here is one of my favorite recipes for a tasty, low fat dinner. I hope this has started you thinking of how to get on the road to better health. Enjoy!

Broiled Tilapia w/ Fresh Mango Salsa

2-4 Fresh Tilapia Filets

2 cups of cooked rice

Chop mixture of mango pieces, green onions, red peppers, tomatoes, red onions. While you are cooking the rice, pan fry or broil the tilapia filets with a non-fat cooking spray for a few minutes on each side. Tilapia cooks fast and is very mild.

Mix your mango and veggies together and set aside. To serve, place the cooked fish on the rice, and top with the mango salsa mixture.

For dessert, a bowl of fresh fruit.

Share Corner *from Our Facilities*

What a “Can Do” Attitude Can Do!

By Tammy Weis, Director of Business Development

I am continually amazed by the ability each of your facilities demonstrates to handle difficult situations with compassion and grace. The following letter was received by Regency Manor from one of their Hospice providers and again, demonstrates the level of commitment I know you ALL strive to demonstrate each day. Congratulations Regency Manor!

Dear Kathie & Greg,

I wanted to bring to your attention the great job the Cottage A staff has done with one of our patients.

On Friday, we received a referral from a physician who had a patient with some very complex needs. The patient had recently been discharged from a skilled facility with home care. When the home care agency evaluated the patient, they simply told her that they couldn't care for her. Consequently, they left the woman "high and dry." We received the referral to care for her and knew that she needed to be in a facility. We called Mary Jo Barnes who said quite simply, "we can handle it - bring her on over." Because of the complexity of the IV meds, one of our RNs thought it best to also touch base with the unit manager, Lisa Sturgell. Lisa was very comfortable with the patient's complex care and assured our nurse it would not be a problem. Our nurse was amazed at Lisa's "can do" attitude with all the issues surrounding the patient.

We discussed the status of the patient this morning in our Monday meeting. On more than one occasion, the words, "incredibly competent" were used to describe the care the Cottage A staff was giving this patient. Your staff has been instrumental in helping to stabilize this patient and have been a real pleasure to work with.

Thanks to Cottage A for their commitment to excellent care and a "can do" attitude!

Matt Kehlmeier
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Pine Valley Corner

Kiss The Pig

By Ruth Hardke, Pine Valley

Our CommuniCare Cares Team at Pine Valley is having a Kiss The Pig Contest! Each department head, Unit Manger and Dan has a piggybank. The person with the most money in their bank on April 22 has to kiss a real pig at the staff meeting. This is to raise money for our committee! We are keeping an up-to-date graph of who is winning at the front desk. Anyone wishing to donate to any bank, please let Ruth Hardke know!

In Memory Of...

By Dan Blechschmid, Administrator

Last month, one of our former long-time employees, Patti Lovell, lost her courageous battle with cancer. Patti worked at PV for 16 years as a nursing assistant, then in activities both as an assistant then the director of the department, and finally as our administrative assistant. She was known for her sense of humor and ability to make our residents laugh. She welcomed our visitors warmly and could put new staff members at ease. She adored her job here and had told me once she would rather be at work than at home. She was truly a fixture at Pine Valley. Please remember in your thoughts and prayers Patti's son and daughter, Chris and Crystal; her granddaughter, Kamryn; her mother, Betty; and sister Susan.

Share Corner (Cont.) *from Our Facilities*

Inspirational

Just Do Your Best

By Doris Proctor, Regional Director of Marketing

The title of an inspirational poem, but at the same time, great advice. Burlington House and its employees will never be quite the same again having had the opportunity to care for and grow in love with “Annie.”

Born Sara Ann Gregory, her sister, Sue Breiner shares that Annie was challenged from the moment of birth. Downs Syndrome, and later in life, Dementia, were never big enough barriers to stop Annie from making a difference. Even her death on January 14, 2004, has not concluded her involvement in our lives, but rather, been an acceleration of the strength and inspiration that she fueled in us.

Niki, Burlington’s Social Service Director has a hand-written copy of “Just Do Your Best” hanging above her desk. It is a gift that she uses to pull on, for personal and professional strength, while often sharing it with those that just need a little uplift. Annie found this beautifully written poem many years ago and decided then, that it was the source of inspiring words to live by. Daily recitation to build character, Annie also shared it with her niece, Joelle, when her college classes and requirements were personally challenging. Like the rest of us, Joelle was touched by its words, but more so because someone very challenged, yet very special cared enough to share. It is our pleasure to share with you now...

Just Do Your Best

Author Unknown

*Just do your best in whatever you do,
Though sometimes it may not be easy for you.
Half-heartedness never accomplished a goal,
And positive thinking is food for the soul.*

*Just do your best, that’s all one can ask,
In spite of the odds, whatever the task,
So what if you work up some old fashioned sweat,
You first have to give, before you can get.*

*Just do your best with what you have got,
And though it is little, or if it’s a lot,
You’ll know in your heart, when each day is through,
You’ve done everything, God expected of you.*

“I love you. Good Luck! Annie

Making A Difference In Our Lives

The Following is something to make each of us stop and think.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America contest
4. Name 10 people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last 5 Academy Award winners for best actor/actress
6. Name the last 10 years World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is, none of us remember all the headliners of yesterday. These are not second rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. Unfortunately, the applause dies, awards tarnish, achievements are forgotten. So take another quiz and see how you do:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name 3 friends who have helped you through difficult times
3. Name 5 people who have taught you something that you will never forget.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel special and appreciated.
5. Think of five people with whom you enjoy spending time.
6. Name 5 heroes whose stories have inspired you.

Easier? The lesson is this: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They are the ones who care. Today stop and think about those people and thank them for making a difference in your life.