



Home Care Administration

CATHERINE L. FOLSON, RN, BSN, MSA

Executive Director

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As the executive director of Global Home Care, Inc., Catherine L. Folson has an interest in working with people within their limitations to add “to their organizational structure to achieve positive performance.” At Global Home Care, Inc. (a Medicare and Medicaid certified home health agency servicing more than 350 patients in Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties on a daily basis) her daily functions include overseeing clinical functions, hiring clinical staff, writing and implementing policies and procedures, and evaluating clinical staff performance. Additionally, she serves on the professional advisory board of the agency’s board of directors.

Above and beyond her clinical oversight at Global Homecare, Inc., Ms. Folson utilizes her nursing and health-care knowledge to educate the public about improving and managing their health. She has begun working on a program for patients suffering from wounds that don’t heal, including people with diabetes. “My goal for when I retire

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is to have a small agency for myself and my associates with physicians to provide wound care to patients in their homes,” she explains.

Ms. Folson received her master's degree in health administration in 1993 from Central Michigan University and her bachelor of science in nursing in 1985 from Michigan State University. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Philippine American Medical Mission Foundation of Michigan. Ms. Folson has contributed as a writer to Healthcare IT News, a local periodical given to hospitals, and for newsletters published by her agency.

“Nursing is an art, and if it is to be made an art, it requires an exclusive devotion as hard a preparation, as any painter’s or sculptor’s work.” —*Florence Nightingale*

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CONVERSATION WITH CATHERINE L. FOLSON

CAMBRIDGE WHO'S WHO: What would you like to promote most about your business?

CATHERINE L. FOLSON: We provide skilled care to patients in their home. I manage the clinical side of the company; I promote the care aspect in the profession that I practice.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your position and your career?

Being able to return patients to a state of independence and functionality related to their daily living activities and health issues. This deals directly with disease processes and the knowledge to manage these processes, [either] by themselves or within their family structure. Another rewarding aspect is having the ability to work within a multidisciplinary team concept in order to achieve those goals and objectives.

What prompted you to go from nursing to healthcare administration?

As I got people involved in the delivery of care – including the staff who actually implements the strategies, policies, procedures and best practices – I

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decided to get into an administrative role, since it involves people skills as well as the ability to structure processes.

What topic(s) do you consider yourself to be an expert on?

I have a good knowledge base in obstetrical nursing, particularly high risk; also, psychiatric nursing. I was a director of nursing at a psychiatric hospital here in Michigan. I also taught at community colleges in Michigan and often speak at conferences about my profession and clinical skills.

What is your greatest professional accomplishment to date?

I am a mentor for improving individual performance and elevating my agency to a point where we can be a leader in the community. I'm also strengthening our relationships with physicians to assist them in managing their patients.

What are your short-term and long-term career goals?

I will be retiring in eight years. I have no intention of stopping work after that time. I'm preparing myself for the next phase of my career, when I will be utilizing my skills and knowledge, which I learned administratively and clinically, to help patients with the healing of wounds. I will also be partnering with other certified wound nurses.

We have a lot of patients who are diabetic and hypertensive; we also have a lot of older people who don't have the access to resources or knowledge. These people

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just are not able to get a handle on their issues or problems. I would like to be able to go into their homes and produce positive outcomes for them, which includes teaching them about wound prevention and connecting them with community resources.

You'll be doing this when you retire?

I'm not going to create a conflict of interest in terms of my loyalty to my agency, but after I retire I will continue to use my knowledge to create a wound care agency.

How do you remain current in your profession?

I read a lot; we attend conferences and come back to the agency to give relevant in-services; I attend a lot of Joint Commission leadership retreats. Feedback is essential: we invite physicians and other specialists to come in and help us manage; I listen to what issues my nurses have in terms of how they can be better practitioners. We have to achieve 25 CEUs [Continuing Education Units] on a yearly basis. We keep up with the healthcare standards of regulations. In my quest for retirement, I have to prepare somebody else to take my place; I sponsor and mentor nurses coming into the profession.

What is the most significant issue facing your profession today?

The shortage of nurses. When I graduated with my diploma in 1975, nurses pretty much ran the hospital. We were very assertive and confident; we worked constantly and we learned a lot. We got into nursing for the love of the job and for the love of people.