

Hospice Essay

FP Homecare

In honor of National Hospice and Home Care Month, the staff at FP Home Care was asked two questions: *Why did you choose to work in home care instead of another healthcare venue and what is your favorite or best success story.*

The answers to the first question—why home care—were remarkably similar throughout the staff of FP Home Care. The clinicians, both nurses and therapists, liked the ability to spend more time with their patients on a one-to-one basis, they liked building a real relationship with the patients and their families, they liked being able to direct the care being given.

The non-clinicians said that keeping patients independent at home was important. They said that they could imagine their own family being given the type of care that FP Homecare provides and how important it must be in the lives of all the patients. Being able to recuperate at home instead of a facility or being able to age in place was mentioned by a few of the staff.

Sharon Stucky, RN, FP Homecare Administrator, said that home care helps patients and families to cope with whatever life throws at them. Coping is a skill that can be taught and learned. Sharon's favorite success story is one she tells often at new employee orientation to exemplify home care at its best. She tells of a young mother with a very sick baby that was on home care services. In spite of poor living conditions and the lack of education, the mom was taught how best to care for her very fragile child. The baby's meds and care needs were complicated but after a while that young mother became an expert on her child's condition. Homecare made no judgments on this mother's life choices, but provided loving care and helped the family cope with the sick baby's illness.

Another success story has been touted in the news in recent weeks and because he went above and beyond to help his patient, **physical therapist Antonio Baes** was honored as the winner of the *Hospice of Marion County Employee Excellence* award for October. Antonio's patient is a double amputee and Antonio worked diligently to get the VA to pay for a very expensive and special prosthesis so that his patient would be able to become independent and walk again. The patient was discharged from FP Homecare as a success story and has a goal to return to golf soon.

Beth Vannucci, who works in the FP Homecare office, recalls the story of the patient who was able to live and thrive following a transplant donation made by the man's daughter. She says that being part of an amazing recovery like that is so profound.

The stories of success continue. **LPN Stacey Hayes** remembers a patient who was bed bound, was failing to thrive and was in excruciating pain. There seemed to be no hope left. An adjustment in the patient's medications made all the difference in the world. The quality of life improved dramatically and Stacey has never forgotten this patient.

Not all success stories are directly care related but they are significant in the patient's quality of life all the same. **FP Homecare Home Health Aide Rhoda James** had a patient who lost electricity because there was no way to physically get the payment to the company. She was involved in getting the bill paid and getting the lights turned back on. Helping to keep each patient home and independent is the purpose of home care.

Mindy Wellborn, occupational therapist, had a patient who had a stroke and had lost the use of the right arm and hand, but at the end of home care occupational therapy, the patient was independent and could eat and dress without assistance. This patient was trained for the job of living on his own.

In Lake and Sumter counties, the **RN case manager is Sandi Nastari**. While her background and experience is primarily in cardiac nursing, Sandi talked about a patient who could not care for his colostomy in the usual way, while standing in front of a mirror. Sandi constructed a mirror on a stand that allowed her patient to see and perform his colostomy care while lying in bed and this once again allowed the patient to be independent.

The stories are as diverse as the staff members. This month, join FP Homecare in recognizing the benefits and successes available to folks who take advantage of home health care.