



NEWS FROM



WINTER 2010

Home Health United

With a little help from her friends

For 26 years, Muriel Zwickey worked as a secretary at LaFollette High School. She often sees former students in various settings around town. Her hairdresser is a LaFollette graduate and others often greet her around town. One day when she fell in the shower, Muriel was embarrassed to discover the paramedics who responded were also former students.

While shopping, her granddaughter remarked about how many people Muriel knows. "I can't help it I just get around," was her explanation.

These days Muriel doesn't get around too well, but she is on the mend. After three knee replacement surgeries, she had surgery to release her spinal cord from being pinched by bones in her spine. She spent six months in a nursing home and one month in assisted living before she was able to come home.

Through all this Muriel has gotten to know her Home Health United staff team quite well. Kristi Sorenson and John Navine were her registered nurse case managers. Julie Woodward, social worker, counseled her about coping with

loss of mobility, helped her complete advance directives, connected her to community transit services and the East Madison/Monona Coalition for Aging. The coalition arranged for two high school students to visit Muriel weekly. She has a special place in her heart for teenagers.

Sarah Nguyen was her occupational therapist and Marcia Lavin provided physical therapy. They helped her gain strength, made her home safer, and taught her new ways to do things around the house. Linda Watson and Darlene Zeaman provided personal care until Muriel could take care of herself.

"I have no fear of the shower any

more," she stated. "I haven't fallen since I had Home Health United come in." Sarah showed her how a shower bench and non-slip rug make it possible for her to shower herself without risk of falling. She also does her own cooking and laundry.

"I suggested how to rearrange her freezer to make it easier to get her meals with less of a reach," said Sarah.

"I am good friends with the people from Home Health United," she says. "They are special to me. I would trust them with anything."

Friends take her to church every week. Her family takes her shopping and community transit gets her to doctor appointments. When the weather was better, she enjoyed walks outside with her walker. Now she counts her steps as she moves about her condominium to make sure she is getting some exercise.

Despite her progress, Muriel would like to be able to drive herself places and walk more outside without a walker.

"Sometimes I get discouraged," she



◀ (top, left) Muriel Zwickey appreciates the service provided by Home Health United social worker Julie Woodward.

(bottom, right) Volunteers Kayla Trimborn and Mackenzie Moser visit with Muriel to help with household chores.

Message from the President

We value feedback from our patients and customers who use our services. We also seek input from those who refer patients to us including physicians, nurses, hospital discharge planners, clinic managers and case managers. (See “Survey results positive” below.) To determine how we are doing, we regularly send surveys to ask about their experience with our agency.

Overall responses are gratifying and complimentary. These responses are important as well because we continually strive to improve our service in all areas. Recently we surveyed our Meals on Wheels recipients and volunteers. Among the volunteers, 99 percent said they would recommend our service to friends or family members in need of meals. They also would recommend volunteering with HHU – Meals on Wheels to others. As for the Meals on Wheels recipients, 66 percent were extremely satisfied or very satisfied with the program. The survey also showed high satisfaction with the flavor of the meals, and the volunteers who deliver them.

Recently 92 percent of our Home Medical Equipment customers said they were satisfied with the products and/or services provided by Home Health United. The same



amount would recommend HHU to family or friends. Survey results for Home Health Services patients show 92 percent are satisfied with their care and 92 percent would recommend us to others. Eighty-six percent of the referral sources rated us excellent or very good. In hospice, 100 percent of our hospice families who responded to a survey said they would recommend HHU – Hospice to others. And, 84 percent rated HHU excellent or very good.

If you would like to see more comments from our patients and their family members, visit our web site, www.HomeHealthUnited.org, and look for “What our patients are saying.” These testimonials are the best reflection of the care we provide. I encourage you to add your story.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick Bourne'.

Rick Bourne, President & CEO
Home Health United

Survey results positive

Home Health United recently conducted a survey of referral sources with overall good results. A total of 415 people responded including physicians, clinic nurses, hospital discharge planners, clinic managers and case managers.

The survey included questions about HHU - Home Medical Equipment, Home Health Services and Hospice. Of those responding, 79 percent gave HME an overall rating of excellent or very good. Other questions were asked about HME staff, products and services.

In the section about Home Health Services, 86 percent of responders gave an overall rating of excellent or very good. The response for HHU – Hospice services was 84 percent excellent or very good.

There were many comments, compliments and suggestions from those responding to the survey.

One nurse wrote: “It is valuable having the Home Health United liaisons available in St. Mary’s hospitals for making referrals and coordinating discharge plans. It makes it easier for patients and families in being assured that the home health services are available to them at the time of discharge.”

“Thank you for the excellent service you provide, we can make referrals with confidence. I have never heard a complaint in 34 years,” wrote another responder.

HHU among top performers

Home Health United was named to the 2009 HomeCare Elite™, a compilation of the top-performing home health agencies in the United States. This annual review identifies the top 25 percent of agencies and further highlights the top 100 and top 500 agencies overall. Winners are ranked by an analysis of performance measures in quality outcomes, quality improvement, and financial performance.

“The 2009 HomeCare Elite winners demonstrate a commitment to providing their patients with the best possible care while performing at the highest level,” said Nancy Buller, senior director of marketing communications at OCS HomeCare. “We congratulate Home Health United on being one of the top home care agencies in the country.”

According to Rick Bourne, Home Health United President and CEO, “We are excited to achieve the HomeCare Elite status again this year. It demonstrates our staff’s ongoing commitment to providing the highest quality home care services in the most cost effective manner.”

The 2009 HomeCare Elite is the only performance recognition of its kind in the home health industry. The 2009 HomeCare Elite is brought to the industry by OCS HomeCare, the leading provider of homecare information, and DecisionHealth, publisher of homecare’s most respected independent newsletter Home Health Line. The data used for this analysis was compiled from publicly available information. The entire list of the 2009 HomeCare Elite agencies can be viewed by visiting the OCS Web site at

Auction allows more patients to use St. Clare Hospice House

Once again, Home Health United and members of the greater Baraboo community came together to support residents of the St. Clare Hospice House at a beautiful event, “Spirit of Life – Supporting the Hospice Journey” held Nov. 12 in Lake Delton at the Wilderness Resort.

Since the Home Health United – Visiting Nurse Service Foundation underwrote the event all proceeds went to the St. Clare Hospice House Resident Fund to assist residents with financial need.

More than 275 people registered for the evening that featured a live auction and silent auction, live entertainment, fun and fellowship. A champagne toast provided by St. Clare Hospital gave a festive touch and employees of Pierces Marketplace Foods surprised the crowd by making a \$1,000 donation to the Hospice House raised through a “Casual for a Cause” campaign.

Various HHU employee groups came through again with fantastic themed

baskets for the silent auction and local businesses added to the list totaling 35 baskets. Some of the 18 live auction items went for more than \$1,000 and 500 balloon pop prizes added to the event proceeds. All together the event raised approximately \$24,000 for the St. Clare Hospice House Resident Fund.

To add to the excitement, Spa Serenity donated \$100 gift cards for over-bids on the live auction items and The Grainery provided \$30 gift cards for those bidding over the value on silent auction items.



▲ Ron Schaetzel, administrator of St. Clare Meadows, gets a little pressure to bid from Karen DeSanto at the Spirit of Life live auction.



Kudos to the committee for this year’s event: Darlene Otto, Andi Anderson, Karen DeSanto, Katie Smith, Sandy Kessenich, Sharon McArthur, Karen Reppen, Tara Zitzner, Pam Godfrey, Debbie Bauer, Nancy Hoffman, Rosy Jackson, Kelly Beetschen, Denise Gloede

Couple demonstrates true “Spirit of Life”

Matt and Collette Balfanz of Baraboo won a \$1,000 shopping spree donated by Pierce’s Marketplace at the “Spirit of Life-Supporting the Hospice Journey” event sponsored by the Home Health United – Visiting Nurse Service Foundation.

Friends and family gathered at the grocery store to watch the fun. In two minutes, Matt filled his carts with goodies like crab, steaks and roasts and then tore off to grab pizzas. The groceries added up to approximately \$1,050. Then Collette pulled out her Advantage Savings card, which brought the total down to \$827. Since it was a \$1,000 shopping spree, Pierce’s manager told Matt and Collette they could shop for the balance. In true Christmas spirit, the Balfanz family put the remaining money towards Food Pantry grocery bags to help their fellow community members.



▲ Santa (Greg DeSanto) congratulates Collette and Matt Balfanz and children Anna and Jacob after their shopping spree at Pierce’s Marketplace.

Thanks to these Spirit of Life event Supporters

Event Underwriter
HHU-VNS Foundation

Champagne Sponsor
St. Clare Hospital

Table Sponsors
Baraboo National Bank
Dental Associates, S.C.
Gunderson Construction Company
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Michelle Jones
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Giving Matters

Blizzard meals came in handy

Thanks to Lona Ehlers and the Madison Rotary Foundation, 400 Meals on Wheels recipients received two shelf-stable meals in case bad weather forces cancellation of meal delivery. The “Blizzard Meals” were distributed in December just before the first snowstorm hit.

Mrs. Ehlers made a substantial bequest to the Madison Rotary Foundation in honor of her husband S.C. “Spike” Ehlers, a long-time loyal member of the Rotary Club of Madison. Her donation established the Lona Ehlers Community Grant Program.

Home Health United - Meals on Wheels received a grant of \$1,900 to purchase the Blizzard Meals. Meal recipients appreciated the extra

▶ Meals on Wheels volunteer Bob Eby delivers a “Blizzard Meal” to Aagot Thorpe.



Volunteer profile

At 84 Bob Eby just can't slow down. Since 2000 Bob has delivered Meals on Wheels for Home Health United five days a week. Sometimes he delivers more than one route in a day.

Volunteer coordinator Sue Barker talks with Bob every day when he calls to find out where he is needed. “He delivers meals and follows up if he has any concerns about meal recipients,” she says. Bob is willing to do other little things for those he delivers to.”

“I like meeting people and making their day,” Bob explains.

This winter Bob found out just how healthy he is when he got caught in a snowstorm and had to walk about a quarter of a mile uphill in deep snow. “I’m in good shape,” he says with pride. It’s no wonder with all the walking and stair climbing he does while delivering meals.

“I plan on doing it until I’m 100,” he adds. “Delivering meals is rewarding.”

Credit union employees deliver

One of the benefits Dane County Credit Union (DCCU) offers its 54 employees is time to volunteer. Full-time employees are allowed to donate 16 hours per year of paid time and part-time employees are allowed 8 hours per year.

Last year, nine employees chose to give their time to Home Health United – Meals on Wheels. This year 13 people delivered meals.

Since one of the pick up points is located on Olin Avenue near the Rimrock Road branch of the credit union, some employees come from other locations to join with employees from that branch. DCCU employees deliver meals every other Wednesday.

“I was really pleased with the increase in volunteers this year,” said Jen Chavez, creative director for DCCU. “I am hoping we will have enough volunteers in the future to take on the route every week.”

Jen makes up the schedule and becomes an alternate if needed. The volunteers are responsible for gaining supervisor approval and arranging coverage for their absence while delivering meals.

For more information about volunteering with Meals on Wheels call (608) 276-7598.

Homemakers club visits House

The Fireside Homemakers of Wisconsin Dells recently toured the St. Clare Hospice House. Kelly Beetschen, volunteer supervisor, served coffee and cake, and told them the history of the house and our mission as an organization. They were very interested and asked many questions regarding Home Health United services.

Members said they want to learn more about hospice in the coming year. They were so gracious and donated \$100 to Home Health United – Hospice.

To schedule a tour of the St. Clare Hospice House call Kelly at (608) 356-2206, ext. 8419.



◀ John Van Dyke, registered nurse for Home Health United-Hospice, delivers cookies to Rachel Davidson of Baraboo. Pierce’s Bakery of Portage donated 90 dozen cookies for hospice patients and families. HHU-Hospice currently serves about 70 patients in 10 counties, providing end-of-life care wherever they call home.

Testimonials

Susie and Sarah were excellent. They always listened to my concerns. They always asked if they should do anything different to make me more comfortable. Overall, I think they did an excellent job.

Kristi Vinz, Home Health Services patient, Markesan

Angie was my nurse. She was extremely compassionate with me. She worked with my doctor to adjust my pain medicine. She made me feel wonderful and helped in my speedy recovery very much! She was wonderful. I will request her should I ever have my other knee replaced.

Susan Wink, Home Health Services patient, Lodi

Tammy was very good to my son, Jaxson. She also was attentive to any signs of illness coming on and made the appropriate arrangements for follow up care. She was on time and organized and offered lots of encouragement and support for me. She made me feel comfortable with caring for Jax and what I was doing. I appreciated her services. Also, Paulette is our supply lady and is prompt with all supplies. If she doesn't have something on hand, ordering it is never a problem. Our needs are always completely met.

Stacy Ripp, parent of pediatric patient, Dane

When I was discharged from St. Mary's Hospital I was told I could not put weight on my left leg. At 9:00 am I met with (the discharge planner) and she told me I would need a wheelchair and immediately made all the arrangements with Home Health United. I was discharged at 11:00 am and the chair was there.

At the time I didn't realize how valuable that chair was going to be to help me get around the house. I will definitely recommend your services.

Marian Pirkel, Home Medical Equipment customer, Madison

I was in to get my nebulizer and instructions on how to use them from the therapist. She was most helpful in explaining everything to me. I really appreciated the fact that she made a follow up call to see how I was doing. Most appreciated. It was nice to hear a live voice on the phone and not a machine.

Lynette Smyth, Home Medical Equipment customer, Edgerton

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continued from pg 3, Spirit of Life

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Help us in our mission to ensure people stay as healthy, safe and independent as possible at home. Please consider including Home Health United in your estate planning.

Your bequest can be as easy as "I hereby give and bequeath to Home Health United the amount of \$ _____ or _____ % of the remaining value of my estate for its exempt purposes."

The Home Health United - Visiting Nurse Service (HHU-VNS) Foundation administers donations, charitable gifts and bequests to Home Health United.

The proper legal designation is:

Home Health United - Visiting Nurse Service Foundation
4639 Hammersley Road, Madison, WI 53711
608-276-75090 or email at foundation@hhuvns.org
Tax ID 39-1839309

If you choose to leave a bequest to the HHU-VNS Foundation, please notify us. We appreciate the opportunity to personally express our gratitude. Please inform us if you want your donation announced publicly, or if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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