

CENTRA CARE CONNECTION

Spring 2018, Vol. 2, Issue 1

The Tale of Two Nurses

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participant and her
caregiver daughter

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New Hospital System Liaison
and New Clinic
Nurse Practitioner

Free Respite Care!

Available in Kalamazoo
and Calhoun Counties



CENTRA CARE
Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE)

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CentraCare Connection is a free publication for all members of the communities we serve.

CentraCare, a nonprofit organization, has two convenient locations. To find out more about our nonprofit mission and services to the community, use the contact information below:

Kalamazoo Location:
CentraCare
445 West Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Battle Creek Location:
200 West Michigan Avenue Suite 103
Battle Creek, MI 49017
Toll-free: (800) 488-5860
Local Kalamazoo: (269) 488-5460
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Web: www.mycentracare.com
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The CentraCare Difference

A Message from
Alexandria Lueth,
CentraCare CEO

I T'S HARD TO BELIEVE we are entering our tenth year of service as an organization. CentraCare was officially incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 2008 in Calhoun County and expanded its services to include Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties in 2013. Since then we have had the privilege of serving nearly 800 frail elderly members of our community and that number grows every month.

I recently had the opportunity to sit in a focus group made up of CentraCare participants and some of their caregivers. It was an eye opening event for me in a very positive way. Because the coordinated care that CentraCare provides on a day to day basis has become routine for me, I have a tendency to forget this is not the typical care all frail elderly individuals receive.

During the event I heard things like, "This is a wonderful place," "I receive great care here," "Everyone goes above and beyond," "CentraCare is a motivator to keep living," "I would be in a nursing home without CentraCare," and dozens of other similar comments.

I must say, these remarks caused me to pause and remind myself that we are making a huge difference in people's lives! The reality I was reminded of in that moment was that people under our care receive extraordinary attention because of the PACE (Program of All-inclusive Care for the

Elderly) model of integrated care that we follow. Each person literally has multiple sets of eyes on them on a consistent basis. From doctors to nurses to physical therapists to occupational therapists to social workers to personal care assistants to home care aides and a host of others individuals, our participants are being monitored for any changes in their health or wellbeing. But there is even more to the story, each of the disciplines monitoring our participants communicate daily with each other to adjust the participant's care plan as needed. We are there for our participants 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

That is the CentraCare difference! There is no other care team in our region that is as integrated in their model of care. While this has become our "normal," it is far from normal in the field of caring for the frail elderly. We are indeed unique and pride ourselves in providing a level of care that surpasses what is ordinary.

I walked away from that focus group with my head held high. Not in an arrogant sense, but in a grateful manner, knowing I am surrounded by a team of professionals that provide a level of care to the frail elderly of our community that is second to none. If you are not familiar with the services we provide, please call one of our centers to arrange a visit so you can see first-hand the CentraCare difference. ■

PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT:

MYRTLE EVANS, a CentraCare participant since March of 2017, and Nancy Allen, Myrtle's primary caregiver, are mother and daughter. But over the years they have had other relationships such as "nurse peers" and "ICU charge nurse and ICU staff nurse" (yes, Myrtle was Nancy's boss for about a year). But, the true life-changing relationship came when the parental role gradually reversed and Nancy had to become her mother's caregiver when signs of dementia began showing up and interfering with Myrtle's ability to continue to be independent.

Always a stay-at-home wife and mother of four children, Myrtle's life, and that of her family, changed dramatically at the age of 36 when she became a single mom with the responsibility of continuing to raise her 4 children. It was at this time she made a decision to become a Registered Nurse, returning to school for training and then beginning her nursing career in 1970. She would continue in this role for the next 26 years, eventually retiring from Battle Creek Health System.



Throughout her entire life, Myrtle proved herself to be an achiever. For many years she carefully juggled family, work and continuing her education. After graduating with her RN certification from Kellogg Community College (KCC) in 1970, she went on to obtain her Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University (WMU) in 1987. She was head nurse of ICU/

PCU/Cardiac Evaluation at Community Hospital for many years, as well as a similar position at Leila Hospital, eventually concluding her nursing career in the Emergency Department at Battle Creek Health System.

Myrtle was named Barry-Calhoun County Nurse of the Year in 1978, received the KCC Outstanding Alumni Award in 1981, and was also a WMU

Presidential Scholar. In her spare time she was an avid reader, poetry writer and liked to bicycle. After her retirement she especially enjoyed traveling, making several medical missions trips to Kazakhstan, a Central Asian country and former Soviet republic, where she would stay for periods of 6 to 12 months at a time.

During one of her trips to Kazakhstan she met Veronika, a teenager who had a dream to go to college in the United States and Myrtle worked diligently to help this young lady achieve her goal. After high school graduation, 16 year old Veronika came to the U.S. to live with Myrtle and attend college, graduating from Kellogg Community College in 2004 as a dental hygienist. When Veronika arrived, Myrtle not only gave her a place to live, but also helped her navigate the U.S. college system, network with friends, learn more about the English language, provided transportation, and helped her obtain scholarships and sponsors.

While attending KCC, Veronika met a young man who eventually proposed to her. When Veronika's mother was in the U.S. for the KCC graduation, her mother and Myrtle arranged a beautiful, but small wedding for the couple. Veronika now has a Master's Degree from the University of Michigan and a 3 year old



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son. She continues to stay in touch with Myrtle.

In her post retirement years Myrtle also worked at the KCC Testing Center, Senior Health Partners, and Bachman Hebble Funeral Home. Additionally, she volunteered at CityLinC where she received the Volunteer of the Year Award and she was a recipient of the Community Service Award from the Exchange Club of Battle Creek.

When Myrtle began working full-time in 1970, that meant some of the parental responsibilities would fall on then 16-year old Nancy, Myrtle's oldest daughter. With a 10 year age range spanning she and her 3 siblings, Nancy began to take on additional responsibilities around the house including being in charge of her younger family members while Mom was at work.

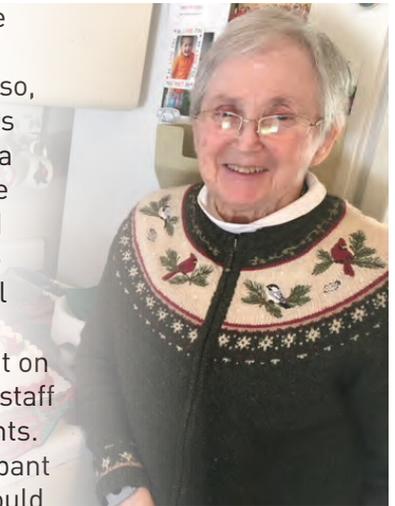
After high school graduation Nancy found herself following in her mother's footsteps and also became a Registered Nurse. Mother and daughter would cross paths often as peers in the nursing field. It was during Nancy's work as an Emergency Department Nurse at Bronson Battle Creek that she first learned of the many benefits of CentraCare.

Nancy recalls, "When the program was starting in Battle Creek, I was a Case Manager in the ER and

CentraCare had people come in to educate us about the program. Also, one of my nurse friends came into the ER with a participant and told me how much she enjoyed working at CentraCare and gave me additional information about the program. As time went on I saw how CentraCare staff treated their participants. If a CentraCare participant came into the ER, it would not be unusual for a CentraCare staff member to also be there and they did a fantastic job educating the registration people, nurses, and doctors. We knew when a CentraCare participant came in, we were to contact CentraCare and CentraCare would also call us if they were directing a participant to go to the ER. I also observed when the CentraCare physician would come in to see the participant at the hospital. The physician actually knew them by name. That was highly unusual."

Nancy continued, "CentraCare used all their resources to keep their participant out of the hospital if at all possible. If a participant was released from the ER they would go back to the CentraCare clinic where they could be observed throughout the day. If a participant needed to be admitted to the hospital, they were very involved in the admission and care process. They would even arrange for the transportation. They did it all and I was very impressed with the service they provided."

Nancy distinctly remembers, "Mom had made it very clear to me that she wanted to stay in her own home and CentraCare was the first thing I thought about when I knew I needed help with Mom. I saw first-hand how they took care of their people and it was a level of care I've never seen in my entire nursing career. I've seen managed programs before, but never to the extent that CentraCare has taken it. They are very 'hands on' with their participants and I knew that would be the best place for Mom."



When Nancy made the call to CentraCare to inquire about enrollment, a representative went to her house to see her. She said, "My sister, who is the other DPOA (Durable Power of Attorney) for Mom as well as an RN, happened to be in town from Illinois at the time and she was able to ask all the questions

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she wanted to better understand the program. The representative answered all our questions, and then all the other assessment appointments were set up for us. They walked us through every step of the process.”

Nancy added, “My only regret is that I wish I would have enrolled Mom in the program sooner because for a couple of years she just sat in her house 24/7 with no structure and no routine. She even lost her ability to read a calendar and a clock. She ate randomly and slept randomly.” Nancy was working full-time, but was also at her mother’s house daily as well as being on the phone with her very consistently. Nancy admitted, “I was constantly checking on her because she was making me so nervous.”

Not only was Nancy doing her best to care for her mother while working full time, but she also watched her grandchildren every other weekend while her son and daughter-in-law worked. Add to the mix watching another grandchild every Friday, sports events for the grandchildren and other responsibilities that needed her attention, Nancy confessed, “I was overwhelmed to say the least. I became part of the ‘sandwich’ generation. I was trying my best to take care of Mom while taking care of my own family and it was getting to be too much for me to handle.” The stress related to being a caregiver caused Nancy to eventually retire from nursing.

She continued, “What is really nice about Mom going to CentraCare Monday through Friday is that now she once again has a routine. She gets up in the morning, and also has lunch, and dinner. She once again has a regular bedtime. She talks to people and has socialization opportunities throughout the day. When I stop by the center I see her talking with other people and I know she enjoys that. There was nothing for her before CentraCare.”

Nancy feels a great sense of relief and a high degree of confidence that her mother is receiving excellent care. She added, “Mom absolutely loves her home care worker from CentraCare. She can get Mom ready to go in the morning without any problem. She seems to take instruction much better from non-family members. Since Mom still lives in her own home, I am so thankful to have so many eyes from CentraCare looking at her and keeping watch. It’s a great relief to know that there are so many people with dementia care experience watching her. It is the only thing that has enabled her to remain in her home this long. If it wasn’t for CentraCare, we would have had to put Mom in a long-term care facility. But, with CentraCare’s help, she is able to continue to live at home just like she wanted and I’m very happy we can honor her desire to be at home.”

Nancy is always ready to tell others about CentraCare. She said with much enthusiasm, “I tell people about CentraCare every chance I get! I explain to them how inclusive they are with their care and how the medical part, especially, of the all-inclusive care is absolutely wonderful. The people that attend the day center are observed by multiple people. If they have a physical complaint

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they will be referred to the clinic immediately. The staff is constantly observing the participants and will sometimes pick up on an issue before the participant even says anything about it. If the situation warrants, they are taken to the in-house clinic immediately. You don’t have to call to make an appointment or wait days or sometimes weeks for an appointment. Things are addressed quickly. And, I don’t have to take Mom to any appointments. All her appointments are right at CentraCare and they even provide the transportation to and from the center on a daily basis. The way they use their resources to fully support the participants is simply amazing. We are extremely fortunate to have CentraCare in our community!” ■



Meet Our New Hospital System Liaison: Donna Ismailoglu



DONNA ISMAILOGLU, MSN, A-GNP, came to CentraCare in October of 2017 as an Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (A-GNP) in the Battle Creek medical clinic. With a background as a hospitalist, it was a natural fit for her to

transition into her current role as CentraCare's Hospital System Liaison. In this role, Donna manages relationships with physicians and care managers within the hospital system and is responsible for collaborating with hospital care managers and hospitalists to monitor the daily care of CentraCare participants who are hospitalized. Beginning her career in healthcare as a Registered Nurse, Donna has a vast background in various specialties such as med-surgical, cardiac, pulmonary, emergency department, critical care, acute long-term care and neurology. As an A-GNP, she has focused on internal medicine and gerontology. Donna earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), specializing in Adult Gerontology, from Spring Arbor University. Additionally, she is a Board Certified Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (A-GNP) through the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners and is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners.

Meet Our New Clinic Nurse Practitioner: Shanna Van Aken



SHANNA VAN AKEN, MSN, FNP-BC, joined the Kalamazoo CentraCare clinical team in December of 2017 as a Nurse Practitioner. A licensed Registered Nurse and Advanced Practice Nurse, she received her certification as a Family

Nurse Practitioner (FNP-BC) from The American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a subsidiary of the American Nurses Association. Shanna holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Missouri, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Nevada State College, and a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Nevada. With extensive nursing experience in hospital critical care, she has also spent significant time serving geriatric and hospice patients as a nurse practitioner in facility and home settings providing quality patient care, palliative care, and hospice care to the frail elderly. Additionally, she has worked extensively as a preceptor performing Health risk Assessments (HRA) and History and Physical (H&P) assessments for Medicare Advantage Plan patients. Shanna holds memberships with the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners (MICNP), American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP), Hospice & Palliative Nurse Association (HPNA), and the Sigma Theta Pi Honor Society.

What Our Participants Say About CentraCare

“They help me so much with my medical care and everything else with my life. Really, everything. They gave me my life and freedom back.”

“I appreciate the personalized care. I feel that I am being cared for. I get treated not as a stranger, but as a part of the family.”

“I like that everything is offered at one place. I used to struggle to get help all over town, now it's very convenient.”

“I like that I can get immediate medical care from the clinic when I need it.”

“I feel very much at home and relaxed here.”

What is “PACE”?

PACE stands for “Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly.” PACE is a long-term comprehensive health care program that enables frail elderly adults to live at home in their communities for as long as medically and socially possible. CentraCare is the official PACE program for Calhoun, Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren counties in Michigan. Our many services are designed to help older adults stay in their homes, and be part of the community where they live.



Get Involved!

VOLUNTEER

CentraCare always needs new volunteers!

For more information, please call Kristina at (269) 441-9548.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Tax-deductible donations of any kind are greatly appreciated and will be used to support our mission.

You can give online at: www.mycentracare.com.

Or you may drop off or mail your donation to:

CentraCare
200 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 103
Battle Creek, MI 49017

Free Respite Care!

*Are you a caregiver of an elderly person?
Are you tired? **We Understand!***

CentraCare, a local nonprofit organization, currently offers evening and weekend Respite Care for residents of Calhoun, Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties at **NO CHARGE** to you. Our experienced staff will lovingly care for your family member at our Battle Creek or Kalamazoo Day Center locations. *We provide free:*

- Transportation
- Nutritious Meal and Snack
- Socializing time
- Assistance with Personal Care
- Cognitively Stimulating Activities

To register for *No Cost Respite Care*, contact Donna at **(269) 441-9319** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mon. - Fri.

Funding for this program in Calhoun County is made available through a grant from the Calhoun County Senior Millage and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation. Funding for the program in Kalamazoo and eastern Van Buren Counties is provided solely by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation.

Phone: **(269) 441-9319**

Website: www.mycentracare.com