

News for You...

Functional Pathways Employee Newsletter

Message from the President: *Customer Service*

For the New Year, I wanted to write about one of my favorite subjects, "Customer Service." Now, I know what some of you are thinking, "Dan, you need to get a life if that's one of your favorite subjects," and maybe that's true. However, I enjoy assessing the customer service skills of myself and others, and deciphering what makes up a great customer experience. I have found that one of the most important, if not the most important aspect of customer service is communication.

For example, I am currently on a flight back to Knoxville returning from a meeting. The flight is delayed and I am going to miss my connection. You would think I would be quite upset about the delay, but not so much. As we were boarding the plane, the flight attendant taking



our ticket informed us that bad weather at our destination was going to delay the aircraft. Once on the plane, the Captain then informed us that the weather had not improved, many planes were delayed, and our new wheels up time would be over an hour away. Once in flight, the Captain again informed us that air traffic control had rerouted us off course to avoid the weather, which would extend the flight. Even though there were some hang-ups, the captain and crew kept us informed the entire way. As a frequent flyer, I can tell you first-hand, this seldom happens. Normally, when I am flying and there are delays, I

am left sitting with the other passengers wondering what is happening, anxious and frustrated. This is the power of effective communication. All I ever want to know when I am traveling is what is going on. If I'm informed, whether it is good news or bad, I can prepare myself.

So, let's put ourselves in the shoes of our customers, patients, administrators, nurses, physicians, family members and the countless others we are in contact with

every day. How do they feel when they don't know what is going on? When information is available and not shared, how is that perceived? The true key to customer service is not only doing a great job, but effectively communicating the job you are doing. All of us provide the best care possible and

even though we do that, problems can still arise. Great customer service is not about never making a mistake, but making sure you communicate your successes, as well as your failures.

Dan Knorr, President

CELEBRATING
20 YEARS
1995 - 2015
Excellence in Rehabilitation

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Employee of the Months

October



Sarah Killman, CM at Celina in Celina, TN, is our Employee of the Month for October. "Today, we have had the unfortunate event of having a resident to fall and break their hip. The daughter came to visit with Karin and myself and of course was upset. Sarah could have gone the other direction when she saw an upset

family member, but she did not. She came over and helped Karin discuss the clinical side of having hip surgery and helped Karin to reassure the family on the proper course of treatment. Between Karin and Sarah, it made my job so much easier to have clinicians willing to face an upset family member and to help reassure them. For that I am really grateful and I know that the daughter was as well. It is wonderful to work with such professional clinicians."

November

Paul Nasiatka, COTA, at Tri-County Extended Care Center in Fairfield, OH, is the creative talent behind the Tri-County therapy department. He is responsible for the 'mobile pig-up line' pig that raised money for the Cookie Jar Fund. He writes all the skits the therapy department performs for the residents throughout the year and the Christmas skit for the facility staff. Paul goes above and beyond the job including visiting residents that have been admitted to the hospital. He's always willing to help other co-workers. His rapport with residents is great and they all look forward to working with him.



December



Julia Holley, our Rehab Tech at Homewood at Martinsburg in Martinsburg, PA, demonstrates a kind and caring approach with patients and staff. She represents FP with a great relationship to staff at Homewood and provides excellence customer service as needs arise. She is very deserving of the December Employee of the

Month award. We are so happy to have Julia on our team!

Employee Milestones

We recognize our employees who have reached 5 and 10 year milestones this quarter.



- **Kim Smith**, Administrative Assistant at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Mark Smith**, PT-CM at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Nancy Vaneaton**, PTA at Adamsville Health & Rehab
- **Linda Lairamore**, SLP-RM
- **Scott McQueen**, PTA at TN Vets Murfreesboro
- **Kristen Dyke**, COTA at Covington
- **Kelly Wathen**, PTA at Richwood, KY
- **Mark Romack**, OT at Woodview
- **Jessica Torres**, PTA at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Melissa Taylor**, COTA at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Karmen Reedy**, SLP at Pine Meadows
- **Mary Via**, SLP at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Amanda Sanor**, SLP at Pleasant View
- **Matthew Collier**, SLP at Sandpiper Rehab
- **Carol Robb**, Tech at Covington
- **Christin Shivers**, Tech at TN Vets Humboldt
- **Amy Starnor**, PTA-CM at Sarah Moore
- **Amanda Bates**, Tech at Woodview
- **Rebecca McKernan**, COTA at Bradford County
- **Debra Williams**, Administrative Assistant at Cheraw
- **Kim Stuffle**, Client Services Manager at Corporate



- **Phyllis Perdue**, PTA at Jefferson County Nursing Home
- **Kelli Douglas**, Lead Recruiter at Corporate
- **Stephen Hurley**, PTA at Asbury Place at Kingsport
- **Kimberly Bryant**, OT-RM

Facility Spotlight: *Jefferson Manor Health Care*



Jefferson Manor Health Care is nestled into a picturesque landscape in Brookville, PA, which boasts many specialty shops, coffee bistros, taverns, art galleries, and much more in its historic downtown. It is a neighbor to Punxsutawney--home to the infamous groundhog and weather prognosticator, Punxsutawney Phil. Brookville is also known for the nearby Cook Forest State Park and its Rails-to-Trails program, and Brookville was recently named one of the prettiest painted downtowns in America. Jefferson Manor offers skilled nursing, independent living, personal care, as well as a specialized Alzheimer's Dementia Unit. They were named Business of the Year by the Brookville Chamber of Commerce. The elite therapy team lead by CM, Carrie Park, live the FP Core Values daily and routinely participate in or host events like the Soup or Bowl Charity Food Drive, Annual Sportsman Dinner, Therapy Soup Sale for Dream Makers (raising over \$500 for resident's needs), Annual Community Trash Pick-Up, Decorated Hallway Contest (which they won last year), Prayer Breakfast, Holiday Dinner Events, Annual Blood Drive, and were the 4th leading contributor to the CJF Feed the Pig Contest. It is my honor to work with this outstanding facility and rehab team at Jefferson Manor.

- Amy Emmerling, Regional Manager

Innovation Corner

In 2014, we formed a relationship with Jintronix, a Canadian based company that powers our Virtual Rehabilitation Platform (VRP). This system uses state-of-the-art motion-capture technology to transform therapeutic exercises into goal based activities, making therapy interventions challenging and fun while improving patient motivation, duration of treatment, and functional outcomes. We are installing VRP in many of our rehab departments across the country. If your administrator would like to learn more about VRP or schedule a demo, have him/her contact your Regional Manager.

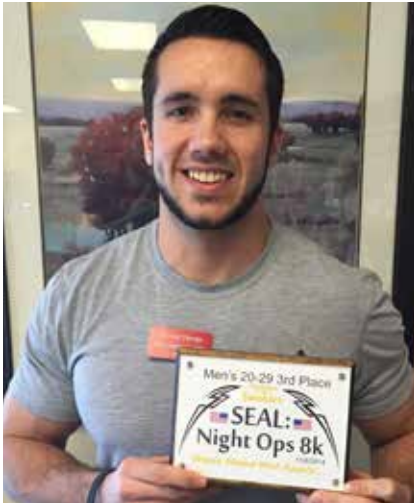


Deficiency-Free Facility

We would like to congratulate our facility who has completed their annual survey with no deficiencies for the 4th Quarter 2014!

Christian Care Center of Rutherford County

CPC of 3rd Quarter 2014



Billy Johnson was named Functional Pathways' Clinical Program Champion of the 3rd quarter for his outstanding work and dedication to the staff and residents of Christian Care Center of Johnson City, Tennessee. Billy was nominated by his manager and team for his passion in implementing and supporting excellence in clinical program development along with his ever-present positive attitude. Recently, he successfully completed an advanced training course in lymphedema earning his certification. This makes him one of only a few certified lymphedema therapists in his area! His commitment to delivering elite care has also been recognized by the facility. The facility frequently includes Billy in their marketing campaigns. He has been featured in newspaper advertisements, brochures, and even a billboard! Congratulations, Billy, and thank you for all you do!

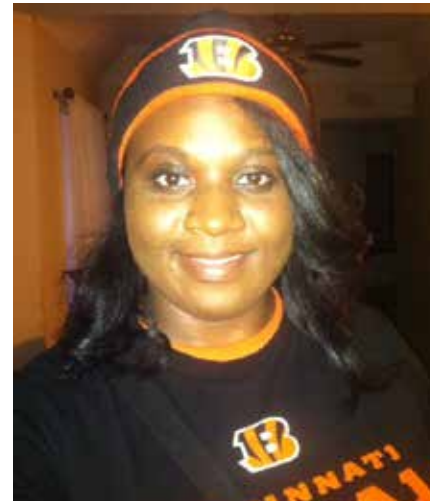
- Melissa Ward, Director of Clinical Services

CPC of 4th Quarter 2014

Functional Pathways is excited to announce the Clinical Program Champion of the 4th quarter -Denise Burley of Glendale Place in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Denise was nominated by her CM for her ongoing dedication to clinical program development in order to meet the needs of the facility patient population. She was also recognized for her innovative ideas and initiatives designed to improve the lives of the residents of Glendale Place. Denise has been instrumental in the ongoing success of their wound care program. With this program, she has taken the lead in educating staff as well as providing direct care utilizing physical agent modalities for wound healing.

In addition to her commitment to the facility, patients, families, and staff, Denise is known for her ability to brighten the room with her smile and positive energy. Thank you, Denise, for your commitment and passion for your job and Functional Pathways!



- Melissa Ward, Director of Clinical Services

GET CONNECTED TODAY!

Are you connected to FP on all of our Social Media sites?

You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube and Pinterest!

And be sure to follow our Blog!!



GET CONNECTED today to become a part of our online Communities. You will find updates on what's happening with your company and in your facilities though photos, news updates, contests and more! Please feel free to send in your facility and rehab team photos to: socialmedia@fprehab.com.

Role Model of the Quarter

Role models are amongst us in all shapes and sizes. They motivate, interact well with others, and often do not take credit for all they do. The Commit2fit Employee Wellness Program wants to recognize these people. We admire those who live a healthy lifestyle, but also want to recognize those who are making the commitment to take steps in the right direction. Quarterly, we will pick a "Commit2fit Role Model". Nomination forms may be found on the Intranet.

We are proud to announce that Shawn Coleman, Physical Therapist, at Hanover Hall in Hanover, PA is our first Role Model of the quarter for 2015. Shawn wears many hats to include her day job at Hanover Hall as a PT, wife and mother of 2, and assistant coach of the cross country team at Delone Catholic High School. She truly has a positive influence on everyone she runs into each day. Speaking of running, Shawn has completed a full marathon and several half marathons. Not only is she physically fit, she is always educating those around her. She teaches the importance of nutrition for her cross country team, even in the off season.



Shawn lost a dear friend in July 2013 to breast cancer. She, along with her husband, are lead sponsors in a local 5k in support of breast cancer. In December 2013, they had close to 600 participants and this past year for 2014 they had about 400 participants. A few from this year are pictured (left) : Shawn Coleman, PT (in her PINK Santa Hat); Lori Stickler, Dietary Manager; Ruth Smith, Beautician; Betsy Ernst, Clinical Manager; Kim King, Director of Therapeutic Recreation; Jodi Lyons, Director of Social Services.

I would also like to recognize the whole FP Team at Hanover Hall. They all seem to be inspired! Courtney Funk, Rehab Tech just completed her 1st bodybuilding competition in Nov 2014 and plans to participate in another in the Spring. Speech Therapist, Sharon Shoul, completed a 5k in November with her best time ever in a race. As a team, they participated in Functional Pathways second annual Spirit Week. Pictured (right) for 50s day: Genny Robertson, Jane Concino, Wendy Nivison, Betsy Ernst, Courtney Fink, Sharon Shoul, Morgan Soprano, and Shawn Coleman. Great job team and Thank You for being such a great example to us all!



Congratulations Shawn, and Thank You for being a great role model. You represent the FP Family well. Shawn will receive a "Be Elite" T-shirt and a Fit Bit to help her in future endeavors. We are blessed to have her on our FP Team! Commit2fit!!

-Jill Fiala, Director of Wellness

Golden Watermelon Awards

- ☺ Terry Bullis, Bradford County
- ☺ Diane Craddock, Astoria
- ☺ Caitlin Rudd, Astoria
- ☺ Nicole Pryor, Astoria
- ☺ Brandon Sells, Grace of Phoenix
- ☺ Misty Stanifer, Hancock
- ☺ Gina Kanyha & Victoria Mitchell, Village on High Ridge
- ☺ Heather Gross, Colonial Manor

If you would like to nominate someone for a Golden Watermelon Award, please fill out a nominee form and email or fax to

Paula Hargis, HR Director

phargis@fprehab.com

Fax: 888-531-2697

**Forms can be found on the intranet*

Program of the Quarter

Functional Pathways is very excited about the December release of the Pathway to Lymphedema Management program developed in conjunction with our very own Certified Lymphedema Therapist, Saundra Aldridge. Saundra is the Clinical Manager at Roan Highlands Nursing Center in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. She has extensive management and clinical experience and has been employed with Functional Pathways for 3 years.



Saundra's interest in lymphedema began in 2009 when she was diagnosed with bilateral lower extremity lymphedema following a surgical procedure. Fortunately, she was referred to a therapist for Complete Decongestive Therapy while her lymphedema was in stage I. During treatment, her therapist educated her about proper management of the condition which has been instrumental in preventing the condition from transitioning to stage II. During her treatment, Saundra realized how many of her patients could benefit from lymphedema therapy so she enrolled in the Norton School of Lymphedema where she successfully completed the certification program.

With support of the facility staff at Roan Highlands Nursing Center, Saundra has developed a strong lymphedema program, treating both inpatient and outpatients since receiving her certification in 2010. She truly has a passion for patient care and lymphedema – just ask her!

Lymphedema is a potentially serious condition caused by a blockage or dysfunction of lymph vessels or nodes, giving forth excess protein-rich fluid, which begins to accumulate, causing chronic swelling in the arms, legs, or other parts of the body. Initially, lymphedema causes uncomfortable swelling. If left unchecked, it can lead to major swelling that can lead to serious infections and, in extremely severe cases, soft tissue cancer. Lymphedema is often associated with, but not limited to, orthopedic, systemic disorders and lymphatic disorders. Lymphedema can affect infants, children, and adults of all ages.

The **Pathway to Lymphedema Management** program was developed to provide a general overview of lymphedema and treatment options to help manage the primary and secondary implications of the disorder. The lymphedema program, along with the clinical and medical expertise of the interdisciplinary team, will help identify common causes and symptoms of lymphedema in order to educate and rehabilitate the patient to their highest level of function.

- Melissa Ward, Director of Clinical Services

A Company's Values

We would like to share a section of a great blog by Paul Morris, Strategic finance leader at AlixPartners LLP, relating to a company's VALUES:

"I've been part of organizations that truly lived their core values (and even years later can recite them by heart, because they were so prominent). We all knew what they were. We all agreed they were important, or at least accepted them as such. The leadership talked about them, and everything we did as a company HAD to align to them. I left an organization once after it forgot its values and stopped talking about them because it wasn't long before the entity had lost its way. I have also been in companies that barely even mention their values – and really, what that says is, "Our core value is to make more money for our owners, whatever it takes." Not exactly compelling, but that's what is being conveyed. If that's what you're really all about, you may as well admit it, there is nothing wrong with making money."

At FP, our values define our company culture. MANY of our employees across 16 states can name all of our values by heart. But are you living those values daily? Leading each day by 'Living Your Values' is important because it creates a culture of unity. Thank you all for embracing and living the FP values each and every day!

- Angel Knorr, VP of Recruiting

Meet your Corporate Staff



We would like to welcome Melissa Ward to the Functional Pathways' family. Melissa is the Director of Clinical Services for Functional Pathways and has extensive experience in long term care and contract rehab. Prior

to joining Functional Pathways, Melissa worked as a Clinical Coordinator helping to ensure companywide clinical documentation compliance and excellence in therapy service delivery for a multi-state contract rehab provider. She has also successfully held the position of Area Manager directly overseeing the daily operations for up to 12 facilities specializing in geriatric care. Melissa's in-depth knowledge of therapy service delivery has been instrumental in guiding teams to maximize functional outcomes while maintaining an environment of patient-centered care. We are very excited that Melissa has joined our team and look forward to working with her and having access to all the skills and knowledge she brings to us. Please join us in reaching out to welcome Melissa!!



Functional Pathways is pleased to announce effective October 1, 2014, Linda Morse has joined our team as Regional Director of Business Development. Linda's primary responsibility includes the development of our growth throughout the

Southern region. She brings over 20 years of increasingly responsible experience in the long term care industry and fits perfectly into the Functional Pathways culture of providing *Elite People* who give *Elite Care* and produce *Elite Results*. Please join us in welcoming Linda to our team and she looks forward to visiting your organization soon.

New Facilities



Functional Pathways would like to welcome our newest facilities who joined FP in the 4th Quarter of 2014!

Legacy Village - Xenia, OH
MorningStar - Nazareth, PA

Functional Pathways has a new look.

Visit our website!
www.functionalpathways.com



2015 Wellness Initiatives



2015 WELLNESS INITIATIVES

For 2015 we have 2 rounds: February-June and August-December. You must choose ONE of the THREE options below for each round and complete to get credit for the Healthy Lifestyle portion on your insurance. You may choose the same for both rounds. No Pledge forms required.

Round 1: February 15 - June 30, 2015. Deadline: July 7, 2015

- all challenge entries completed and turned in by July 7th will be eligible for chance to win \$100 gift card. -

Round 2: August 15 - December 31, 2015. Deadline: Jan 7th, 2016

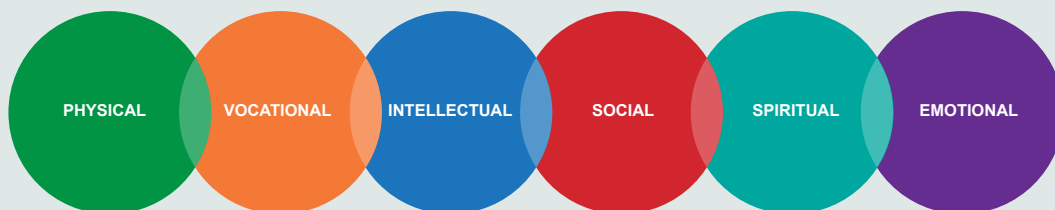
Send completed forms to Paula Hargis - Email: phargis@fprehab.com or Sfax: 855.294.0818

1. Complete the 6 dimensional surveys online: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SBD9x9z>

For each section, follow the directions for tallying score. It is important for your Commit2fit Journey to answer truthfully so you get full benefits from it. Based on the survey, create 2 goals for your Commit2fit Tracker Calendar

My Commit2fit Tracker: Attached is a calendar for Feb-June. Create 2 different goals for each month. Daily, record what you did or didn't do to achieve those goals. Life happens and may hinder your progress but being aware of those struggles is part of the journey. Turn in all 5 completed calendars at the end of the round.

2. Teambuilding Event: Choose an event, group, challenge, or something that promotes team unity within the 6 Dimensions of Wellness. Send pictures, agenda's, and/or results for proof at the end of the round.
3. Health Screens and Knowing Your Numbers are vital to your health. Provide proof via doctor's signature that you had the following preventative screens: Cholesterol, Blood Pressure, Blood Sugar, Eye Exam, Cancer screens (based on your age).



www.functionalpathways.com

The Cookie Jar Fund



We are happy to report that our pig submissions flew in! We are loved the creativity and effort put into these little piggy banks and we truly appreciate everyone's participation. If you are not aware of the purpose of the piggy banks, please let me explain. In the spirit of Thanksgiving, we held a facility-wide contest through the month of November to raise money for the CJF. Each facility was provided with their very own piggy to personalize as they wished. Both FP employees and facility staff were encouraged to participate. This contest was called "Feed the Pig!" The facility who raised the largest amount of funds by November 30th received a \$250 Wal-Mart gift card. Also, the most creative piggy received a \$50 gift card! Everyone fattened up their piggies and 100% of the proceeds went directly to the Cookie Jar Fund!

The Cookie Jar Fund also recently paired with The American Red Cross for a sale at Wolfgang Interiors in Knoxville, TN. Wolfgang Interiors donated 15% of sales to both charities. We would like to thank Wolfgang Schaeber, OT, and his crew for their wonderful support.

Events like these help raise funds and awareness for this incredible cause. Currently the fund has been fortunate to assist over 100 families with a total reaching over \$79,000! Because of your support the fund has been able to touch lives and give fellow FP employees and facility employees light at the end of the tunnel during these overwhelming times in their lives. We are so proud of the involvement and support we are seeing. Keep it up! Without you the fund fails and it's safe to say we have been experiencing success!

- April Williams, CJF Media Chair



To find out how you can donate today and to learn more about the Cookie Jar Fund, please visit us at www.cookiejarfund.com.

IMPACT Act of 2014

President Obama Signs the Improving Medicare Post-Acute Care Transformation Act of 2014 (IMPACT) Act Into Legislation



The IMPACT Act of 2014 is being likened to the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 related to the impact (no pun intended) of this piece of legislation on post-acute care providers as it sets the stage for overhauling the Medicare payment methodology for these services.

This bill, which was passed by Congress on Sept. 18., calls for 3 specific areas of new reporting:

1. Standardized Assessment

This assessment tool is to be interoperable, to allow exchange of data among post-acute care providers and others and must include common standards and definitions. The expectation is that existing assessment instruments utilized by LTACs, IRFs, HHAs, and SNFs will be modified to include the required elements of this standardized assessment instrument.

The assessment instrument will include information regarding functional status, cognitive function, special services, treatments and interventions (such as dialysis, ventilator use, chemotherapy); medical conditions and impairments such as sensory loss, incontinence or inability to swallow.

No later than October 2018, “the secretary shall match claims data with assessment data pursuant to this section for purposes of assessing prior service use and concurrent service use, such as antecedent hospital or PAC provider use, and may use such matched data for such other uses as the secretary determines appropriate.”

2. Quality Measures

In addition to the existing quality measures currently reported, the IMPACT Act calls for reporting of functional status, cognitive function and changes in function; skin integrity and changes in skin integrity; medication reconciliation; incidence of major falls; and the existence of and providing for the transfer of health information and care preferences.

While risk adjustment is mentioned in reference to quality measure reporting, it is to be done “as determined appropriate by the secretary”.

The first phase will include measure specifications such as numerator, denominator and other exclusions; data collection; and data analysis. The second phase will involve feedback reports to PAC providers. And finally, the third phase will include public reporting.

This will occur not later than two years after the specified application date (Oct 1, 2018 for home health and SNFs), and will be incorporated into existing reporting programs.

Beginning October 1, 2018, failure to report the standardized patient assessment data or quality measures will result in a 2 % reduction in payment rates.

3. Resource Use

This area is intended to capture the full cost of the post-acute care that will include total estimated Medicare spending per beneficiary (to be done at CMS through claims data); discharge to community; and measures to reflect all-condition risk-adjusted potentially avoidable hospital readmissions (however, it is worth noting that such risk adjusted measures have not been released for post-acute settings).

The secretary will apply geographic adjustments to resource use, as well as other risk adjustments, “as determined appropriate by the secretary.”

The date to begin the reporting of these three domains will be October 1, 2016 for home health and skilled nursing, October 1, 2018 for inpatient rehabilitation facilities, and January 1, 2019 for long-term care hospitals.

IMPACT Act of 2014 (cont)

Alternative PAC Payment Models

Not later than June 30, 2016 the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) shall submit to Congress a report that evaluates and recommends features of PAC payment systems; “to the extent feasible,” such report shall consider the impacts of moving from the current payment system “to new post-acute care payment systems under title XVIII of the Social Security Act”.

What Does This Mean For Skilled Nursing Facilities?

Clearly the requirements for reporting will mean new work for providers, and failure to do so will result in significant payment reductions (2%), but this is only part of the story.

Although not specifically called out by name, this legislation sets the stage for payment changes that will likely include some form of “site-neutral” payments that pay for services provided and not by setting, as well as new prospective-payment models -- including expansion of bundling.

These changes will not only impact fee-for service beneficiaries, but will also translate to Medicare managed care and private insurance payers who typically follow Medicare standards for payment.

Now is the time to put into place strategies to capture your internal quality measures and integrate them into process improvement activities, focusing on areas such as hospital readmissions, functional changes, medication reconciliation and documenting patient preferences in care.

The positive side to all of this is that the industry has long pushed for payment methods that recognize complexity of care and are not merely driven by such services as rehab. Furthermore, this will provide meaningful and standardized information to drive improved care coordination and optimal use of post-acute services.

- Sheila Capitosti, VP of Compliance & Clinical Services

Falls Prevention Program

Falls are always a concern in long term care facilities. In light of this, Jefferson County Nursing Home in Dandridge, Tenn., identified through its Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement (QAPI) process that improvement was needed in the area of falls management. As a result, we began considering a performance improvement project (PIP) by looking for an innovative way to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of falls.

Falls Prevention Program (cont)

As a result of a learning circle from among our interdisciplinary team, The Balancing Act was proposed. The intention was to strengthen some of the deficits our elders have that may contribute to falls. After the first time of doing the program, the team was in agreement that The Balancing Act was the appropriate PIP.



The Balancing Act Is Born

The goals of Jefferson County's Balancing Act are to actively engage elders who are at risk for falls, promote endurance and balance for gait stability, and enhance socialization and quality of life. The interdisciplinary team includes the activities department; therapy, including occupational, physical, and speech; housekeeping; and restorative certified nurse assistants. In addition to the team, the group is also joined by students from the local high school who are a part of a program known as the Service Learning Project. Additionally, family members of the elders take part. The group of elders includes those who have been identified as a fall risk or who have had a recent fall; however, any elder who wishes is invited to participate. The location of The Balancing Act may vary, but the program is usually held in the home's main dining room due to its size. The length of the program is typically one hour.

“Elders who participate in The Balancing Act have more minutes in therapy than elders who do not,” says Lori Toney, physical therapy assistant for Functional Pathways, the facility's therapy provider.

Therapy The Fun Way

The program usually begins with the traditional activity of gathering around a colorful parachute and using it to develop arm strength and range of motion as the elders get “warmed up.” Once the elders have warmed up, the sky is the limit on the types of nontraditional games used as exercises.

“The Balancing Act has turned into both a fun and functional program,” says Debbie Thacker, clinical manager for Functional Pathways.

Falls Prevention Program (cont)

Baseball is one popular game, with the elders hitting the ball and team members running the bases for them. They also play games that include balancing plates on their heads; throwing water balloons outside during the summer heat; volleyball, bowling, kickball, soccer; reminiscing with questions; passing a ball; and taking a turn with a stick while standing and swinging at a piñata.



The goal is to maximize elders' standing time by utilizing staff members or volunteers while the games are taking place. The games and activities are all approached by thinking with a "culture change" mindset.

How It's Working

Over the past quarter, falls have been reduced up to 15 percent. The Balancing Act is used as a possible intervention when an elder falls and the program has potential to strengthen them. The program is growing not only in terms of elders who are participating, but with the number of volunteers and family members. The activity continues to

generate a great deal of staff and visitor interest.

One specific example of a resident who has benefited is Myrtle Reidell. She had a fall but no serious injuries soon after coming into the nursing home. Reidell also completed a round of therapy at the nursing home and was somewhat active within the building.

After starting The Balancing Act, Reidell has been attending more outings with the use of her walker. She recently attended a 90-and-over potluck luncheon at her church and was reunited with all of her friends from church, which meant so much to her.

"The Balancing Act has proven to be a fun and social activity that the elders truly enjoy," says Rich Henderson, occupational therapist with Functional Pathways. "It has been wonderful to see the elders improve their safety awareness and functional progression toward their therapy goals as a result of this program."

Roger Mynatt

Administrator of Jefferson County Nursing Home

December 2014, Provider Magazine



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