

# HEMOCARE

Management Corporation

*News from the Mental Health Division*

## From Our Offices

Safety is a major concern for us at HEMOCARE — safety for you and safety for those with whom you work. A few reminders:

- Be alert for hazards. HEMOCARE supervisors conduct a safety assessment and let you know of safety concerns before assigning you to work, but conditions change. For example, if the floor is wet, you will have to be especially careful to avoid slipping. Look for throw rugs that may slip or electrical cords that are frayed or might cause you to trip.
- Observe universal precautions. This involves wearing safety gear as needed. For instance, you may need to wear rubber gloves; just let your supervisor know when you need more and we'll provide them.
- Lifting can be dangerous, so always use the proper techniques. If you need to transfer a consumer, you may need a special belt to protect your back.
- Make certain you know how to use any equipment involved in your work, such as a Hoyer lift.
- Kitchens can be particularly risky. Both at work and at home you should be alert and careful. Keep knives out of reach from children and those unable to use them safely. Keep pot handles pointing to the back so that you don't accidentally hit them and tip them over. If you spill something greasy onto the floor, clean it up quickly to avoid a fall.
- Auto safety is crucial. Remember, the safest place in a car is the back seat, and that is why we insist that consumers ride there unless special permission is given. Distractions while driving can be deadly. Talking on your mobile phone is a major distraction and is not permitted when you're on HEMOCARE business. A consumer with behavior problems also can be distracting, and physical aggression or attempts to grab the wheel are particularly likely to result in accidents. If you have safety concerns about transporting a client, talk to your supervisor; we don't want to put you, the consumer, or others on the road at risk.

Of course, there are more important safety precautions than we have room to discuss here. Take a look around. What are the dangers you see, and what can you do to prevent an accident from occurring? Be cautious, and let your supervisor know if you are concerned about safety risks you observe.

## Employee Spotlight

**Jeffrey Brinager** has been working for HEMOCARE for the past seven years — quite a feat in a field where many eventually feel “burned out.”

He attributes his longevity to the satisfaction he gets from seeing people improve and gain the ability to enjoy their lives.

“I don't think it's a job for everyone. You have to have patience, you have to have time. You don't see a lot of benefits quickly... You've got to be disciplined with your work. Don't think you're going to get into it for a short period of time... Over the years you see people make progress. That is amazing.”

Jeff has been working with his current client, who has schizophrenia, for more than four years. Thanks to Jeff's dedi-

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## Client Spotlight

**Tonia** is a 13-year-old who attends seventh grade at Chase Middle School in Rutherford County, where she recently made the B honor roll for the very first time. She has been a HEMOCARE client periodically since she was seven and has made a great deal of progress. She and her Behavioral Technician, **Julie Burgess**, work very well together as Tonia strives to achieve the goals she has set with the help of her mother and her support team.



With Julie's assistance, Tonia is learning to act as any other ordinary teenager as she works toward independence. Along this journey she has reached many milestones in dealing with anxiety, improving her self-esteem and self-image, developing social skills, and earning acceptance from her peers.

Tonia enjoys reading and science. She excels in singing and is in the school chorus. Tonia has written and recorded

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## Understanding Cerebral Palsy

**Cerebral Palsy** is a neurological disorder that affects a person's muscle coordination and ability to move and maintain balance and posture.

Cerebral Palsy is caused by a non-progressive brain abnormality, which means that it does not get worse over time, though symptoms can change over a person's lifetime. People with CP have damage to the part of the brain that controls muscle tone, which is the amount of resistance within a muscle. In other words, it's what allows you to keep your body in a certain position.

The damage can occur during pregnancy, delivery or even within the first few years of a child's life as a result of a genetic disorder, bacterial meningitis, bleeding in the brain (caused by head trauma), lack of oxygen, severe jaundice and head injury.

CP cannot be cured, but treatment will often improve a person's capabilities. Most people enjoy long healthy lives if their disability is properly managed.

The most common sign of CP is a lack of muscle coordination due to muscles that are too stiff or too loose, making it difficult to walk, go up and down stairs, etc.

The earlier treatment begins, the better chance children will have to overcome developmental disabilities and most importantly learn new ways to accomplish the tasks that challenge them.

Most people with CP require long-term physical and occupational therapy, or at least daily stretching to ensure flexibility and prevent additional stiffening of the muscles.

The same part of the brain also affects speech, and many people with CP require speech therapy services or communication aids. Other treatment may include drugs to control seizures, relax muscle spasms and alleviate pain; surgery to correct anatomical abnormalities or to release extremely tight muscles; braces or other assistive devices.

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### EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

cation, his client is able to live at home and avoid out of home placement.

Jeff says his proudest moment was when his client chose to enroll in classes to earn his GED as he had lacked motivation or drive before. This is no surprise as Jeff is also a seventh-grade math teacher at Troutman Middle School.

Jeff says about teaching, "I enjoy teaching. I enjoy working with students in middle school. I like kids that age. When you say something to those students, they never forget it... It's all about being a role model." Jeff derives great pleasure from helping people see they can be somebody, no matter what their struggles may be.

Jeff's advice? "You've got to have enjoyment outside of your work." Jeff relaxes by golfing and playing in basketball leagues. He is also a family man, having been married to his wife Donna for 15 years. His eldest child, Titus, is graduating from North Iredell High School this year, and he jokes that he and his wife have decided to start over with Tanner, who is only four.

## Opportunities For Learning

### IN-SERVICE TRAININGS

- **All About CAP**, Wilmington office, March 27, 9-11 am
- **Behavioral Tech's Toolbox for Interventions**, Charlotte office, April 17, 2-4 pm
- **Becoming Disabled**, Statesville office, April 17, 6:30-8:30 pm
- **ADHD, OCD and Conduct Disorder**, Tarboro office, April 19, 4-5 pm
- **Common Chronic Conditions**, Wilmington office, April 25, 6-8 pm
- **You Eat What? Understanding Cultural Diversity**, Morganton, April 25, 10 am-12 pm

*Please contact your supervisor for more information on these valuable training sessions, for required re-certification trainings, and for information on additional opportunities for you to obtain required Community Support training..*

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## Anniversaries

March is another month filled with significant HOME-CARE anniversaries. **Levonía Keaton** and **Jacqueline McCoy**, both of Statesville, are celebrating 8 years of service this month. **John Henderson** from the Lenoir office has been with us for 7 years, serving as a Behavioral Technician and as a PRI and CPR/First Aid Instructor. The Statesville office has 3 employees celebrating 6 years with us: **Rose Frazier**, **Rose Passmore**, and **Margie Rankin**. **Tina George** of Whiteville has been with us for 5 years, and **Mike Harper** of Lenoir; **Linda McGinty**, **Donna Tucker**, and **Vickie Turner of Statesville and Michelle Shive** of Forest City have all worked with us for 4 years. We appreciate all that you do, and so do the consumers and their families!

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### CLIENT SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

her own song, "Waiting On You," which she dedicated to children with an absent parent. Both her mother and HOME-CARE supervisor **Karen Lawing** report that it is a very inspirational song.

Overall, Tonia enjoys having a technician and looks forward to working with Julie. She and her mother are justly proud of her improvement, but do not hesitate to acknowledge that her successes are not just her own, but also HOME-CARE's. We, in turn, are proud to be part of the team supporting her hard work and we look forward to working with her as she makes further strides towards reaching her goals.

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## PaySchedule

### Services Delivered

March 1-15  
March 16-30

### Checks Mailed

April 5  
April 19

**Community Support (CS) documentation must be postmarked or delivered the 9<sup>th</sup> for services delivered the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>, the 16<sup>th</sup> for the 9<sup>th</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup>, the 24<sup>th</sup> for the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and the 1<sup>st</sup> for the 24<sup>th</sup> through the end of the month. CAP/MR-DD, CAP/DA, and Personal Care documentation must be postmarked or delivered the 16<sup>th</sup> for services delivered the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> for the 16<sup>th</sup> through the end of the month.**