

Newsletter



**TCS HEALTHCARE
TECHNOLOGIES**

The Clear Choice of Medical Management Professionals



CEO PERSPECTIVE

Preparing for Disaster Recovery

*Rob Pock, Founder and CEO,
TCS Healthcare Technologies*

My wife Esther and I recently had house guests from Indonesia. We are very close friends with this couple and have teamed with them on a number development projects specifically targeted at poor rural Indonesian island communities. One such project was in response to the devastation left in the wake of the tsunami that struck the city of Banda Ache in Northern Sumatra. With the help



of concerned business leaders and the support of TCS, we built an orphanage to care for some of the countless children who had lost parents. We had visited the city shortly after the tsunami struck, and saw firsthand how one catastrophic event brought life to a screeching halt. Lives, families, businesses, schools and hospitals were all wiped out in just a few short moments.

Today, our Indonesian friends tell us that life in Banda Ache is back to normal after only six years. Disasters of this magnitude are becoming more common in this day and age. The earthquakes in Haiti, Chili, New Zealand and most recently Japan, have all resulted in similar levels of devastation. Closer to home, recent tornadoes in the Midwest caused us all to give thought to our own preparedness and disaster response plans.

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CLINICAL INSIGHTS

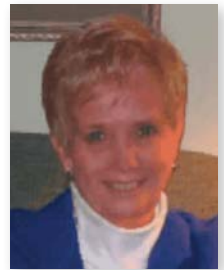
Promoting Comparative Effectiveness in Case Management

*Pat Stricker, RN, MEd, Senior Vice President,
Clinical Services, TCS Healthcare Technologies*

I'm still reflecting on "take-aways" from the 21st Annual CMSA Conference. Each year there are some sessions that really stay with me. This year it was one by Dr. Tom Wilson, PhD, entitled, "Health Care Effectiveness Review—Measurement and Performance." It sounded like a good outcomes session, so I decided to attend. But it was much more than that!

What Dr. Wilson described is a new, exciting way to transform the overwhelming, intimidating process of developing a research study and publishing its results into a simple method that any of us can feel comfortable doing. We have

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*Pat Stricker,
RN, MEd*

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PRODUCT FOCUS

Gearing Up for ACUITY 6.0

TCS has completed an upgrade to its medical management software, Acuity Advanced Care™ (ACUITY), version 6.0. TCS staff and clients have been looking forward to this upgrade, which has been in development since late last year. ACUITY 6.0 was designed to help clients comply with the ICD-10 regulatory changes, as well as the HIPAA 5010 transaction standards mandated by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

ACUITY 6.0 also includes client enhancement requests designed to make the care management system more user-friendly, according to the TCS senior management team.

The 6.0 release is now ready for installation, well ahead of the October 1, 2013, deadline for implementing ICD-10. This will allow TCS clients plenty of time to prepare for the advancement so they

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can schedule accordingly and perform the ACUITY upgrade in conjunction with future business priorities and other IT system maintenance and system enhancements.

Under the new release, TCS customers will be able to use either the ICD-9 or ICD-10 codes or both. Further, the user's choice can be determined by each organization—who might allow ACUITY users to access the ICD-9 codes one day, then ICD-10 the next day, or allow both code sets to effectuate a systematic transition. ACUITY 6.0 was modified to comply with the new 5010 transaction standards. On January 1, 2012, the 5010 transaction standard will be required by HHS, replacing the 4010 version. The new 5010 form allows the use of a larger field size of ICD-10 among other improvements.

In addition to the regulatory changes and the client-requested enhancements, ACUITY is also keeping pace with the technology advancements. The 6.0 release is certified for use with SQL Server 2008, Windows

Server 2008, Windows XP and 7, SAP Crystal Reports XI, Citrix® and Remote Desktop Services™, McKesson's CareEnhance Review Manager® and Milliman's CareGuidelines® and CareWebQI®. ■

For more information about the Acuity Advanced Care system, visit www.tcshealthcare.com or email info@tcshealthcare.com.

CEO Perspective

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As I watched the images of the Joplin, MS, hospital and heard how tornadoes scattered patient records (PHI) across the countryside, several questions came to mind:

- What was their recovery plan?
- What if a similar disaster struck any one of our clients' operations?
- How soon would they be back in operation?

At TCS we are keenly aware of the important role our software applications play in your day-to-day operations. The costs of reconstructing patient records and technical infrastructure are staggering. Having a proven, off-site, ready-to-go backup of your operation seems like a no-brainer. But how do you do this?

TCS is building a "cloud based" application and data storage cooperative for users of the ACUITY Advanced Care™ and related TCS products. The concept is simple—all of our customers who are interested would share in the cost of one infrastructure environment, but where all client data is appropriately properly accessible, separated and secure. This environment would receive backups of your data on a daily basis along with your unique configuration. If a disaster is declared by any one of the cooperative members, TCS would position the member's data and corresponding configurations within the environment and make it accessible to the member within 24 hours.

Our clients as well as yours expect us to be prepared and to have a well thought-out recovery plan in place. If you are interested in being part of this cooperative, please give us a call or drop us an email. ■

MEDICAID HEALTH PLANS Gaining Care Management Support with Acuity Advanced Care™

TCS Healthcare Technologies is supporting a growing number of Medicaid health plans with its robust, best-in-class medical management system, Acuity Advanced Care (ACUITY). The reason for TCS' popularity among Medicaid health plans is the depth and ease-of-use of ACUITY, and the value of the application to support the care management needs of at-risk patients, who often have multiple co-morbidities.

“Medicaid health plans have unique requirements, and TCS knows that,” says Rob Pock, TCS CEO and founder. “Medicaid populations are growing, stretching limited government budgets to levels not seen before. This has increased the pressure on vendors like TCS to produce effective means to identify and manage high-risk patients and eliminate manual processes, duplicative systems, and increase workflow efficiency.”

Consider these TCS health plan customer testimonials about ACUITY:

- “After reviewing a myriad of software vendors and their respective applications, we decided TCS' ACUITY was the only medical management software solution that was both robust and flexible enough to meet Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island's clinical and business needs.”—*Mack Johnston, MD, medical director, Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island*
- “TCS' ACUITY has assumed an integral role in empowering our team to serve the populations that we cover, who often are facing enormous social and economic challenges that complicate their health. ACUITY's functionality will take Hudson's care management programs to the next level by automating key workflows and making sure the right information is getting to the right person.”—*Georganne Chapin, president and CEO, Hudson Health Plan*

- “TCS' software permits the Health Plan to significantly decrease the processing time when a referral request is received and then returned with a decision to the physician's office, thus providing timelier scheduling of surgeries and other procedures. Also, as medical director, I am able to function more effectively off-site because I can review a complete record and all of the related attachments via the application.”—*Ernest Buck, MD, medical director, Driscoll Children's Health Plan*
- “ACUITY was the only care management software application that met our unique needs as a growing health plan, both in the public and private sectors. We liked the fact that ACUITY is designed to be member-centric, fully integrated, and case manager friendly. ACUITY is helping us better manage special-need populations, such as neonates and the full range of patient conditions often found in employer-sponsored plans.”—*Susan Dickerson, RN, BSN, CCM, vice president of health services, Community First Health Plans*

Another handful of Medicaid plans recently have signed on to use ACUITY's dynamic application. Stay tuned for more details. ■



IN THE NEWS

More Americans to Get Flu Shots This Season

In preparation for the 2011-2012 flu season, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention expect that 166 million flu shots will be produced and are hoping that more Americans get vaccinated. The CDC hopes that in particular, those working in the healthcare industry and pregnant women take advantage of the increased availability of the vaccine. The number of shots available is up by nearly 9 million from the 2010-2011 flu season in which 157 million shots were produced. The flu typically runs from late fall through early spring. ■

For the full article, see <http://blogs.wsj.com/health>.

Nurses Fronting New Hospice and Palliative Care Programs

Recent trends show nurses are at the forefront of new and innovative hospice and palliative care programs. According to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, an estimated 41.6 percent of all people who died in the United States in 2009 were under the care of a hospice program, up from 38.8 percent in 2008,

but unmet needs remain, and people still do not understand hospice. The latest programs created by nurses aim to combat these key issues by providing a wide range of solutions that include, assessing community needs, boosting patient nutrition and increasing public knowledge. ■

To view the full article, visit www.nursezone.com.



Jeff Frater, past CMSA president, discusses case management software applications during CMSA's 21st Annual Conference & Expo. Did you notice the 1st bullet—TCS' Acuity AnyWare that was developed in partnership with CMSA for independent and small case management organizations.



AND THE WINNER IS...

Angie Smith, nurse manager at the Veterans Administration, Dallas, TX! Here she is pictured with TCS' John Sekerak. TCS would like to thank everyone who attended the June 2011 CMSA conference in San Antonio and stopped by the TCS Healthcare Technologies booth to review our ACUITY™ care management software and enter the drawing for the Apple iPad.

As for Angie's win? She was trying to decide if she would give it to her husband as a Father's Day gift or keep it for herself. Wonder what she decided? ■

Clinical Insights

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probably all had some successful program, project, new initiative, or maybe a study that showed lowered costs or increased productivity that we felt others would be interested in learning about. However, we didn't publish it because it didn't seem like it was "formal" enough. Likewise, we are interested in knowing what successes (or failures) others are having, but they aren't published, so that information doesn't get shared. So what can we do about this?

Those of us working in case management have an obligation to demonstrate the clinical and financial efficacy of how we intervene with patients and their providers and to share this information with others. One challenge we must address is that our choice of services is broad and dynamic, so any "return on investment" (ROI) analysis or report might not adequately document how case managers are positively impacting the targeted population.

Similar challenges and problems have confronted other areas of medicine as well. In fact, much has been written in recent years about some of the "poor" evidence that is used to support studies that are published in peer reviewed journals, including even the New England Journal of Medicine.

This has given rise to the "comparative effectiveness" movement. The U.S. Agency of Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has taken a leadership role in promoting research and medical interventions that are more transparent and accountable.

Even the Congressional Budget Office touts the benefits of comparative effectiveness research in a 2007 report.¹ CBO defined the concept: "As applied in the health care sector, an analysis of comparative effectiveness is simply a rigorous evaluation of the impact of different options that are available for treating a given medical condition for a particular set of patients."² A primary motivation for CBO's support is the ability to save costs in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Dr. Wilson, founder of the Population Health Impact Institute—PHI Institute (www.phiinstitute.org), has worked closely with CMSA to operationalize the principles of comparative effectiveness criteria in the case management environment.

And now Dr. Wilson and the PHI Institute have teamed with Anne Llewellyn and Dorland Health to provide the "Health Care Effectiveness Review," a new kind of "peer" reviewed publication targeted to real-world workers. Its goal is to enhance measurement and performance of care management programs.

Dr. Wilson notes that the "peer-reviewed learnings" will focus on the easy-to-understand "Method Evaluation Process" (MEP) developed by PHI Institute. Articles selected for publication can be either new submissions or articles that have been published previously, but may need some re-formulation. All articles submitted will be reviewed by true "peers"—individuals who have been granted MEP certification and wish to help the real world writers and readers advance the cause of care coordination learning.

Documenting case management outcomes is an ongoing journey. By using resources made available, the journey can be made more educational, focused, effective, and FUN!

If you want to consider a 1st step, take a look at PHI Institute's transparency pledge at <http://phiinstitute.org/transparency-pledge>. Your 2nd step should be to listen to Dr. Wilson's session on the CMSA website. It is one of the 47 recorded sessions that are available to CMSA members and non-members as part of the Extended Conference (<http://cmsa.peachnewmedia.com/store/seminar/seminar.php?seminar=8873>). And if you want to take a "really big" 3rd step, why not submit an article for publication? Come on. It may be easier than you think!

Documenting case management outcomes is an ongoing journey. By using resources made available by AHRQ, PHI Institute, CMSA and others, the journey can be made more educational, focused, effective, and FUN! ■

An earlier version of this column was published in the CMSA's Member eNewsletter (July 2011)

¹ See "Research of the Comparative Effectiveness of Medical Treatments" COB (December 2007, 48 pages) at <http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/88xx/doc8891/12-18-ComparativeEffectiveness.pdf>.

² Ibid at page 11.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Torry Slaton, Implementation Manager/DBA

TCS Superstar and Super Dad

Torry Slaton plays dual roles as a TCS Superstar, as well as a Super Dad to his four children. Torry joined TCS in 1997 as a quality assurance analyst when he was fresh out of college. Fast forward almost 15 years and Torry is still an integral part of the TCS Healthcare team as technical implementation manager, in addition to being a father that plays an active role in the lives of his children and his church.

“He mastered the TCS product suite in record time and we quickly recognized his value as a system trainer and a problem solver,” says Rob Pock, CEO of TCS Healthcare. “Today, without a doubt, he is one of TCS’s most valuable employees. His reputation among our customers is stellar and his contribution to the future of our company’s product is vital.”

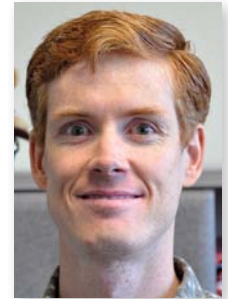
When the computer science major joined the team, TCS was only in the beginning phases of developing Wisdom for Windows, and all of the clients were still on the DOS version of the program. Over the next several years Torry quickly advanced at TCS to handle client implementations and training.

Currently, his primary role is working with clients on the technical side of implementations, which includes application and set up, data imports and exports, and training. He still frequently assists with sales demonstrations and filling out proposal requests. Torry also helps provide internal training and guidance on product direction. Torry’s family keeps him incredibly busy. He has four kids—two of which are adopted—ranging in age from 4 to 13. “We do a lot of activities together, which takes up a good amount of my non-work time,” Torry says.

In addition to the role as Super Dad, Torry and his wife Heidi are leaders for a youth group sponsored through his church. Similar to a scouts program, they work with kids to earn honor badges, advance in class levels and gain practical experience in things like camping, knot tying, etc. They also continue to lead a kindergarten program each July, something they have done for the past eight years. Torry and his wife host the five- to six-year old

kindergarten age group, and they run an Indian style program which the kids love. Activities include Indian games, bible stories, Indian tribes, medicine and plants, and Indian life. Each station even has its own teepee.

Next March will mark Torry’s 15th anniversary with TCS Healthcare. He is looking forward to the future with the company, as well as spending more time with his family. Regarding his time at TCS, Torry says he appreciates the environment and Christian leadership at TCS. “It’s a good place to come back to every day.” ■



Torry Slaton

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