

From Our Offices

In December 2008 HOME-CARE administered its annual Consumer and Behavioral Technician satisfaction survey. This is the fourth year that HOME-CARE has distributed surveys to consumers and the second year for Behavioral Technicians. Historically the survey has been mailed in the spring. However, last year's survey was mailed in December to avoid conflict with the survey carried out by the Council on Accreditation. This timing may have contributed to the fact that we had lower response rates than in previous years.

Our purpose was to see how well we are meeting the needs and desires of consumers, family members and our employees. The surveys sent to consumers and their families were slightly different than the ones sent to Behavioral Technicians, but each survey had questions that targeted satisfaction with administrative staff, direct care staff, supervisory staff, and training opportunities. Each survey also asked if the respondents would recommend HOME-CARE to others. The goal is that 90 percent of respondents would recommend us to others.

The overall outcome was positive in both the Consumer and Behavioral Technician surveys. Eighty-nine percent of consumers reported overall satisfaction and 91 percent reported they would recommend HOME-CARE to others. Ninety percent of the Behavioral Technicians reported they would recommend HOME-CARE to others. We were pleased with that. However, there appears to be a slight reduction in satisfaction from previous years, particularly regarding phone calls being returned promptly, Behavioral Technicians arriving on time and with Clinical Supervisors. These are critical areas, and plans are in place to make improvements. Planning is underway for the implementation of the 2009 satisfaction surveys, and we encourage each of you to respond.

HOME-CARE strives to provide high quality service and to continuously improve. We welcome your input at any time. Feel free to contact **Rankin Whittington**, CEO at 1-800-223-2841 or **Sara Nolan**, Director of the Mental Health Division at 1-800-718-4599 with your suggestions, complaints and compliments



Employee Spotlight

Thresia Hallam has been with HOME-CARE Management Corporation since July 2004. She has worked with the same client, **Pam Patterson**, for the entire time.

Thresia had her own childcare nursery for 10 years, was a foster parent for 10 years, and directed Prime Time after school for seven years.

In the almost five years she has been with HOME-CARE, Thresia has helped Pam reach many of her goals. At one time Pam was dismissed from a volunteer job because of her behaviors. Since working with Thresia, she has become able to go into the community and interact in groups without yelling or cursing.

Thresia has been great to work with. Her paperwork is always on time and is always mistake free. She is very helpful and friendly and shows a genuine concern for her client.

Thresia has two grown daughters and five grandchildren

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Client Spotlight

Tina Brown, a very special lady who is full of personality, has received services from HOME-CARE for the past 2 years. Supervisor

Dawn Anderson describes being a part of

her treatment team as "a joy." Tina, shown here with Behavioral Technician **Ethel Brown** (no relation) and **Ms Rosie** of the Mooresville Soup Kitchen, is the type of person who doesn't know a stranger. She volunteers at the Soup Kitchen one to two days per week, participates with Special Olympics, and is involved with continuing education and drama at Mitchell Community College.

Tina receives Personal Assistance and Respite services from HOME-CARE and is quite proud of the progress she has

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The danger of gambling addiction

When you think of gambling, what comes to mind? Most people don't realize how prevalent gambling is in our area. In the past three decades legalized gambling in the United States has grown from a limited activity to one that is extremely commonplace. A 2004 Gallup Study found that two in three Americans admit to some form of gambling, with playing the lottery being the most common type. Other gambling activities include slot machines, card games, betting on sporting events, video poker, the stock market, and bingo.

There are many levels of gambling. Compulsive gambling is defined as an urge to gamble despite negative consequences or a desire to stop. Severe problem gambling may be diagnosed as clinical pathological gambling if the gambler meets certain criteria. Although the term "gambling addiction" is common in the recovery movement, pathological gambling is considered to be an impulse control disorder and is therefore not defined as an addiction by the American Psychological Association. Pathological gambling is similar to many other impulse control disorders such as kleptomania (stealing), pyromania (fire-setting), and trichotillomania (pulling out one's hair). Other mental diseases that are associated with an impulse control disorder include antisocial personality disorder and schizophrenia.

The DSM-IV-TR diagnostic criteria for pathological gambling are presented as a checklist that includes preoccupation with gambling, the need to gamble with increasing amounts of money, the desire to gamble more in attempts to get even or win money back after losing, lying to families and others about gambling, relying on others to provide money when in desperate financial situations due to gambling, inability to control or stop gambling, and gambling to escape other problems.

Gambling may have negative effects on an individual's life. As debts build up, people may turn to other sources of money such as theft or selling drugs, often under pressure from bookies or loan sharks. Also, a gambler who does not receive treatment for pathological gambling may, in desperation, contemplate suicide. Child and spousal abuse are common in homes where pathological gambling is present. Growing up in such an environment may also interfere with emotional development and increase the risk of the child falling prey to problem gambling behavior.

A variety of treatments exist for pathological gambling, including counseling, self-help groups, step based programs, and psychiatric medications; telephone counseling services are also available. Online peer support is growing as a method of treatment. Gamblers Anonymous (GA) is another common option for obtaining help for gambling problems. Modeled after Alcoholics Anonymous, GA uses a 12-step model that emphasizes a mutual-support approach, including peer support.

If anyone you know needs help or needs to discuss gambling with a representative from Gamblers Anonymous, call North Carolina's hotline at 1-888-846-4427.

NEED TO TALK?

**GAMBLERS
ANONYMOUS
1-888-846-4427.**

Opportunities For Learning

- **Cultural Diversity**, Lenoir, May 28, 10-12 p.m.
- **Serving Clients in Natural Environments**, Boone, June 10, 1-3 p.m.
- **Grief 101**, Lenoir, June 10, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
- **Gang Task Force**, Wilmington, June 16, 5-7 p.m.
- **Working with Mentally Ill Adults**, Charlotte, June 17, 2-4 p.m.
- **Abuse: Signs and Reporting Requirements**, Forest City, June 17, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- **Sign Language**, Statesville, June 17, 9-10 a.m. or 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Anniversaries

This month **Jeff Brinager** of our Statesville office is celebrating his 11th HOMECARE anniversary! Jeff has worked with many consumers, and we can always count on him to help each of them reach goals. **Amanda Bellamy** of Wilmington is another long-time employee; she has been with us seven years. Six-year veterans include **David Hardie** of Whiteville and **Karla Harris** and **Tasha Pettaway**, both of Tarboro. **Christy Formyduval** and **Shenna Redd**, both working from our Whiteville office, have been with us five years. We appreciate all that you do, and we know that those you serve so well do also.

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

made since HOMECARE began working with her. Tina said that "the program is really good because it helps people with disabilities." She also said that "It helps us not use our disability as a crutch." Speaking specifically about the Soup Kitchen, Tina says that she feels that her greatest achievement is that she has learned to follow the rules. Tina's behavioral technician agrees that Tina has shown great improvement in self control, recognizing boundaries, and controlling her anger.

This lady likes to be on the move, whether she is volunteering, performing in a play, going to the library, working out at the YMCA, or going on vacation with her family. Tina states that she really enjoys having HOMECARE as a part of her life and that she does not feel that she would have the opportunities to grow without the services we provide.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT (Continued from page 1)

that she loves to talk about. On top of everything else she does, she takes care of her 87-year-old mother.

Thresia says that she loves working for HOMECARE Management Corporation because everyone is so professional and helpful. The consumer's family and her supervisor agree that Thresia has made a huge impact on Pam's life and is an asset to HOMECARE Management Corporation.