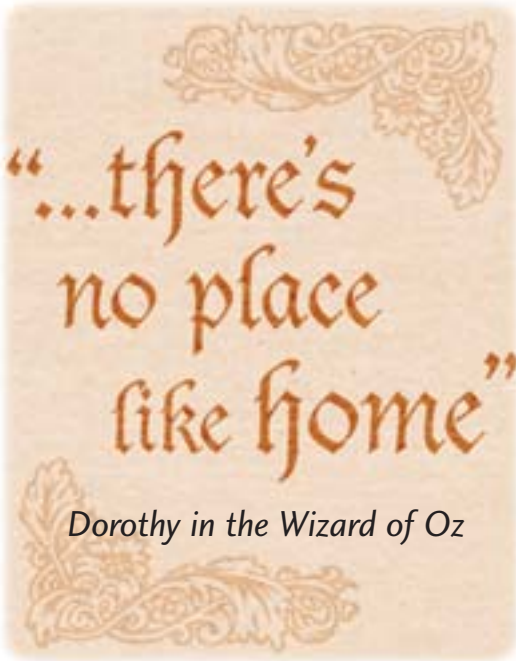




Complex care, Simple comforts

COMMUNITY care connection



But what will it take to lead us home?



That is the question addressed by VHA Home HealthCare CEO Carol Annett at the November 2006 Ontario Hospital Association Convention. Home is where most people want to be cared for if at all possible. As Carol Annett discussed, the home care sector needs visionary and effective leaders to develop and maintain the home care option.

Carol spoke at a well-attended joint session on leadership in healthcare sponsored by the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) and the Canadian College of Health Service Executives (CCHSE). Responding to keynote speaker Dr. John Hylton, President of CCHSE, Carol talked about leadership in the challenging context of home healthcare. Other panelists Joe Mapa, President and CEO of Mount Sinai Hospital and Mimi Lowi-Young, CEO of the Central West Local Health Integration Network offered their unique perspectives on the essential leadership competencies required in the new healthcare environment.

Why the growing emphasis on leadership?

Leadership training and succession planning seem to be on the agenda everywhere...particularly in the healthcare and community support sectors. A few examples attest to this heightened focus:

- ◆ the OHA has a new strategic direction to "improve executive and management leadership capacity within the healthcare sector through a new leadership institute";
- ◆ "change or transformational leadership" courses abound in business schools and executive training programs; and
- ◆ the United Way of Greater Toronto and George Cedric Metcalfe Foundation collaborated with the Schulich School of Business to present a unique course for Emerging Leaders in the not-for-profit sector.

the other panelists, are legion, for example:

- ◆ the unrelenting pace of change;
- ◆ instability in the planning environment;

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* Dr. Hylton's presentation is available at www.cchse.org.

in this issue



"...there's no place like home"



Nominations Now Being Accepted for the 2007 Heroes in the Home Awards

An aging leadership cohort and enormous challenges fuel the leadership "crisis" in healthcare. The leadership challenges, identified by Dr. Hylton* and

“...there’s
no place
like home”



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- ◆ governance and performance accountability;
- ◆ limited resources;
- ◆ shortages of talent; and
- ◆ leadership capacity.

Unique Leadership Challenges in Community Care

The very considerable challenges of leading healthcare agencies in the current environment are exacerbated in the community health sector by the endemic undervaluing of home healthcare. Community health leaders are burdened with advocating for recognition of home healthcare and support within a changing and integrating healthcare system.

What are the other unique contextual challenges for leaders in home healthcare? Carol Annett cited several:

- ◆ Managed competition – for ten years now, home healthcare leaders have operated in a different business environment than any other part of the healthcare sector; both for profit and not-for-profit agencies must compete on a regular basis with each other for the privilege of providing care to our communities and clients;
- ◆ Consolidation – within that competitive context of buyers and sellers of services, the consolidation of “buyers” from 74 (home care and long term care placement coordination programs) to 43 CCACs in 1997 to 14 CCACs on January 1, 2007 has led and will inevitably lead to fewer “sellers” of service either through bankruptcies/voluntary exits from the field or mergers;

- ◆ Increasing acuity and complexity of clients – which require higher levels of skill in the field;
- ◆ No control over the work environment – given the variation in types of housing and living conditions of our clients, constant flexibility and vigilance is needed.

What does it take to meet these challenges?

What are the leadership skills required to successfully respond to these challenges? In her presentation, Carol used a Wizard of Oz analogy to examine the key leadership competencies required in the current environment. See the abbreviated excerpts from her presentation on the next two pages.

In keeping with her analogy, Carol concluded that we are undoubtedly operating in a new context, i.e., “we’re not in Kansas anymore!” It is imperative that we find ways to foster the development of leaders, thinkers and innovators, and, particularly in the home healthcare sector, advocates. Many of the key leadership skills and competencies can be learned. Carol suggests providing varied learning opportunities through formal training and mentorship programs as well as by creating cultures within organizations and across the system that allow each individual to lead and innovate within his/her sphere of influence.

With an optimistic and strategic approach to leadership development, our vision of the future - of an integrated, efficient, high quality and humane healthcare system - will be clearer and infinitely more attainable.

Scarecrow...

in search of a brain



There are five critical components of intelligence necessary to leadership in home healthcare: conceptual thinking; emotional intelligence; social intelligence; executive intelligence; and systems thinking.

Conceptual Thinking: Evidence suggests that cognitive ability is a strong predictor of managerial success. Leaders must be capable of critical analysis and creative problem-solving to meet the challenges of the rapidly changing healthcare environment.

Emotional Intelligence (EI): Coined in 1975 by Daniel Goleman, the elements of emotional intelligence are: self-awareness (realistic self-assessment, confidence); self-regulation (trustworthiness, integrity, comfort with ambiguity, open to change); motivation (drive to achieve, optimism, organizational commitment); empathy (skill in recruiting and retaining talent; cross-cultural sensitivity, customer/client service); and social skills (persuasiveness, expertise in building and leading teams, effective change leader).

Social Intelligence: In a recent book, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*, Goleman enlarges his earlier thinking focused on an individual's EI, shifting his attention to social intelligence. This is, in essence, our social smarts – how well we interact with others.

Executive Intelligence: Justin Menkes' concept includes a new element of "ability to accomplish tasks" but overlaps with the categories above in that it also includes the ability to work with other people and a critical view of self (including an ability to learn from mistakes). An interesting offshoot of Menkes' work is an "executive intelligence" screening tool developed and used by the largest U.S. executive search firm, Spencer Stewart.

Systems Thinking: System mapping and finding solutions that work across and within multiple, interconnected systems is part of today's challenge. Leaders are charged with being system architects, and with finite resources, we need to identify ways to better organize and align ourselves so the resources meet community needs.

Lion...

in search of courage



It is a mistake to overlook the importance of courage and risk-taking among necessary leadership qualities. Today's healthcare organizations need to accept reasonable risks to improve performance. Innovative approaches and processes are necessary to tackle complex problems with no easy solutions.

Boards and leaders in the healthcare sector are traditionally risk averse. But the new context demands leaders who will take calculated risks and act decisively – keeping in mind the tortoise makes progress only when it sticks its neck out.

Leaders must ask tough questions, including challenging traditional ways of providing care. Courage is evidenced by:

- ◆ challenging the status quo
- ◆ drawing out and dealing with conflict
- ◆ taking risks
- ◆ learning from failures
- ◆ instilling courage in others
- ◆ leading change.

On this last point, change leadership, there is a very interesting current study of leaders of complex cross-boundary change in government and healthcare by Starfield Consulting. (See, www.starfield.ca). According

to the authors, successful change leadership includes: creating and keeping alive a shared vision; finding the right balance between commanding and letting go; full engagement; proactively creating environments that encourage change; nurturing collaboration and initiative; and strategically building momentum to get results.

Tinman... in search of heart



The core of leadership in this field is heart, lots and lots of heart! We need passionate and committed leaders. The work is tough – you need to love the work and the mission, and those you work with need to see your passion. In this respect, leaders in healthcare have an advantage over those in many other industries. For the most part, the staff we lead are mission driven. Our staff have a calling to care and put their clients first.

Leadership is about building relationships – internally and externally. In healthcare today more than ever, we need to foster teamwork and collaboration. Building partnerships and alliances is particularly important when resources are in short supply – joining forces with others opens new possibilities while conserving resources.

Dorothy... has it all!



She is a leader with the Lion's courage, the Scarecrow's brain and the Tinman's heart - and much more – all rolled into one!

She has the mix of professional will and humility that Jim Collins, the author of *Good to Great*, would identify as the key characteristic of a successful leader. In his research, he found that the most successful leaders were steadfastly focused on results – ambitious first and foremost for their companies and not themselves. They were the plow horse – not the show horse.

Dorothy also has top-notch communication skills – she listens well, she can get her point across, and she has the ability to create shared values and vision with her traveling companions on the yellow brick road. She successfully leads a diverse group, keeping them focused on the shared goal.

We welcome your support

MEMBERSHIP

VHA welcomes new members. Consistent with our not-for-profit tradition and to help us be the best we can be, we encourage members of the communities we serve to participate in VHA's governance. There is a nominal membership fee of \$25.00 (which can be waived in special circumstances). For more information, we invite you to contact Patricia Triantafilou at 416-482-4617 or patricia@vha.ca.

DONATIONS

Charitable donations to VHA Home HealthCare increase the quality of life of vulnerable people in your community. Donations are welcome, and can be mailed, made by phone (credit card contribution) or in person at our 170 Merton Street office. You may also want to consider making a "tribute gift" in honour of a loved one or special friend. To all of our donors, our sincere thanks for your generosity.

Nominations Now Being Accepted for the 2007 Heroes in the Home Awards

Heroes in the Home are those family members and friends who compassionately provide most of the in-home care for their loved ones suffering from chronic illness or disability.

VHA's annual award attempts to recognize the sacrifices and devotion of these informal caregivers through a symbolic recognition of one or two such caregivers each year.

In 2006, VHA Home HealthCare recognized Robert Troisi, a devoted son caring for his mother. Read his story in Community Care Connection Issue 10 at www.vha.ca.



Lucia and Robert Troisi

In spring 2007, VHA will again award \$1,000 to a nonprofessional caregiver who exemplifies the compassion and sacrifice demonstrated by the many family members and friends who are providing daily care for their loved ones.

Nominations are welcome until April 30, 2007 for the 2007 award. Caregivers must reside in Ontario. To nominate a caregiver you know, please go to our website at www.vha.ca and click on Heroes in the Home on VHA's home page, or send your nomination to Joy Klopp at (jklopp@vha.ca) or at VHA's 170 Merton Street office. For more information, call Joy at (416) 482-8782.

IF YOU

have any comments or suggestions regarding our newsletter, please feel free to contact the editor of

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care
connection

Joy Klopp

at (416) 482-8782 or 1-888-314-6622
or visit our web site at www.vha.ca



Eye On QUALITY

• 2006 Accreditation Survey

VHA Home HealthCare's third Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA) survey took place in late November 2006. All staff got involved this year through the self-assessment teams, the survey preparation, or through "accreditation challenges", competitive games that raised awareness of the accreditation process and related CQI concepts. Close to 100% participation was achieved! We will receive the final report from CCHSA in January 2007. Participating in an accreditation program is a huge undertaking yet always a very positive learning experience leading to many improvements in our processes and quality of care.

• Sharing VHA's CQI Initiatives

Staff at VHA gave presentations on one of VHA's CQI initiatives at two recent conferences. VHA shared information on our innovative approach to evaluating Board effectiveness at the 2006 Ontario Community Support Association conference and the 2006 Ontario Association of Community Care Access Centres conference.

• Some Other Recent Quality Improvement Activities

- Implementing a new Client Safety Improvement Plan
- Continuing implementation of staff safety improvement initiatives identified through an Occupational Health and Safety Program gap analysis
- Currently developing the 2007 Quality Improvement Plan

Offering complex care and simple comforts since 1925

VHA SERVICES

- ✓ Adult and Elder Care
- ✓ Child and Family Care
- ✓ Respite or Caregiver/Family Relief
- ✓ Palliative Care
- ✓ Mental Health Support
- ✓ Foot Care
- ✓ Attendant Care
- ✓ Extreme Cleaning
- ✓ Information and Referral Services
- ✓ Supplementary Staffing in Care Facilities
- ✓ Supportive Housing

VHA PROFESSIONAL STAFF

- ✓ Registered nurses/registered practical nurses
- ✓ Personal support workers/homemakers
- ✓ Client service coordinators/supervisors
- ✓ Other skilled professionals as required

VHA Home HealthCare is a member agency of the United Way of Greater Toronto and a contracted provider with Toronto Central, Central, Central East, Central West, Mississauga Halton, and Erie St. Clair CCACs, the City of Toronto's Homemakers and Nurses Services program and the Regional Municipality of Durham.

All services can be made available in your own home, in hospital or in a long-term care facility.



For more information, please call us at

(416) 489-2500

or **1 (888) 314-6622**

or visit our web site at www.vha.ca



United Way
of Greater Toronto

Community Care Connection is available electronically. If you'd like to cut down on the paper landing on your desk and be able to share the newsletter with your colleagues by a click of the mouse, just send your email address to jklopp@vha.ca.



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