



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
August 2016



On a daily basis, Lutheran Homes Society impacts hundreds of residents, clients and families. The stories told here reflect the mission of Lutheran Homes Society to care for needy youth and elderly with compassion. Sharing these stories lets you know your support is truly making a difference in people's lives.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"Melody" is a client of the HOME Choice transition coordination program. She had been in a skilled nursing facility for over a year due to numerous injuries and illnesses. When the LHS Service Coordinator met Melody, she was very outgoing, positive, and had a good attitude and outlook on life. She always had something positive to say, even in spite of her situation and everything she had been faced with over the past year, including a cancer diagnosis. LHS has been working with Melody since March 2016, and finding her an apartment was a challenge. Eventually, LHS was able to help find her a place to live in Woodville, Ohio. Melody moved in on July 1 and has been very happy in her new home. Everything is falling into place for her. The week after she moved into her home, Melody also found out she was cancer free. When the LHS Service Coordinator talks to Melody on the phone and asks her how she is doing she always states, "I am doing just great, thank you." Everyone can learn from Melody's outlook on life, and working with her has been a rewarding experience – knowing LHS has made a world of difference in a client's life.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Allen" lived at home and stayed active by walking, golfing, biking, and boating. At only 66 years old, he found himself in the hospital after experiencing cardiac complications. Allen was completely unprepared to hear that he needed to go to a nursing home for rehabilitation. It was a shock to him and his family, and the prospect of being with "old people" depressed him. He chose to come to Lutheran Home at Napoleon, but Allen was still anxious. After all, he was not much older than many of the staff. Since Napoleon is a small community, Allen was known by several staff members, which added to his uneasiness. With this in mind, staff began working at making Allen feel comfortable, as well as helping him get stronger for a quick rehab-to-home stay. Staff sought to learn Allen's preferences in food, when he wanted to shower, when he wanted to rise or go to bed, as well as what he wanted to do between therapy treatments. According to Allen, he was sure his stay would be an unpleasant one. He now admits that staff members turned his expectation upside down and proved him wrong. Today, Allen is at home, but returns to the Napoleon campus for his outpatient therapy. As often as he can, he wears his Lutheran Home rehab t-shirt that he received when he graduated from inpatient services. Allen even calls himself a walking billboard for Lutheran Home at Napoleon.



WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

"Dolores" was hired as an LPN in Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek's assisted living in 1997. She was a respected nurse, who cared deeply for her residents during the six years she was employed at Wolf Creek. Dolores retired and then began volunteering in Wolf Creek's Village Store. She had returned to bring more happiness to residents, families and staff. As years went by, Dolores's health declined. She suffered from numerous health issues, including a leg amputation. Her husband was also living at Wolf Creek in the long-term nursing care. Eventually, she was admitted into Wolf Creek's short-term skilled nursing care because of her declining health. After completing her therapy, she decided that living by herself was too hard. She decided to make a permanent move to the Wolf Creek campus, and she became a resident in assisted living. At one time, she served assisted living residents and now she is being served by today's nursing staff. "I feel like this is home for me," Dolores said. She has come full circle in Wolf Creek's assisted living...starting out as an employee and now living there as a resident. Wolf Creek recognizes and thanks Dolores for her years of service, and for making this campus her home.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

“Jackie” was admitted to Lutheran Memorial Home after a stay at Firelands Regional Medical Center. She had lung cancer and needed radiation daily for several weeks. Prior to her stay, Jackie was an energetic woman, who was retired from her passion of working with persons with developmental disabilities. She also enjoyed boating, fishing and camping. Coming to Lutheran Memorial Home, Jackie knew she would get the help she needed to regain her strength through physical therapy. She also was grateful for the transportation services LHS provided to and from her radiation treatments. During Jackie’s stay she especially appreciated the therapy. She often thought she could not handle anymore and wanted to give up, but the therapists continued to encourage her. “Therapy has helped me by pushing me to reach my goals, and they are such kind people!” Jackie said. “I have come a long way, and I can tell the progress I have made toward reaching my goals. The therapy staff has gone above and beyond!” Jackie also truly admired the floor staff and commented on how kind and compassionate they were toward her.

In the coming weeks, Jackie should discharge home. Without the commitment of the staff, she feels she would not have been able to return to her independent life. Jackie intends on enjoying her retirement at home. Although she still has a long road of recovery ahead of her, she will leave the Sandusky campus knowing that if she needs a place to come back to, she is always welcome at Lutheran Memorial Home.



TOLEDO CAMPUS

“What brings you back to us?” This is the question asked of patients who have returned to The Labuhn Center for additional rehabilitation services. “Harriet” told staff some of the reasons why her husband is returning for a second time. “The care was great the first time,” she said, adding that “all the people are very nice” and “the whole atmosphere here is very caring.”

Another second-time rehab patient stated that “I received great care the first time, and I knew I would get good care this time; plus, all my family likes it here.” The therapy department gets a great deal of the credit from returning patients for their persistence and kind efforts to help them get through their rehabilitation successfully. Sometimes factors for returning are little things, such as the one mentioned by Harriet: “I love those Thursday home-made cookies, especially the peanut butter...they are delicious.”



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

LHS Family & Youth Services is best known for ministering to children and young adults through residential treatment and mental health services. LHS long-term care communities are well-known for their work with older adults in need of supportive and independent living services. However, one never knows when the two areas of LHS will be called to work together to help a family. Recently, staff members from Family & Youth Services and an LHS care community jointly held a job fair to recruit new staff. The mother of a young man saw the signs for the job fair and stopped to see if there were any job opportunities for her son. She was not sure what she was looking for or even what services LHS provides to the community.

After some brief conversations, the tide slowly turned to a concerned mom. She was concerned for the future of her son and his abilities. He was a good kid who was struggling in school, but did not qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). He was struggling in the classroom and was slipping through the cracks of the school system, since he did not fit the “model” of a student who needed extra help. After some discussion, it was clear that LHS services were probably not the best fit for her son. At this point, the staff gave her other options and resources, such as extra tutoring help or the option of a technical school. While the seasoned staff was not directly able to help this concerned mom with conventional LHS services, they were able to help her by listening, consoling, and offering encouragement and suggestions. The care community staff and family and youth staff both came away from the encounter feeling blessed to have been able to be there for the mom and, ultimately, her son.