

A Call for Wellness

No doubt all of us were touched by the life and example of Becky Flynn, the dietary manager at The Oakridge Home for 12 years, who died on Valentine's Day after suffering a cardiac arrest. A diabetic, her dedication to her residents and to the mission of the center was dramatically demonstrated when she worked through an entire state survey in 2001 with an infected foot – not telling any of her co-workers and canceling a physician's appointment – and subsequently lost her foot.

This past Friday, I received a telephone call from a good friend and Life Care associate in Massachusetts, who is also a diabetic. He, too, marveled at Flynn's commitment, but he said the story also pointed to the importance of Life Care's wellness program, the details of which will be announced soon.

"We need to take good care of ourselves so that we can take good care of our residents," he stated. His point is well made.

Maryann Dubyoski and the staff of The Oakridge Home – the people profoundly affected by Flynn's contributions and customer service ethic across the years, and who were hit hard emotionally by her sudden death – would echo this admonition. They would have preferred that Flynn be around for many more years and many more surveys. "Sometimes, people who work in health care want to be sure that nobody thinks they have an illness, and they are afraid to talk about it, and they work harder when they should be taking care of themselves," Dubyoski said. "When we are healthy, the results for everyone are so much better."

There is no doubt that associates who are well and happy are much more productive – physically, mentally and emotionally – than they would be otherwise, and the residents receive a higher degree of service and positive attitudinal reactions.

Life Care will be describing details of our wellness program very soon. Watch for the announcement and plan on participating wholeheartedly.

You will be better for it, and so will our company.

--Beecher Hunter