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Health care at home and part of the family

It doesn't usually take very long for home health care workers and patients to form close friendships. Sometimes, the bond grows so strong it seems more like family.

That's how Elaine Johnson views her home health aide Cindy Niehaus. "She's gotten to be like one of my kids," 88-year-old Elaine says. "Cindy helps me with my bath, she does my hair, anything and everything really."

Cindy has been coming to Elaine's home for years as a part of the home health care services offered through Perham Memorial Hospital. In the fall of 1997, Elaine suffered a heart attack which prompted her to first look into the option of home health care. Over the last decade, Elaine has gone through periods of time where she hasn't needed home care services, and has resumed services again when her health required it.

Her most recent injury, a backyard fall that happened this past summer, necessitated not only home health aide services, but also the assistance of a physical therapist and nurse. Elaine says she is fortunate to have family members who live close by and who gladly step in to help when she needs it. However, especially after her last fall, she suddenly required the type of daily care her kids couldn't provide on their own.

Although her kids visit frequently, Elaine says she recognizes they still have their own families and jobs to tend to. A proud mother of five, grandmother of 16, great-

grandmother of 40, and great-great-grandmother of one, Elaine has plenty of family to keep her company, but still found herself in need of the type of medical assistance only health care professionals can provide.

Last summer's fall meant that Elaine had to wear a brace for three months. With her range of motion severely limited by the brace, even daily tasks such as changing clothing were no longer possible for her to do on her own. Home health aide Cindy Niehaus spent seven days a week with Elaine for the first few weeks after her fall. During this time, Cindy worked with Elaine's daughter Connie to show her how to best assist her mother.

"Cindy is marvelous for helping out," Elaine says, expressing her gratitude for the quality of care she has come to rely upon. "I couldn't ask for a better home health aide."

Eventually, Connie was able to help her

mom on the weekends, and Cindy assisted Elaine on the weekdays when Connie was working. Knowing that their mom is getting the care she needs, in the comfort of her own home, is of utmost importance to Elaine's five children. As daughter Connie Sczygiel describes it, "It's nice just to know someone will be here to help her, someone you can count on."

During the recovery process after her fall, Elaine was able to regain her range of motion and strengthen her body with the help of Perham Memorial Hospital Physical Therapist Celeste Kostohryz. Elaine's fall, which occurred while she was pulling weeds in her backyard, resulted in her breaking the second vertebrae in her back.

Not only was she given a personalized physical therapy regime to help her recover from the fall, but she was able to do so at home rather than traveling to the hospital every week. Elaine says she was thankful to have a trained physical

Lifelong Perham area resident, Elaine Johnson, and her daughter, Connie, enjoy opening Elaine's stack of Christmas cards together. Perham Memorial Home Care's services allowed Elaine to enjoy this past Christmas season in her home while recuperating from a backyard fall.



therapist come check her progress and assist her with exercises.

"It especially helped me to be able to turn my head," Elaine says of the physical therapy. "I couldn't look out of a car window before without turning my whole body. I can move it pretty good now."

As Elaine's condition has continued to improve over the last few months, she now requires less frequent home health care assistance. She is currently only receiving Perham Memorial Home Care's nursing and home health aide services.

Home health aide Cindy visits just three times a week instead of every day like she did right after the fall. Cindy now helps Elaine with the same physical therapy exercises that the physical therapist used to do with her. This is a task they both have developed a good sense of humor about. "Cindy will tell me, 'you've got to go to the corner now,'" Elaine laughs, explaining how one of her exercises is always performed in a specific corner of the living room.

A registered nurse visits her once a month and checks her blood pressure, pulse, and temperature. "She also asks me 100 questions," Elaine says with a chuckle, adding how she truly is thankful all of this can be done in her home so she doesn't have to make a trip to the hospital.

Elaine doesn't drive, so having health care professionals who are willing to travel to her home means she doesn't have to go through the hassle of finding herself transportation to and from a medical facility. "If I can stay home, that's what I want," she summarizes.

Perham Memorial Home Care is equipped with a qualified team of medical experts that includes registered nurses, physical, occupational, and speech therapists, and



Perham Memorial Hospital physical therapist, Celeste Kostohryz, assists Elaine with some specialized physical therapy exercises she can perform at home.

home health aides. Each of these professionals work together with clients and their families to care for the individual health needs of people who are best served at home.

Elaine says simply, "Go for it!" when asked what she would say to anyone consider-

ing using Perham Memorial Home Care's services, adding how she has never had any regrets.

"The staff has always treated me just wonderfully. I wouldn't be able to be here at home without them or handle all of the things they help me with."



Why choose Home Care?

Living independently means being able to choose to live at home with hope, dignity, and peace of mind.

- The **hope** of continuing to live in the place we all love and want to be...home.
- The **dignity** of receiving care in the privacy of your home.
- The **peace of mind** of having a home care professional assist your loved ones in meeting their healthcare and lifestyle needs.

For information on how you or your loved one can benefit from home care, please call Perham Memorial Home Care at (218) 347-1880.

At left, Elaine Johnson shares a laugh with her longtime home health aide, Cindy Niehaus, while getting her hair styled for the day.

Perham Memorial Hospital and Sanford welcome new providers



Julie Tobkin, FNP

Perham Memorial Hospital and Sanford Health are pleased to welcome Julie Tobkin.

As a nurse practitioner, Julie, in collaboration with a physician, specializes in the care of patients of all ages. This includes all aspects of family medicine. Julie's special area of interest is women's health. She will begin seeing patients at the Sanford clinics in New York Mills and Perham in February.

Julie received her undergraduate nursing education and her graduate doctoral degree in nursing from North Dakota State University, Fargo. She and her husband, Patrick, have been married three years. Since 2008, Julie has been a registered nurse in acute care at Perham Memorial Hospital.

"What I am most looking forward to as I start my practice in New York Mills and Perham, is getting to know the residents of these unique, growing towns," said Julie. "I am also looking forward to working with the wonderful providers (medical staff) at both clinics."

Julie enjoys spending time outdoors - especially at the lake in the summer - and she and her husband are both avid Bison football fans. In fact, she said she 'bleeds green and gold!' Exercising, reading, spending time with family, and enjoying their two dogs top off Julie's leisure activities.

Marisa Zutter, FNP

Ottertail native, Marisa Zutter, will join the PMHH and Sanford Health team in February as a nurse practitioner specializing in the care of patients of all ages. Marisa has a particular interest in women's health, well exams, and chronic disease management. She will see patients at the Ottertail and Perham Sanford clinics.

A graduate of Henning High School, Marisa received her doctorate of nursing practice from North Dakota State University, Fargo, and her bachelor of science degree in nursing from St. Cloud State University.

Marisa and her husband, Sam, have been married two and a half years and are the proud owners of Apollo, a chocolate lab.

"I am very excited to start my practice in Ottertail and Perham," said Marisa. "For most of last year, I did clinicals in Perham and had a great experience. I am mostly looking forward to meeting new people!"

In her spare time, Marisa enjoys reading, gardening, playing cards, and games. Additionally, she and Sam enjoy fishing and anything outdoors.



Joshua Chapman, M.D.

Perham Memorial Hospital and Sanford Health are very excited to introduce Dr. Josh Chapman, who will be joining the medical staff this summer.

Dr. Chapman is in his final year in the Internal Medicine/ Pediatrics Residency Program at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where he also completed his undergraduate degree in genetics and medical school. He will be board certified in both specialties.

Dr. Chapman and his wife, Chanda, have been married for 10 years and have two children; Maren, 5 years old, and Jonah, 21 months. In his free time he enjoys cooking, reading, and family time, and looks forward to adding grilling, learning to play the piano, and traveling to his list of hobbies.

"We're really looking forward to joining the community of Perham this summer and raising our family here," said Dr. Chapman, about his family's move to Perham.

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