

Collin County SENIOR™

Fall/Winter 2009

A Magazine serving the interests of those 50 and older.

Recipe for
Success

Complimentary Issue

PLUS:

*The H1N1
and You*

*Fighting
STROKES*

*Stay out of the
FINANCIAL ER*

*The Bee's Knee's
for WOMEN*

Recipe for Success

Ingredients

3 ladies named Marion, Laura, and Emily willing to forego income, risk their savings (with the wholehearted support of their respective husbands), and dedicate untold hours, in order to “make a difference”

Add more ladies, with names like Rachael, Jennifer, Kim, Susan, Virginia, each seeking more than just a paycheck, sharing the desire that their life’s work truly “make a difference”

Instructions

Combine first three ingredients in a small space (the dining room of Marion’s home), as the other ingredients are added, gradually move into slightly larger (800, then 3,500, finally 11,000 square foot) space.

Mix slowly (about three times longer than you anticipate), taking care that every action follows the motto, your watchword: Doing what is right for the right reasons.

Turn back time for just a moment, and see Marion Runyan as an empty-nester, her two daughters away at college. Although she could return to teaching in elementary school, Marion really was ready for something new. Enrolling as a student herself was more enticing, but what to study? Purely by chance she took a speech pathology class—mostly to learn what it was all about—and quickly discovered that she had found her niche.

After attaining her master’s degree in 1998 and at her first job in her new field, Marion met Laura Morris. Laura had both undergraduate and graduate degrees in speech pathology, after which she became licensed and certified in multiple, related, specialized areas. As the two worked together, Marion and Laura found they shared philosophies and values, both personally and professionally.

The strengthening bond of their friendship, coupled with a desire to better serve their patients, led Laura Morris and Marion Runyan to establish their own partnership, Morris & Runyan Speech Pathology, Inc, early in 2001. Their company consisted of Marion and



Laura, who both worked directly with clients and patients, plus an additional staff of 21 clinicians under their supervision. But there simply weren't enough hours in the day to serve clients, care for patients, supervise staff and do the bookkeeping and accounting necessary to any business. That job was, however, a perfect fit for a degreed and experienced accountant named Emily Martin, who was ready for just that work-from-home situation so she could care for her husband and their two young daughters, who just happened to be Marion's grandchildren.

The experiences gained over the half-dozen years operating Morris & Runyan, which provided its speech pathology services by contracting through 95 agencies, only reinforced Marion's and Laura's belief that they could provide an even better level of care to patients with an agency of their own. So three years after establishing Morris & Runyan, these three ladies, for Emily by then had become an integral part, invest still more time and monetary resources, while taking no salary, into establishing Total Patient Care Home Health LLC, usually simply called TPC.

Work-from-home Emily had been living in east Texas but now with two businesses needing her financial oversight and services, she and her two daughters moved into a house rented near the business, with weekend commutes reuniting the entire family. Emily often worked far into the night in order to keep up with all the payroll, billing, and accounting tasks for the two businesses. But as it was also important to keep life nearly-normal for her own daughters, frequently after dinner she'd bathe and get them ready for bed, and they'd all troop down to the office for "campouts" in a corner she had set up for their comfort while she worked. To this day, even with those weekend commutes and campouts only a memory, Abby, now 11, and Micah, at 7, still often ask if they might please have another campout soon.

In a business that is about caring for people, having owners and staff care about people is essential. Remember too, this is a business where staff and owners doing their jobs aren't sitting at a desk in an office. They are out visiting and caring for patients in their homes. But someone has to "mind

the store", answer the phones, keep patient files orderly and in essence be the "glue" that holds things together. The day Rachael Britton became TPC's first employee, they'd found that glue—and Rachael had found a place whose mission, "reflects the passion of my heart." During those earliest months, Rachael often arrived pre-dawn to start her day just as the previous night's campout was ending.

These days everyone still pitches in to ensure everything runs smoothly even as TPC itself has grown and expanded to include another TPC LLC, Trinity Personal Care, both licensed to serve the seven-county area (Grayson, Fannin, Denton, Collin, Hunt, Dallas and Rockwall), with therapist and home health care staff numbering over 100, to date serving and helping some 2,500 patients.

And as their business has grown, these ladies have been able to fulfill another goal—namely give back. For the past two years, in addition to helping support various more local charities, TPC has sent some of its nursing and care personnel on medical missionary trips where they've assisted in surgeries and taught care techniques to residence in need in the Dominican Republic.

When, like spices added to a recipe, the welfare of patients is the priority, and each individual—whether nurse, caregiver, therapist or office staff—is governed by a personal desire to achieve excellence and make a difference, are added to the main ingredient list, the successes which TPC and its founders have achieved should surprise no one.

Pub. note: To see more on TPC refer to ad Inside Front Cover and article on page 35.

TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

It is a generally understood reality that the price of professional health care services provided in ones own home is less costly (regardless of how or who pays) than having similar services in a health facility. Trouble is, at the point where you require those in-home services, you are already under stress coping with a medical situation and less likely to have the energy to find the provider that best fits you and your needs.

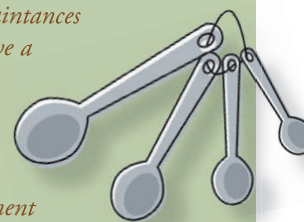
You do have a choice, regardless of whether the service will be paid for by Medicare, insurance or yourself. Finding a provider you feel good about is easier to accomplish when you're healthy. But how?

Look at the listings under Home Health Care & Services in the yellow pages of your telephone book, and read publications like this one to find agencies licensed in your area. Network with acquaintances and friends, ask your physician(s) and office staff for recommendations. Once you have a list of agencies, call or visit them. Questions you might ask could include:

- Tell me about the owners?
- What are your hiring criteria for caregivers?
- Can/will you give me some references?

Marion Runyan adds a recommendation for those who have private (non-government provided) health insurance. She notes that Medicare and VA include rehabilitation therapy, but some health insurance plans and policies do not. These therapy services can be critical to regaining ones independence after a stroke, joint replacement, other medical procedures or conditions.

Marion and Laura repeatedly emphasize the importance of the patient's entire family being involved too. While therapy is prescribed for a patient, when other family members make it a point to be actively involved—caring for, listening to, helping where appropriate—invariably the patient benefits, mentally, physically and emotionally. hvh



Hospice: *The Bluebonnet Approach*

By: George Fetting, CEO

Generally speaking, the purpose of all hospice agencies is similar. Hospice agencies provide the special attention needed by patients in the late stages of a terminal illness. This makes choosing the right hospice provider a significant challenge for families. Bluebonnet Hospice's goals are to improve the quality of life for the patient and to support his or her loved ones.

What separates Bluebonnet from other agencies are the principles upon which Bluebonnet was founded. Bluebonnet is a family owned and operated company with a commitment to treating patients like family. Since 1999, when Bluebonnet was established, it has required all of its personnel to share and practice the same principles as its owners. Those practices include providing exceptional patient care, exceeding expectations, and trust and commitment.

Providing exceptional patient care

At Bluebonnet, we live and breathe exceptional patient care. Bluebonnet's care is not governed by the clock, but rather defined by the patient's and family's needs. Whether the visit is half an hour or 24 hours, Bluebonnet's staff is committed to provide exceptional care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.


Exceeding Expectations

Bluebonnet's goal is to exceed the expectations of the patient and everyone involved in that patient's life. It is our goal to provide excellence in all areas of care including but not limited to keeping the patient comfortable and pain free, consulting and counseling with all family members, assisting in the bereavement process, and working side by side with skilled nursing

facilities and assisted livings to ensure exceptional patient care.

Trust and Commitment

Bluebonnet's staff understands our word is our bond. When we make a commitment, we follow through. Whether it is a scheduled visit, a social work consult, or community involvement, Bluebonnet makes a commitment to our families.

Choosing hospice for a loved one is a tough decision. Bluebonnet Hospice works with the family to make this transition as painless as possible through our core principles. To ensure you are presented with Bluebonnet Hospice as an option, request a referral for our services through your physician. 

In Denton County call 940-323-2122. For Collin County the number is 469-519-2727



"We treat our patients like family."

Home Health Care

- Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapy
- Wound Care/Wound Vac.
- Comprehensive Diabetic Care
- Medication Management
- Skilled Nursing
- Oncology Care

Hospice

- Medical Director
- Hospice Nurses
- Hospice Home Care Aides
- Social Workers
- Chaplains and Bereavement Counselor
- Volunteers
- Medications

Serving several North and East Texas areas, including:
Denton, Collin County, Dallas County, Mineola, and surrounding areas.

Collin County Bluebonnet Home Health and Hospice
1333 W. McDermott, Suite 256 • Allen TX 75013
Phone number 469-519-2727