

# IT'S TIME!

## REAL-WORLD STORIES OF HOW PRIMARIS HELPS PROVIDERS ACHIEVE SUCCESS

### Primaris helps nursing home graduate from Special Focus Facility List

Being named a Special Focus Facility (SFF) has far-reaching impact. SFF homes are surveyed twice as often as other homes, face stricter penalties for deficiencies, and if they don't improve, could be terminated from the Medicare and Medicaid program.

When Beauvais Manor was notified by Department of Health and Senior Services about their designation as a Special Focus Facility, they quickly reached out to Primaris for help.

While "getting off the naughty list" (SFF graduation) was a chief motivator, Beauvais' corporate leadership also shared several priority concerns in an initial meeting with Primaris. Beauvais wished to reduce resident and family complaints through better customer service and improve clinical and quality of life outcomes through nurse assessment training.

#### Surveys

Primaris discussed with various Beauvais department heads and leadership the necessity of continuous preparation for survey. A sound system for auditing/monitoring the correction and prevention of deficiencies is critical to overcome the Special Focus Facility designation.

Successful audits are normally detailed and repetitive, and are not limited to the next survey window. They should not be construed as a reflection of staffs' knowledge or quality of work, but rather a safeguard to ensure success. Particular focus should be given to areas where citations would be considered to be widespread or an "F" in scope and severity, such as dietary.

Primaris began by assessing current and recurring citations and survey results to deliver a customized solution. Our consultant recommended systems and

tools for problematic areas, as well as areas where decent systems were in place, but needed to be institutionalized with all staff.

#### Staff Turnover

Staff turnover was a particular area of concern for the facility. Primaris conducted a staff satisfaction assessment and helped the home put together a plan to address areas where staff satisfaction was lower than anticipated.

Staffing turnover has been examined extensively for its association with quality. Research has demonstrated that turnover less than 30 percent per year among RNs and less than 40 percent among CNAs was associated with better quality (Castle, Engberg & Men, 2007).

#### Falls & Pressure Ulcers

Primaris reviewed procedures and policies addressing high-risk subjects, such as falls and pressure ulcers. This was determined to be an area where staff could benefit greatly by on the job coaching to experience the learning more directly and employ the knowledge and new process on a day-to-day basis. Primaris held three in-services for Beauvais nursing staff on topics including respiratory assessment, cardiac conditions, and fall investigation.

Although Beauvais Manor has been challenged with many barriers, they are making positive steps in the right direction to break down these barriers, and implement effective systems in all areas to improve resident care and help boost staffing morale.

**After working with Primaris, Beauvais passed their first re-survey after being placed on SFF list and graduated from the SFF list altogether well before their 18-month deadline.**

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### Missouri Nursing Home Reduces Restraints, Improves Morale

Restraints, once seen as tools to help prevent nursing home residents from injuring themselves, are now recognized as presenting serious health risks to residents, including circulation problems and pressure ulcers. Because the risks of restraints outweigh any potential benefits, Primaris collaborates with nursing homes to reduce the use of restraints.

Primaris helped Cassville Nursing & Rehab in Hurrah, Mo., meet their target for reducing the number of restraints used on residents. In just over a year, the percentage of residents being restrained dropped from 28.9 percent to 2.3 percent.

"I don't think anyone should be restrained," Director of Nursing Janette Stansbury said. "I wouldn't want to be, and I assume nobody else wants to be either. It's a quality of life thing."

When Peggy Neale-Lewis, nursing home program manager for Primaris, met with the home's leadership, the home had the highest restraint usage rate in the state. Neale-Lewis educated the staff about ways to reduce their rate.

"I told them what the limitations were and the data that was going to be collected," Neale-Lewis said. "The restraints were reduced during the first three months from 13 patients to five patients. We made reduction plans for three additional restraints."

The nursing home first compared the data collected from the Minimum Data Set (MDS) with what they actually observed in their home and realized there were some discrepancies. For example, even residents who were fastening their wheelchair seatbelts on their own as a security measure were being counted as restrained.

"The biggest issue was coding errors and lack of documentation," Stansbury said.

Using the resources provided by Primaris, the nursing home utilized alternative equipment, as well as care planning to reduce the number of restraints used. They also educated families of residents to ease loved ones' fears and reservations about removing restraints. Reducing the number of restraints had a positive impact on the home's employee morale, from top management to Certified Nursing Aides (CNAs).

"It gives our aides a sense of empowerment," Stansbury said. "Before they felt like they were just babysitters; now they are taking an active role in the care of our residents."

The nursing home credits Neale-Lewis and Primaris for intervening when they did, as Stansbury was not aware of their high restraint usage compared to other facilities around the state.

"Thank god Peggy found us, otherwise we would still be ranking No. 1 in the state," she said.

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### Corporation Surpasses Others in Restraint and Pressure Ulcer

Primaris staff understands the complexity of improving nursing home care. Our nursing home experts work closely with nursing home staff to individualize their approach. While our quality improvement effort often centers on frontline staff, leadership buy-in can accelerate improvement.

Primaris' collaboration with a nursing home corporation to reduce pressure ulcers and restraints yielded impressive results. Since this group of homes had higher pressure ulcer and restraint rates than the other homes Primaris worked with and higher rates than the state average, it could be expected that their rates of improvement would exceed that of other homes. And they did. What was unexpected is that their rates surpassed the state average and the improvement other homes Primaris worked intensively with made.

Pressure ulcer rates for the corporation's nursing homes dropped to nearly seven percent, compared to the state average of 10 percent. Restraint use fell by nearly 12 percent. Less than one percent of all nursing home residents in this corporation were restrained compared to 12.6 percent at the onset of our work with them.

"Corporate leadership didn't make participation an option; they made it an expectation," said Deborah Finley, director of Nursing Home Services for Primaris.

Finley was introduced by the president to all home's

leadership at a statewide corporate meeting. The president made his expectations very clear by saying, "This is a good group and you will work with them."

The corporation's engagement was ever present. When Primaris staff would run into a barrier with a home, the regional nurses and/or the Director of Operations provided support and encouragement to move the homes forward.

"Knowing the corporation backed what we were doing increased the motivation of the homes and made the needed changes much more acceptable," said Finley.

The large-scale improvement created a lasting relationship and clearly demonstrated the value of corporate leadership. The strides of improvement showed the amazing things that can be accomplished when leadership is committed.

"This was the first time we've experienced outward corporate influence and it yielded huge success," added Finley. "This support came from the president on down through the entire system and it made a world of difference."

The corporation has been a willing partner and has encouraged its homes to continue to work with Primaris on new projects. This successful partnership has also encouraged other reluctant corporations to get on board with Primaris quality improvement projects as well.