



newsnotes

What is the Merrimack Intranet?



by Jim Boissonneault, MIS Director

In' tra net - n. 1) An IP-based network of nodes behind a firewall, or behind several firewalls connected by secure, possibly virtual, networks. 2) Interconnected computers and networks within an organization.

We've all gotten used to sitting at our PCs and having the ability to create documents, print and save them, get information from the Internet, send and receive emails, enter data and generate reports on that data. We get frustrated when the system seems slow or we get an error message on the screen. Considering all the behind-the-scenes processes that are required to make it all happen, it's really amazing the whole

thing works.

Here's a quick rundown on how our internal computer network is put together. The Merrimack Health Group wide-area-network (WAN) encompasses eleven distinct local networks located at ten facilities and the Merrimack Central office in Haverhill. Each location is interconnected with high-speed Internet circuits through devices called firewalls. Firewalls allow each location to establish a secure link with the central office and each other while preventing external forces from infiltrating our network. The firewalls also actively filter all data for viruses. Each facility has a file server called a domain controller that controls local network printing, network file access, data backups and addressing of PCs and printers. These file servers communicate with the primary domain controller to verify valid user accounts, passwords and printer/file network resource rights along with processing logon scripts that connect local PCs to

network folders. The email server is also located at the central office. Email access is controlled by the same centralized account security database that controls all other network authentication. In addition to the eleven local networks, two facilities connect to the WAN through a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection that allows individual PCs to have network access without the need for a local file server. The VPN connections are established using a dedicated device called a VPN router in conjunction with authentication and encryption software. The VPN accounts log directly onto the file server at the Central Office.

Our WAN has a unique domain name **merrimackhealth.com**. This is also our Internet site identity. Each facility has a unique registered domain name as well. This allows each facility and Merrimack Health Group to have unique web sites along with facility specific email addresses.

What's for the future?
The government is only going to intensify its mandates of electronic transmission of data in conjunction with enforcing regulations pertaining to HIPAA. Moving forward, my objectives are to:

- continue to improve network performance and reliability in the most cost-effective manner.
- keep pace with updates to network, PC and application software as vendors phase out older software versions as well as replacing lette PCs, file servers and networking equipment, and, (continued on Page 2)

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New Faces in MHG Leadership



**Ron Cherubin
Administrator**

Lanessa Extended Care in Webster, MA is pleased to welcome Ron Cherubin to the facility as its new Administrator. Ron brings more than ten years of long-term care experience to Lanessa, with administrative positions at facilities throughout Massachusetts. A bachelor of science graduate of American International College, Ron received his Masters in Business

Administration from Western New England College. He is licensed as a nursing home administrator in both Massachusetts and Connecticut, and currently is a resident of Agawam, MA.



**Julie DiFronzo, RN
Clinical
Reimbursement
Consultant**

Merrimack Health Group is pleased to welcome Julie A. DiFronzo as Clinical Reimbursement Consultant for all MHG facilities. Julie has extensive clinical and

administrative experience, most recently as the clinical reimbursement specialist for HealthBridge Management, where she provided consultative services to 15 facilities. A graduate of Quinsigamond Community College and Worcester State College, Julie lives in Dudley, MA.



**Deborah Peters, R.N.
Director of Nursing**

Clark Manor Healthcare Center of Worcester welcomes Deborah Peters to the facility as its new Director of Nursing. Deb has over 20 years of

nursing and administrative experience in the acute, ambulatory and long term care environments. She was most recently the primary nurse to the Chief of Urology at Fallon Clinic of Worcester, and prior to that was the Director of Nursing for The Masonic Nursing Home in Charlton, MA. A graduate of Quinsigamond Community College in Worcester, Deb lives in Auburn, MA.



**Michael Lincoln,
Administrator**

Webster Manor Healthcare Center is pleased to welcome Michael Lincoln as its new administrator. Michael has more than 16 years of experience leading complex healthcare facilities, most recently as Chief Administrator at Milton Health Care in Milton, MA. Michael received his Master of Science degree in management for Lesley College, and his Bachelor of Science degree in healthcare administration from Ithaca College. Michael lives in Foxborough, MA.

MHG Intranet (continued from page 1)

•remain vigilant in auditing and evaluating network, data and user security to maintain HIPAA compliance and prevent unauthorized access, data corruption and loss.

Reminders

It is vital for network users to keep their Anti-Virus program updated. Every user is connected to their local network Anti-Virus update folder upon logon and is urged to update daily. To update

your Virus Definitions:

Double-Click on the **My Computer** icon on your desktop

Double-click on the Drive **X:** icon in My Computer

Double-click on the **virusupd.exe** file in Drive x:

It is also important to delete any unnecessary Email from your Outlook Mailbox, Sent Items folder and Deleted Items folder. There are 142 Email us-

ers on the Merrimack email system. The Inbox, Calendar, Tasks, Notes, Contacts and Deleted items folders for all users are part of one very large database file. The larger the database becomes, the slower it is for users to open their mailboxes and the more susceptible it is to corruption.

Above and Beyond! Facility Updates



We asked, and you delivered! The Above and Beyond Program at MHG facilities are well underway. By the end of June, all MHG facilities will have incorporated the program into their operational framework. Without further introduction, here are some of the winners, and why they were chosen:



TONY CAREY, CNA-(Above)

Clark Manor-Worcester. Tony received 75% of the 60 votes that were cast for Above and Beyond nominees for February! Some of the comments shared about Tony: "caring for residents is not a job for him...they are his friends..."Tony has always greeted me when I visit my father with a smile and sometimes a joke."

The Arbors of Bedford-Bedford, NH. The Arbors made 3 nominations in April for



MERRISA TEACZA, LPN (Left), SUE CLOW, ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR (center), and NANCY GARTLAND, LNA, (right)

the months of February, March and April. Merrisa Teacza, LPN, volunteered on her day off to take a resident shopping for new clothes.

Sue Clow, has been with the Arbors since it opened in 1998. Sue became quite close to a husband and wife who were residents of the Arbors. She stayed

long past her shift to stay with the family when the husband became very ill.

Nancy Gartland, LNA, has also been with the Arbors since it opened and has consistently been a great asset to the nursing staff, feeding, walking and helping the residents with anything they need.

Clinical Corner *by Kathy Pion, R.N. Clinical Consultant*

January "05" was the rollout of the new Merrimack Nursing Policies and Procedure Manuals.

The plan is to distribute at least five policies every other month to the facilities. To date facilities have received ten policies and one nursing procedure manual.

The purpose of only handing out a few policies at a time verses a whole manual was to

ensure compliance of implementation.

Implementation was discussed with the Directors at the January DNS meeting. Each facility should review all policies at their monthly CQI committee, in-service the staff and then implement the policy. The facilities have sixty days to complete the process.

In order to track each facility's progress the consultants will be

sending out a tracking tool this month to all the facilities. The Directors will be expected to complete the tracking tool by the 10th of each month and send it to their clinical consultant along with their benchmarking.

At the end of the year each facility will have a completed Nursing Policy Manual and Nursing Procedure Manual.

Policies that will be distributed in June are

Psychotropic medication, Hydration, Change in Condition, Nursing assessment, Pain and Wound program. We have asked that facilities notify their nursing consultant on any particular policy they should need now or that they would like in the next few months.

The Clinical Consultants, Marie, Julie, Karen and Kathy would like to wish every one a happy and safe summer...



CLARK RESIDENT TURNS 103! *Nora Burke-McGrath, resident of Clark Manor of Worcester, recently celebrated her 103rd birthday in March.*

Nora, an active member of Clark Manor community, was treated to a very special birthday party at the facility. In honor of the occasion, Worcester Councilman Joseph Petty presented Nora with "The Key to the City of Worcester."



OXFORD RESIDENT TURNS 107!

The Oxford in Haverhill recently celebrated the birthday of resident Charlie Wheeler, (above) who turned 107 in April. Charlie was treated to a large birthday party with entertainment, and was joined by family members, residents and staff. Haverhill Mayor James Fiorentini (above) even stopped by to congratulate Charlie on his special day!



Finance News

*by Richard Atkinson
Accounting Manager*

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Month end close reminders, please make sure the following occurs:

Manual checks are correctly coded and include adequate back up. Please forward copies of manual checks to Haverhill on a weekly basis.

AP invoices should include a GL code, an amount to pay, a pay date and Department Head / Administrator signatures. Please verify with your AP contact or accountant, any "balance forward" amounts have been processed.

All revenue journals are run and accepted with the correct disbursement date. Please coordinate prior month reruns with your Regional. (Use the bed reconciliation report to verify all days and rates are accurate.)

Bank / Loan statements should be forwarded to your accountant when received.

Please ensure, with your Regional, all adjustments are posted.

Completing these important steps will greatly assist your accountant, as well as speed up the month end close. Please

contact your accountant when the monthly census is complete and all revenue journals have been run.

Legislation to formulate the July 1, 2005 Medicaid rates is in process and the State Legislature will be discussing the process the last week of June. Hopefully, rates will be finalized some time in July so avoid any retroactive rate changes. Please remember to have employees, residents and family members contact their State Representatives when asked to do so by the MECF.