

June 2009

Alpha Bits

~Letter from the President~

Dear Alpha Omega Health, Inc. Employees:

As you may or may not know, President and CEO of Alpha Omega Health, JK Horne, Jr. had a mild stroke in January. He is recovering but has decided to retire from his position as the President and CEO. I have taken over his position as President and CEO. While this is a change for the company, we will flourish and continue to build the company as JK wished. We will follow in his footsteps and let his legacy continue. There have been some changes that have been made to make this transition easier for us all. There is now a management team that will oversee the company. We will discuss potential changes and make decisions as a team. The management team consists of Joe Martin, Kathryn Ray and myself, Rebecca Horne. Please feel free to contact us for any questions or concerns, we are here to help.

Growing up, I watched my dad work for the state and then work to build Alpha Omega Health, Inc. Through him, I learned the importance of putting our clients first. For those of you who don't know me, I thought that I would tell you a little about myself. I got my degree in social work at Meredith College, where I did an internship at a local hospital dealing with many different populations. Once I graduated, I went to work at a skilled nursing facility and loved every minute of it. I worked with and for the residents and had a great time interacting with them. We had a lot of fun talking and sharing stories from their pasts.

I came to Alpha Omega Health, Inc. in February 2001 and served as the Director of Social Work as well as working with a psychiatrist for a clinic we started in Wake County. I had my son, Nolan Daniel in September 2001 and took a year off to be with him. He has been diagnosed with autism and goes to a school for autism in Cary, North Carolina. I have now experienced both sides of the coin, being the staff and being the parent of a special needs child. We will be fine as a company and will thrive for many years to come. I have faith in all of us.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Horne
President and CEO

News and Recent Events:

Wilmington

The Wilmington office of Alpha Omega Health, Inc. would like to welcome Jennifer Lewis, QP to the Alpha Omega Family. In addition to new staff, the Wilmington office is adding programs! The Intensive In-Home program is well under way and close to being up and running. We look forward to serving consumers in New Hanover and surrounding counties in this new capacity!

Kenansville

The Kenansville office of Alpha Omega is growing! Alpha Omega recently added Telepsychiatry to the list of services provided in the Duplin county and surrounding areas. This means that consumers in this rural area may have access to psychiatrists and therapists which they may otherwise go without.

Wake/Chapel Hill

The Wake/Chapel Hill office would like to welcome Grant Goodman to the Alpha Omega family. Grant is a QP who will be working with residential and CAP clients. Welcome Grant! Alpha Omega Health, Inc. has closed our Chapel Hill location and merged the office with our Wake office. Staff for the "Triangle" area are now located within the corporate office on Six Forks Rd. Until recently, staff in the Chapel Hill office focused primarily on developing high quality Therapeutic Foster Homes. The triangle staff have begun to look at providing other services such as Home Supports, Home and Community Supports as well as other CAP services. While moving is never easy, Erin and Grant have taken it all in stride and have continued to provide excellent services to their clients throughout the move process.

Henderson

The Henderson office has recently undergone some changes and we would like to welcome the following new office staff members: Sandra Walker—Area Coordinator
Melanie Barnett—Residential QP
Ashley Ratchford—AP
Brandi Davis—Administrative Asst. In addition to new staff, the Henderson office has recently implemented a new Video Conferencing system making it much easier to provide excellent training to staff in this rural location. We are excited about the possibilities!

Winston Salem

The Winston Salem office also has new staff to welcome and has undergone quite a transformation in the last few months. Alpha Omega Health Inc. would like to welcome: Zonie Armstrong - Area Coordinator
Tanesha Johnson - Office Manager
De'Monique Corbett - QP
Pamela Vandelli - QP
Alpha Omega looks forward to working with these ladies to serve Forsyth and the surrounding counties!

Mountains

There have been several news worthy events in the Mountain region. Alpha Omega closed our North Wilkesboro office and merged the two Spruce Pine offices in order to save overhead and provide comprehensive services in one location. Alpha Omega would also like to Welcome back Bernie Farrow! Video Conferencing has also been implemented in the mountain region. This allows our State Training Coordinator (a mountain resident) to utilize his expertise and train staff from Asheville to Wilmington!

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH:

Brandi Davis - Henderson, NC

Brandi has stepped up in our Henderson office. Not only is she a part time admin, but she also works with a client because she did not want to give up her client to move into a full time office position. Brandi has stayed late on several occasions and does whatever it takes to get the job done. Thank you Brandi!

Sarah Blythe - Wilmington, NC

Sarah has been providing PA services for one of our clients for several months now. Before Sarah, we had great difficulty staffing this case due to the nature of the case. Sarah has managed to keep this client served to the fullest capacity we can. She should be highly commended for her patience and diligence in keeping this individual happy. Sarah is truly an asset to the particular client she is working with, to her supervisor and to Alpha Omega. Thank you Sarah!

PROFESSIONAL OF THE QUARTER

Erin Guirguis - Area Coordinator, Wake office

Erin has pitched in with various offices during audits, training new staff and clean up of charts and authorizations. Erin has been a huge help. Thank you Erin!

Judges Johnson - Therapeutic Foster Parent

Judges has had to go above and beyond the call of duty as a Therapeutic Foster Parent. Over the last 2 months she has repeatedly put aside her other responsibilities to effectively deal with her foster child who is currently on home-bound school. Thank you Judges!

Happy Anniversary! Jan - June 2009

Happy 14th Anniversary!

1995 – 2009

Gail Davis

Happy 11th Anniversary!

1998 – 2009

Tinny Perry

James Clark

Happy 10th Anniversary!

1999 – 2009

Ruby Tyree

Sandra Edmonds – Thorpe

Happy 9th Anniversary

2000 – 2009

Brenda G. Buchanan

Amanda Nance

Fran G. Buchanan

Bobby Grady

Happy 8th Anniversary!

2001 – 2009

Carolyn Brown

Delores McCumbee

Sheila Oakley

Happy 7th Anniversary

2002 – 2009

Janice Allen

Gladys Godsey

Vickie Bullock

Marsha Ranes

Shirley Williams

Happy 6th Anniversary!

2003 – 2009

Susan Bremer

Kristy Beal

Paul Plummer Jr.

Happy 5th Anniversary!

2004 – 2009

Tondra Jones

Teresa Cutchember

Mary Lewis

Theresa Mauldin

Happy 4th Anniversary!

2005 – 2009

Joseph Kotei

Charlotte Evans

Debbie Watts

Syreeta Henderson

Carolyn Worley

Charmaine Allen

Robin Mullins

Happy 3rd Anniversary!

2006 – 2009

Cynthia Ramsey

Antwane Parker

Judges Johnson

Courtney Coley

Mary Branch

Connie Cayton

Jerri Wiseman

Linda Reid

Natalie Pridgen

Aundra Foster

Paige Ray

Lucy Henderson

Erin Guirguis

Happy 2nd Anniversary!

2007 – 2009

Christy Skinner

Helen Cate

Sherrie Ledford

Mary Knight

Jan Mallindine

Marilyn Michelle Edwards

Cynthia Johnson

Teresa McCourt

Cindy Halbach

Pattie Meadows

Jessie Ramsey

Lisa McKinney

Vanessa Watson

Christy Williams

Mandy Stephenson

Jennifer Olvera

Lillian Vinson

Matt Lucca

Kathey McMahan

John Pritchard

Jenny Millsaps

Preston Wiley

Lisa Geouge

Trista Arthur

Mari Gramlin

Colleen Hannush

Francesco Monteleone

Matt Peterson

Happy 1st Anniversary!

2008 – 2009

Joanne Williams

Kimberly Byrd

Bettie Jeffreys

Angela Oaks

Sarah Blythe

Carol Forbes

Anson Killiany

Jo Ann Harris

Marian Alston

Keith Forbes

Michele Driver

Tami Kaiser

James Frederick

Desiree Roberts

Pam Glenn

Phyllis Smith

Arshola Brown

Linda McCroury

Carolyn Wood

Debbie Maynard



Policy Review

II.31. Submission of Documentation

Policy:

Documentation of services records the client's condition and progress toward goals. It also records the type of services provided to the client. Documentation of services provided is part of all direct care workers' job responsibilities. Documentation for services is the provider's and the agency's proof that a service has been provided. Alpha-Omega Health, Inc. cannot bill for services without the documentation to support the service. Because of this, Documentation is to be turned in on a weekly basis along with a time sheet showing the hours worked by the employee. Documentation must be done on a daily basis to truly reflect the individual client progress and service provided. Not completing documentation and submitting paperwork on time is neglect of duty. A continual problem with documentation being submitted late will result in disciplinary action.

Procedure:

1. Documentation and timesheets are to be done on a daily ongoing basis, as the services are provided.
2. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the employee has received training on documentation. If an employee does not feel he/she has received adequate training, the supervisor should be notified.
3. Documentation is to be turned in with time sheet on a weekly basis to the employee's supervisor. The employee is to deliver paperwork the next working day after the last day of the week worked or mail the paperwork the last day of the week worked with the client.
4. Each office is to stamp the received date on all paperwork as it is received. If paperwork was mailed then the postmark date should be stamped on the time sheet.
5. **Any time recorded by the employee in which the documentation was not received by the Monday following the week services is provided will be paid at minimum wage. To clarify this, employees that are required to turn in paperwork must have paperwork delivered to the office no later than 5pm Monday. Employees that mail paperwork must have a postmark date no later than Monday. Any documentation received after these times will result in the employee being paid minimum wage for this time. Should the documentation require corrections in order to be billed, the corrected documentation will be due to the supervisor by 5pm on Tuesday. If the documentation is not corrected and can not be billed after 5pm Tuesday, the employee will be paid minimum wage for any dates of service not billable.**
6. The supervisor is to review all documentation quantitatively and qualitatively. If there are problems with the documentation, the supervisor will contact the employee and have the employee correct the paperwork. Employee will return corrected paperwork within deadline set by supervisor. However, if there are continued occurrences of paperwork being completed incorrectly after sufficient training, this will result in disciplinary action which may include being paid minimum wage.
7. If an employee does not submit paperwork on a weekly basis repeatedly, this will result in disciplinary action which may include payment of minimum wage for services provided.

Safety Tidbits!

Know What These Terms Mean—Get educated about Heat!

- **Heat wave:** Prolonged period of excessive heat and humidity. The National Weather Service steps up its procedures to alert the public during these periods of excessive heat and humidity.
- **Heat index:** A number in degrees Fahrenheit (F) that tells how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature. Exposure to full sunshine can increase the heat index by 15 degrees F.
- **Heat cramps:** Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. Although heat cramps are the least severe, they are an early signal that the body is having trouble with the heat.
To treat Heat Cramps: Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch the affected muscle and replenish fluids. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not give liquids with alcohol or caffeine in them, as they can make conditions worse.
- **Heat exhaustion:** Heat exhaustion typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a hot, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Blood flow to the skin increases, causing blood flow to decrease to the vital organs. This results in a form of mild shock. If not treated, the victim may suffer heat stroke.
To treat Heat exhaustion: Get the person out of the heat and into a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths, such as towels or sheets. If the person is conscious, give cool water to drink. Make sure the person drinks slowly. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not give liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine. Let the victim rest in a comfortable position, and watch carefully for changes in his or her condition.
- **Heat stroke:** Heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.
To treat Heat stroke: Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation. Help is needed fast. Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Immerse victim in a cool bath, or wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. Watch for signals of breathing problems. Keep the person lying down and continue to cool the body any way you can. If the victim refuses water or is vomiting or there are changes in the level of consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink.
Remember—during a heat wave: Stay indoors if possible, slow down and do strenuous activities as early in the day as possible (4am to 7am is the coolest part of the day), and always drink plenty of fluids (water is best!) even if you do not feel thirsty.

ATM Safety !

- Always pay close attention to the ATM and your surroundings. Don't select an ATM at the corner of a building -- corners create a blind spot. Use an ATM located near the center of a building. Do your automated banking in a public well-lighted location that is free of shrubbery and decorative partitions or dividers.
- Maintain an awareness of your surroundings throughout the entire transaction. Be wary of people trying to help you with ATM transactions. Be aware of anyone sitting in a parked car nearby. When leaving an ATM make sure you are not being followed. If you are, drive immediately to a police or fire station, or to a crowded, well-lighted location or business.
- Do not use an ATM that appears unusual looking or offers options with which you are not familiar or comfortable.
- Do not allow people to look over your shoulder as you enter your PIN. Memorize your PIN; never write it on the back of your card. Do not re-enter your PIN if the ATM eats your card -- contact a bank official.
- Do not wear expensive jewelry or take other valuables to the ATM. This is an added incentive to the assailant.
- Never count cash at the machine or in public. Wait until you are in your car or another secure place.
- When using a drive-up ATM, keep your engine running, your doors locked and leave enough room to maneuver between your car and the one ahead of you in the drive-up line.
- Maintain a supply of deposit envelopes at home or in your car. Prepare all transaction paperwork prior to your arrival at the ATM. This will minimize the amount of time spent at the machine.
- Closely monitor your bank statements, as well as your balances, and immediately report any problems to your bank.
- If you are involved in a confrontation with an assailant who demands your money, COMPLY.

Other Helpful Info.....

The “Early Bird” Saves \$\$ on Fuel

The proverbial “early bird” not only “catches the worm,” but also catches savings at the fuel pump.

Fill your gas tank early in the morning, when it’s cool, and you can get about 5 percent more gas for the same price. The heat of the afternoon sun causes gas to expand in the station’s fuel tanks so that less pumps out as the day wears on. Believe it or not, the average “early bird” will save up to \$50 per year (and maybe even more) using this method. Try it, you’ll like it!

KIDS, CARS AND BEYOND—”Parking Lot Rules”

Use the phrase “Parking Lot Rules” and teach your kids not to race ahead or trail behind you when they get out of a car in a parking lot. Make sure they know to walk next to you or hold your hand so they can get back and forth to the car safely. Children are often unaware of the dangers in parking lots, and drivers can be easily distracted. When your kids understand it’s meaning, the phrase “Parking Lot Rules” can be useful in other situations. If you see a danger that your child might have misses, such as broken glass, loud voices, or a stranger acting oddly, say “Parking Lot Rules” and your child will know they need to be by your side, no questions asked. If you call out to warn them, you simply call more attention to your family and possible danger.

You really do reach out and touch someone!

If you’re happy, there’s a good chance that your positive feelings will add to the happiness of the people you’ve never even met—and vice versa!

One person’s mood can spread like the concentric circles that form when a rock hits water.

“To think we are connected to one another has caused me to take more responsibility for my own actions,” says researcher James Fowler. “If I head home in a happy mood, I’m not just making my son happy. I’m potentially making my son’s friend happy. I’m not just making my wife happy, I’m making my wife’s mother happy too” What is happiness anyway? It’s different for everyone, but the qualities generally associated with happiness include feeling positive about the future, enjoying life in the present moment, and feeling that you’re just as good as other people. The bottom line is: Surround yourself with positive people as much as possible!



MELANOMA/SKIN CANCER

Once a month—check your skin from head to toe (including the soles of the feet). Contact your doctor if you find any mole that has changed in size, shape, or color; any mole that is larger than a pencil eraser or has different colors such as tan, black, or dashes of red, white or blue; or any patches of scaly skin or oozing or bleeding from a mole or bump. Visit the American Academy of Dermatology (www.aad.org) for more info

Summer means Grilling!

Gas grill safety tips

When cooking outdoors with a gas grill, check the air tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders or grease, and follow these tips to reduce the risk of fire or explosion:

- Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing.
- Move gas hoses as far away as possible from hot surfaces and dripping hot grease.
- Always keep propane gas containers upright.
- Never store a spare gas container under or near the grill or indoors.
- Never store or use flammable liquids, like gasoline, near the grill.
- Never keep a filled container in a hot car or car trunk. Heat will cause the gas pressure to increase, which may open the relief valve and allow gas to escape.

Charcoal grill safety

- Never burn charcoal inside of homes, vehicles, tents or campers.
- Charcoal should never be used indoors, even if ventilation is provided.
- Since charcoal produces CO fumes until the charcoal is completely extinguished, do not store the grill indoors with freshly used coals.

3 Steps for Safe Marinating

1. Keep raw beef, chicken or fish in the refrigerator while marinating.
2. Discard any marinade that you don’t use in cooking. Unused marinade may contain harmful bacteria and is not safe for use.
3. Always wash the pan or dish used to marinate food in hot, soapy water before you place cooked food on it! Happy Grilling!