



# newsnotes

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2007

## Culture Change at Merrimack Health Group



*by Renee Scudder, Senior Director of Marketing and Strategic Planning*

Happy New Year! As we enter into the New Year, Bill Mantzoukas has asked me that we start a company-wide dialogue regarding culture change at Merrimack Health Group.

Over the next few years it is our goal to embrace culture change with a step by step process that is unique to each Merrimack Health Group facility. With your input, we hope to create a vision of culture change in each MHG building. This will happen in a collaborative style. Interdisciplinary teams from all levels and

departments will participate in idea generation and in the creation of appropriate timelines over the upcoming years. These can be small, simple changes or larger scale processes. We will decide as a team what mix of elements will work best according to the unique characteristics of your facilities. There is no time pressure on this-- we are introducing the concept in the New Year to begin the long journey toward creating a resident-centered approach to care.

What is culture change? A general definition is the deinstitutionalization of nursing homes by restructuring facility care to *person directed care*. Nursing homes are changing into personal communities that are creating a sense of "home" inside the facility. Culture change looks at the nursing home experience through the eyes of the resident from the minute he/she walks through the door. What

is the perception and experience of the resident, our customer, when they enter our facilities and experience our care?

Last September, Bill Mantzoukas, Karen Driscoll and I attended the Massachusetts Culture Change Coalition. It was a day-long event that drew attendees from all over Massachusetts to learn about culture change in the Nursing Home industry. Early in the day, Retired Colonel John Ray spoke to the crowd about his experience living in a Massachusetts nursing home. They started with an overview of his life. He had a successful military career, a large devoted family, and a strong commitment to his community. He spoke of his experience the first day that he moved into the nursing home. No one spoke directly to him. He described how everything happened around him, as though he was not even a presence in the room. This human being with

a lifetime of experience became invisible-or at least that was his perception of it. He has become a spokesperson for culture change ; for a nursing home world that includes unconditional positive regard for all people.

Here are some examples of culture change that been implemented over the years in nursing homes across the country: *(continued on next page)*

### IN THIS ISSUE

**Good to Great.....2**

**MHG Central Office Moves .....2**

**Business and Finance Corners.....3**

**Above and Beyond Remonder.....3**

**Lanessa Honors Employees.....4**

**Hubbard TCU Holiday Sock Tree.....4**

# MHG Haverhill Central Office Moves

The Merrimack Health Group Haverhill Central Office's long-awaited new building is finally ready for occupancy. Effective January 26, the MHG Central Office will be located at 35 Avco Road, Haverhill, MA 01835. All phone and fax and e-mail numbers will be the same, with the exception of additions to the extension numbers. An extension list will be distributed to all MHG users as soon as the numbers are finalized. The office is a newly constructed building, with modern interior decor and room for the busy Central Office Staff and the MHG Computer network.



*The new MHG Central Office (shown here in a construction photo) is located at 35 Avco Road, Haverhill.*

Directions to the office are Rt. 495 to Exit 48, right onto Rt. 125 Ward Hill/Bradford, left onto Ward Hill Ave. (Ward Hill Industrial Park), left right onto Rogers Road and then right onto Avco Road.

If you have any questions about the new Central Office, please call Laura McDonnell at (978) 420-1500 or e-mail her at: [lmcdonnell@merrimackhealth.com](mailto:lmcdonnell@merrimackhealth.com).

## Culture Change (continued from page 1)

- \* Open dining where meals are available for 2 hour time periods and residents can come when they choose
- \* Celebrating individual resident birthdays rather than, or in addition to group celebrations of resident birthdays
- \* Waking and bedtimes chosen by residents
- \* The nursing home has a dog or a cat
- \* There are no traditional nurses' stations
- \* The nursing home invites residents to have small refrigerators

- in their rooms
- \* The nursing home has outdoor, raised gardens available for resident use
- \* There are intergenerational programs where children interact with residents weekly
- \* The overhead paging is turned off or only used in case of emergency

Examples of the outcomes that are being tracked as culture change expands:

- \*Reduced staff turnover
- \*Waiting lists of staff and residents

- \*Reduced medications/errors
- \* Increased time in social interaction
- \* Decreased weight loss
- \* Reduction in accidents/incidents

Please stay tuned for more information in the upcoming year! We welcome your feedback and look forward to collaborating with you to achieve the steps toward culture change that Bill has envisioned for our MHG facilities. Please feel free to e-mail me with your thoughts or comments-  
[rscudder@merrimackhealth.com](mailto:rscudder@merrimackhealth.com).

## KEY POINTS IN PEOPLE DECISIONS

*(an excerpt from author Jim Collins' book, Good to Great)*

"1. When in doubt, don't hire-keep looking. (Corrolary: A company should limit its growth based on its ability to attract enough of the right people.

2. When you know you need to make a people change, act. (Corrolary: First be sure you don't simply have someone in the wrong seat.)

3. Put your best people on your biggest opportunities, not your biggest problems. (Corrolary: If you sell off your problems, don't sell off your best people.)

Good-to-great management teams consist of people who debate vigorously in search of the best answers, yet who unify behind decisions, regardless of parochial interests."

# Finance News

by *Richard Atkinson*  
*Accounting Manager*

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.

FY 2007 budgets are complete. Please review GL accounts with all department heads to make sure they are using codes that match the budget.

The 02/01/07 Workers Comp renewal is complete. As discussed at the last Administrator's meeting, it is a guaranteed cost policy. Invoices should be entered to pay sometime around 02/01. Please remember to contact Workers Comp Solutions with any claim questions. Thankyou!



# Business Office Corner

by *Laura McDonnell*  
*Corporate Business Manager*

With the new year upon us, it is a good time to go back to basics. Please review the policy and procedures for AP coding and authorization. It is imperative that all invoices come to the central office timely, with the appropriate code and the dept head's and administrator's signatures.

For 2007, we have also released a new PAF ( personnel action form). It will be helpful to make



sure that the new forms are used for all changes. The new form has a reason for termination. In 2007, we are going to track the reason that employees don't stay, so that we can identify and rectify trends. Please make sure to have a PAF completed by the dept head when there is a change or a hire or termination.

## In the Next Issue...

We will announce the Annual ABOVE and BEYOND Candidates from each facility. These individuals will be in the running to win the MHG Regional Above and Beyond Award, consisting of \$1000 and special recognition at the MHG Above and Beyond Awards Luncheon to be held in May.

All facilities, if you have not chosen your annual Above and Beyond Winner, please do so, and please send his/her name, photo and a detailed account of why he/she was chosen to Karen Driscoll as soon as possible so all candidates can be given even consideration by the Selection Committee!

**"Age is opportunity no less than youth itself, though in another dress, and as the evening twilight fades away, the sky is filled with stars, invisible by day..."**  
**Longfellow**

# Lanessa Honors Employees for Years of Service

Lanessa Extended Care in Webster, MA is proud of its staff longevity!

The following people were recently honored for reaching commemorative years of employment:

## 20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Christine Kokernak  
 Kelly Harrington  
 Joann Corriveau

## 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Maryanne Brunnett  
 Denise Chevalier  
 Patricia Hughes

## 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Susan Augustynski  
 Diane Pardee  
 Bonnie Sequeira



*The staff members at Lanessa Extended Care in Webster celebrating at the Point Breeze Restaurant their more than 215 combined years of employment at Lanessa.*

## 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Jennifer Germano  
 Christine Couture  
 Joseph Forget  
 Sandra Gracyalny  
 Bonnie Colon  
 Jennifer Bicknell  
 Micheline Betty

Dara Bachand  
 Kerrysue Hebert  
 Heather Hircock  
 Barbara Landry  
 Danielle Patrowicz  
 Brenda Tourony  
 Maureen Smith  
 Nancy Young  
 Nancy Piscopo



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# Hubbard TCU's Holiday Sock Tree

In keeping with the spirit of giving, the Transitional Care Unit at Hubbard Regional Hospital decorated their holiday tree with socks and footwear. These items were then donated to the Webster Police Department to be distributed to needy individuals in local shelters. The TCU plans to continue this tradition every year, as it was so well received by both the staff, residents, and the Police Department!



*The Hubbard TCU Holiday Tree*