



Bridges

A Newsletter for the Families and Friends of Carol Woods
Residents in Assisted Living and the Health Center

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Award-Winning Nurse Has Genius for Caring

By Sarah Hyde,

Admissions & Public Relations Coordinator

We are very proud to congratulate our own Octavia Dail-Gilbert, a Care Coordinator in the Health Center, on receiving the 2008 Nurse of the Year Award from the N.C. Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging. The award is presented to a nurse who exhibits outstanding leadership and supervisory skills, knowledge of nursing requirements for state compliance and characteristics that promote quality of care, resident dignity, respect and independence, while meeting the residents' psychological, social, emotional, physical and spiritual needs.

Octavia has been in nursing for 13 years, and the last seven have been at Carol Woods. One resident, Louisa Douglass, attributes Octavia's success to her intuitive "seventh sense" -- she knows when to assist residents and when to leave them alone. "It's like some little genius, and I think of her as almost magic," Douglass said. "Every time I see her, she makes me happy. She knocks, comes in and gives me a hug, and that makes me feel better."

Octavia's colleagues were also quick to support her nomination, noting her



excellent performance and work ethic. "I feel blessed and fortunate to have her working in our Health Center. She is someone I know I can count on," said Amy Alexander, the Director of Nursing at Carol Woods. "I know every time I ask for something or need her help with anything, she will come through, every time."

Reflecting on her service, Octavia says "working with the geriatric population has taught me a lot through the years. I get to learn about their lives; actually you become like a family member. You develop a relationship with the residents and feel like

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they're 'yours'. The fact that I was selected, even nominated, really blew my mind. I had no clue. Winning is wonderful. People want to recognize you, and they did it in such a nice way with this award.”

Using Medicare Benefits in Skilled Nursing

By Ken Reeb, Vice President of Finance

In a previous *Bridges* article, an overview was provided of the monthly service fees, per diem charges and free days related to Carol Woods residents living in higher levels of care. One other important financial consideration affecting some residents is the prospect of medical insurance coverage for skilled nursing services at Carol Woods.

Under Medicare Part A, there is a skilled nursing facility (SNF) benefit. Any beneficiary who has been in the hospital for a period of 3 days or longer and needs either daily skilled nursing care or daily skilled rehabilitation services (physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy) in a SNF might receive Medicare benefits for up to 100 days. These benefits include the per diem fee and most medical services and equipment needed.

The 3rd floor of Carol Woods' Health Center is a SNF that is certified to participate in the Medicare program. Residents returning from the hospital to the 3rd floor may be in position to benefit:

- The beneficiary must have been in the hospital (overnight) for at least 3 consecutive days;

- Medicare is presuming that the beneficiary will be progressing, not just receiving what they term “custodial care”;

- Medicare requires Carol Woods to monitor each person's convalescence to determine his/her continued eligibility. Medicare benefits may be stopped before the 100-day limit if coverage guidelines are no longer being met (for example, the resident's medical condition has improved significantly, therapy goals have been met or no further progress is anticipated);

- If, in Carol Woods' estimation, one no longer meets coverage requirements, that will be conveyed to the resident or responsible party in writing. One can elect to have Medicare review the determination (a process that can take months), but if Medicare agrees with Carol Woods' interpretation, the beneficiary ultimately will be responsible for the costs of the days in question.

- Even though Medicare “covers” up to 100 days as a SNF benefit, beginning on day 21, and for the remaining 80 days, Medicare requires a daily co-insurance be charged to the beneficiary or to one's supplemental medical insurance.

If you have any questions about the Medicare SNF benefits, please contact the Health Center social worker at (919) 918-3216, the Carol Woods billing office at (919) 918-3234, or for general information about coverage, you may contact Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE.



We Want to Hear from You!

Check the mail for your Family Feedback Survey, which will be arriving in August. Carol Woods is committed to providing quality care for all residents, and your participation will assist us in evaluating various components of care in Assisted Living and the Health Center.

Points of Contact Update

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Access Dental

Carol Woods has contracted with Access Dental Care, a non-profit mobile dental practice, to provide on-site dental care at Carol Woods to interested residents. Access Dental Care has been providing dental care to residents of long-term care facilities since August 2000.

For more information, please contact Jeff Sumpter, Administrator-in-Training at Carol Woods. You can also find more information at Access Dental Care's Web site: www.accessdentalcare.org.

Summer Volunteers

This summer, fifteen high school volunteers are visiting residents and assisting with group activities. Four of the students are children of Carol Woods' staff members. Residents appreciate the youthful energy and viewpoints the students bring, and the teens benefit from residents sharing lifelong interests and mature perspectives. Intergenerational experiences like this and weekly visits from the Children's Center classes spark new friendships and learning opportunities for residents and students alike.

Carol Woods Receives Community Connections Grant By Heather Altman, Project Director

For years, Carol Woods has been very involved with aging issues both locally and nationally. It is part of our social accountability as a non-profit organization and an outgrowth of our mission to ensure quality in aging services for older adults.

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(Community Connections Grant, continued from page 3)

Last year, Carol Woods conducted a one-year planning process, funded by a small grant from The Duke Endowment to develop innovative, community - based models for addressing services and supports for older adults. We spent the year listening to statewide and local leaders, advocates, providers and to seniors themselves.

Our findings created the foundation for an initiative called Community Connections for Seniors. We are pleased to announce that in January, The Duke Endowment provided funding for this 3-year project in the amount of \$996,900. The goal of Community Connections is to increase the coordination and support available to seniors, particularly during times of transition. Carol Woods, in conjunction with community partners, will strengthen and expand collaboration among a network of local formal and informal, public and private agencies in order to extend coordinated services to seniors throughout the community and state.

“We remain dedicated to ensuring quality services for the 450 residents we serve,” explains Pat Sprigg, Carol Woods’ CEO. “We also want to advance the field of aging and the quality of care for all older adults. This can happen when we successfully deliver home and community-based services along with the benefits of coordinated care management.”

If you would like more information about Community Connections, please contact me at haltman@carolwoods.org or (919) 918-2609.



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