

THE homepage

NEWS FROM YOUR HOME CARE PROVIDER Summer 2005

New Computer Technology Spells “High-Touch, High-Tech” Nursing at Care Corp

Gone are the days when the doctor needed only a little black bag to hold all the tools necessary for a home care visit. Care Corporation, Geauga County’s full-service home health care provider, recently placed state-of-the-art computer technology into the hands of their nurses with the purchase of 12 laptop computers.

What will this mean for patients? According to Elizabeth Petersen, RN, Vice President of Operations at Care Corp, “This new computer technology improves the quality of information available to our nurses, therapists, and other professional clinicians. While Care Corp’s hands-on, quality care is not affected, Care Corp is beefing up the

quality of information immediately available to its staff. Care Corp’s nurses will now have access to up-to-the-minute information on each patient – which is particularly useful to the on-call nurse who needs the latest information to identify

changes in a patient’s condition during an emergency night call.”

“I think everyone recognizes that it’s the wave of the future – the electronic management of information,” Petersen adds. “If you’re going to keep up in the health care field and provide the best possible care to your patients, you need this type of technology.” Prior to joining Care Corporation 21 years ago, Petersen worked (on and off for 25 years) as a nurse in critical care and the emergency room at Geauga Hospital, while raising her two sons.



So perhaps “high-touch, high-tech” best describes Care Corporation’s transition into the future. Jason Baker, Vice President of Finance and Marketing, credits Petersen for suggesting the move toward electronic information management. “Liz recognized our old computer system had serious drawbacks. We discussed this and knew there must be an easier way for our nurses to do their documentation.” Baker immediately started researching.

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Care Corp purchased Misys, one of the top software programs in the country, in 2003 and started implementing the new software in the back office – accounting, billing, etc. Baker says the software offers superior accounting packages, but the real impetus for this purchase was this software was designed by nurses for nurses.

Petersen says, "We talked to the nurses over the past two years to let them know the transition to laptop computers was coming. I welcomed the challenge to computerize operations. I love doing something new and different, and I loved the opportunity to teach our staff. It's good to keep learning."

"Laptop computers will provide Care Corp's nurses with immediate access to a patient's entire medical record during a house call," Jason Baker, the son of Shirley Baker, RN, founder and CEO of Care Corp, explains. "While in a patient's home, our nurses can enter information about his or her condition and treatments, eliminating the need to rewrite it into patient charts at the office. This provides several benefits: reduced paperwork; strengthened security of patient information; and improved ease in submitting information elec-

tronically, as required by the state."

"A nurse's job revolves around knowledge, and this tool will give Care Corp's nurses more timely and accurate information," Baker adds. "Care Corp made the decision to spend the money knowing that one night in the future the on-call nurse will have the information needed to make a life-saving decision because up-to-date information was available at her fingertips."

And how has Care Corp's nursing staff responded to this change – particularly those with more than 25 years of nursing experience but who have never even touched a computer?

"Unbelievable. Cooperative. Optimistic. They have all responded positively," Petersen exclaims, proudly. "I would not trade our staff for any other. It's been a tremendous amount of work and required a big commitment on their part. We're working days, evenings, and weekends, and each nurse and professional clinician will be trained on Misys and using the laptop computer by August. That is the beauty of our staff. They do what they need to do to get the job done. I can't say enough about them."

She says that paperwork is the biggest drudgery or negative to home care. "Anytime you can stream-

line the paperwork, it's a welcome change. Once some of our nurses learned how to use the computer, they loved it and said they would never go back to paper. Our goal is that our nurses take the computers on each home visit. They will then leave with 80 to 100 percent of the work done," Petersen explains.

She concludes, "This has also been a great opportunity for everyone to learn how to use a computer. Nowadays, everything is computerized. I'm hoping this will help our nurses and other clinicians in other areas of their lives."

INSIDE CARE

Dr. Robert Evans, D.O., family practice, medical director for Care Corporation, has been appointed to Board of Directors of the American Medical Directors Certification Program. This program offers certification for medical directors in the long-term care continuum.

Congratulations to **Sandy Fife, Home Health Aide for Care Corporation**, who was recently named Home Health Aide of the Year! Sandy does an exceptional job working with patients, and her supervisors, coworkers and patients say she is dependable, hard working and a joy to know.

Care Corp Home Health Aide Jan Turk has two daughters off doing interesting things. Michelle Turk is currently volunteering in Panama teaching "cleanliness," while Allison Turk is attending World United College in New Mexico. Students from all over the world attend, and Allison was one of 50 applicants accepted out of a pool of 400 applicants. This summer she will also be in New York teaching autistic children.

Best wishes to **Lisa Milgate, Receptionist at Care Corp**, and her husband Corey on the purchase of their first home.

Tanner Joseph Krantz was welcomed into the world on July 4th at 7'15" and 20 oz. to Karie (Takacs) and Steve Krantz. Tanner is the second grandchild for **Marty Takacs, RN, Manager of Skilled Services at Care Corporation**. Baby and grandma are doing fine! Marty's daughter Kristie also became engaged to Charlie Thompson on July 1.



Sandy Fife