

Terri Hobbs: Polite persistence paves the way to success

The new executive director of Housecall Providers is a familiar face to all who have any sort of relationship with the organization. When Terri Hobbs came on board as Housecall's billing specialist on Sept. 11, 2001, she joined what was then a small but growing organization. And despite the inauspicious 9/11 start date, Terri has calmly and steadfastly worked with Medical Director Benneth Husted over the last decade to build Housecall Providers into a true health care success story.

"You could say I am politely persistent when it comes to getting things done," she says. "I've always believed you get better results with honey than with vinegar. And, in the end, it's the results that matter—for our patients, and for our business."

Terri was named Executive Director July 1, the culmination of 15 months of succession planning by the board of trustees, Benneth, and Terri. Benneth remains in her office adjacent to Terri's as their partnership enters a new phase, with Benneth able to concentrate more on medical issues and advocacy for homebound patients.

The smooth transition is yet another example of the way Housecall's leadership team works together to continually develop the organization. Benneth foresees her and Terri's new partnership as an important step in Housecall's evolution.

"Through the years Terri has been a calming presence, a wise and fair personnel manager, and a courageous advocate for Housecall Providers and the vulnerable patients we serve," Benneth says. "I can't imagine a person I would trust more than Terri to guide us into the future." Board President Patty Murphy echoed that vote of confidence.

"The fantastic team of Benneth Husted and Terri Hobbs has built Housecall Providers into a nationally recognized health care model," says Patty. "We are pleased to be able to promote Terri to executive director, allowing Benneth to focus more on

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"You could say I am politely persistent when it comes to getting things done..."

– Terri Hobbs

About the new executive director

Favorite Oregon getaway: Family cabin in Sumpter.

Favorite pastimes: Snowmobiling, gold prospecting, camping with friends and family.

Best way to spend free time: With my family or with my husband Barney's family; attending car shows with Barney (he restores classic autos and trucks).

Significant milestone: Besides being named executive director, Barney and I celebrated our 30th anniversary this year!

What you may not know about Terri: Her 92-year-old grandmother Helen is a HPI patient.

What I'll do if I ever retire: Paint, finish my own book, resume metalworking with gold and silver, enter a black powder muzzle loader competition, do organic gardening, and read.

What she likes in a coworker: Reliability, initiative, can-do attitude.

What she frowns upon at work: The wearing of perfume or cologne (she's chemical-intolerant), a sense of entitlement, irresponsible behavior.

When to take her very seriously: When she is being polite but persistent about something in your realm.

Message from Board President Patty Murphy

Make Housecall Providers a part of your legacy

In June, I met Dr. Thomas Cornwell, a home care physician with national recognition and numerous awards, including the first “Home Care Physician of the Year.” After spending three days with Benneth, he had wonderful things to say about our organization and its success. I was shocked and gratified to learn that HPI is the only successful house call practice in the nation that is not subsidized by a large teaching university or a medical center.



For me, Housecall Providers embodies the perfect way to give truly holistic care to the homebound. I have worked in clinics where the elderly and those with mental health problems or dementia have been “delivered” to the clinic with a note on their chest for me to try to diagnose their problems and sort out complex conditions. At HPI, we are able to see patients where they spend all their time and in a place where they are comfortable. We meet with their caregivers and family; or, if they live alone, we see the circumstances that need to be considered in managing their illnesses. It is so gratifying to be associated with this organization, which is thriving because we are meeting a necessary need for primary care in the community. With the successful addition of our hospice program, we have a truly integrated system.

We have just finished a challenging year with technology changes and a new hospice. I want to thank all the dedicated staff who have gone the extra mile to see that we have been successful. Benneth, Terri, and Rebecca have done a phenomenal job keeping things running smoothly while never losing sight of the compassion and caring that are at the heart of the organization. The clinicians and support staff have had a wild ride converting to a computerized health record system and adding a hospice. I can't stress enough how much the board appreciates their hard work. We continue to grow and serve more people in the metropolitan area. Thank you to all our friends, supporters, and volunteers. Your generous gifts of time and financial resources are crucial. The only limit to future growth is the need for additional physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants; these additions will allow us to serve more areas and patients. It is a great place to work, so let's spread the word.


Patty Murphy

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When the time comes to turn your attention to estate planning, we at Housecall Providers urge you to make us part of your legacy. With our expansion into hospice services, the need for us to build our infrastructure is greater than ever. Without additional medical staff and support personnel, our ability to care for new patients is limited. By including Housecall Providers in your estate planning, you will help bring our signature health care services to more members of our community.

A planned gift offers tax advantages to the donor. To gain the full advantage, we suggest consulting a professional. Now, we have an opportunity to offer personal assistance with estate planning from one of the region's foremost authorities on estate planning—with absolutely no obligation. Gene Christian of Charitable Estate Planning Northwest has graciously agreed to meet with anyone interested in learning how to plan and put in place a personal bequest, trust, or endowment gift of any size.

To learn more or to set up an appointment with Gene, call 503-988-4743.

Housecall in the News



Unexpected pleasure: A site visit from U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer

Housecall Providers is on the radar of some influential people these days. We were paid a site visit last year from U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, who came away impressed with our work. Then, earlier this year, we got a call from the staff of U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer requesting a site visit. We happily agreed to accommodate the long-time Congressman's wish.

Rep. Blumenauer arrived with two aides on April 19. He was ushered into our conference room, where he was greeted by Dr. Benneth Husted, Board President Patty Murphy, Executive Director Terri Hobbs, and others from the team. Dr. Husted told the story of our organization and our work through a PowerPoint presentation and then entertained questions from the Congressman.

A lively discussion followed. Blumenauer had many insightful questions about the Housecall model. He wanted to learn more about the model: whether it was sustainable financially, how it differed from traditional medical care models, if we saw an increase coming in the need for home visits to homebound patients, and whether the concept was catching on outside Oregon.

We told him that between Medicare reimbursement, other insurance payments, the revenue stream from our hospice, and fundraising, our financial resources would be sufficient to fuel our operations into the future. However, if the government devalues Medicare services, then all bets are off.

He asked whether patients were turned away if they lacked the financial resources to pay for care, and we were able to assure

him that none are. He was interested to learn about the cost savings our service represents compared to office-based health care for the patients that we typically see. Our team explained that our philosophy of care for homebound patients is based upon patient needs. By being responsive to what our patients, their families, and caregivers need, we can offer health care that is designed to make them safe and comfortable in a place where they feel secure.

"We are not a nursing service," Patty Murphy told the Congressman. "It is primary care delivered in the home. We go to the patient, the patient does not come to us."

Clearly impressed, Rep. Blumenauer wondered whether there were other Housecall Providers within the nation's health care system. "To what extent are you seeing this nationally?" he asked.

"They are popping up around the country," Dr. Husted replied. "But we're pretty much it in Oregon." The American Academy of Home Care Physicians has hundreds of members nationwide.

The Congressman's staff followed up several weeks later with requests for more information in order to post a profile of Housecall Providers on the Congressman's web site. Of course, we were happy to grant that request as well! Watch for our story on <http://blumenauer.house.gov>.

Hospice team responds quickly and compassionately to a family's call for help

Antonia Garland, our new patient intake coordinator, picked up the phone around noon one day in April. The woman on the other end of the line sounded distraught. "I need a doctor to come to my mom's house!" she said. As the woman described her mother's condition and symptoms, Antonia recognized that the mother was actively dying. She transferred the caller to our hospice team.

Dr. Lara Garrett, hospice medical director, quickly confirmed that the mother—we'll call her Jean—was indeed dying. She called Hospice Program Director Rebecca Ashling, who called Meagan McFarland, RN, and Susie Smith, one of our nurse practitioners, who drove to the woman's home. Meantime,

Dr. Garrett gathered up wound care supplies and pain medications (she picked them up at the pharmacy and paid for them herself) and drove to Jean's house. The team was able to alleviate her pain, stabilize her, and reassure the family members who had gathered at their mother's bedside. Within two and a half hours, Jean passed.

Jean had not seen a doctor in 20 years! Had her daughter not contacted us, Jean would have faced a painful death alone. Our hospice team took action to make sure that didn't happen, and they were there for the surviving family members as they processed the passing of their mother. That's the Housecall Hospice way.

"He just wants to be home."

The Housecall Providers team lets Chuck go home again

Chuck Perry's Story

Retired longshoreman **Chuck Perry** had been in declining health for some years. As he entered his 80s, he and his wife helped each other get through the days in their isolated home tucked into tall pines near Scappoose. They had lived there together for 40 years and expected to take their last breaths there.

Chuck's wife fell suddenly very ill and passed away three years ago. It was a blow to Chuck, who counted on his wife for most of his daily needs. "This can be a tough place to live alone," says daughter Debbie Hodges, who moved in with Chuck to assist him. "We lose power up here, get snowed in. If you need immediate medical attention, help is a long way away."

Our patient Chuck Perry invited photographer Cathy Cheney to photograph one of Housecall Provider's routine visits in his rural home on a June afternoon.

Debbie and two of Chuck's nephews became his primary caregivers. They would take him to his doctor's appointments and make sure he was okay day and night. The burden grew as Chuck's condition worsened. Then, last November, he had a health crisis requiring hospitalization. Afterward, the family was told he should have round-the-clock care in a facility.

Debbie and other family members tried to settle him in two different care facilities, but Chuck was miserable. Then, his doctor in Portland suggested they check into Housecall Providers.

"I made the phone call, and the next thing I know, Dr. Husted is coming up the driveway," Debbie says, pointing out the front window to the winding dirt driveway from the road to the house. "I don't even know how she found us, but we sure are grateful that she did!"

Chuck's condition is still not good. Debbie is there to keep him company and attend to his daily needs. He spends most of the day in his favorite chair in his living room, watching TV and dozing. But thanks to Housecall Providers, he's where he wants to be—in his own home.



Photos 1 and 2: Daughter Debbie Hodges invites Housecall Nurse Practitioner Marian Todd into the family home.

Photo 3: Physical therapist Jen Marty checks on Chuck's condition and supervises his exercises.

Photo 4: Marian greets Chuck and asks how he is doing.

Housecall Providers to the rescue:

How we support Chuck to live at home

When Dr. Benneth Husted was alerted to the request for a home visit from Chuck Perry's family, she immediately worked it into her schedule. Little did the founder and medical director of Housecall Providers know what lay before her.

"Chuck's home is really far from our office," Dr. Husted said one afternoon in June, as she sat chatting in Chuck's kitchen with his daughter, Debbie Hodges, and Nurse Practitioner Marian Tews. "It's beautiful here—I can see why he wants to stay in this home. But it is a trek!"

It's a trek that Marian Tews, family nurse practitioner, gladly makes in order to check in on Chuck and make sure everything's as comfortable for him as possible. After Dr. Husted came to Chuck's home and did an initial evaluation, she assigned Marian as his primary care provider from Housecall. Dr. Husted also contacted Gentiva, a Portland physical therapy service, requesting that a physical therapist visit Chuck to help him regain mobility.

His therapist, Jen Marty, was working with Chuck in the living room as Dr. Husted, Marian, and Debbie talked about Chuck around the kitchen table.

"I come at least once a month, more often if needed," Marian said. "Sometimes I'm here for an hour, sometimes three. I don't keep an eye on the time. I'm here to do whatever Chuck needs me to do to make him more comfortable. I like to take time with my patients!"

Debbie recalled saying to Marian after her first visit, "I can't believe you come all this way for us." Marian responded: "That's what we're in business for—to take care of people like Chuck."

As the therapist wraps up her work, Marian moves into the living room to talk to Chuck. His voice barely above a whisper, he says his eyes are bothering him—itching. Chuck has ingrown eyelashes that irritate his eyes, making them itch and water.

Marian swings into action. She goes to the bathroom and prepares a compress for Chuck's eyes. Then she patiently, carefully applies the compress, smoothing it over his face, making sure it's working. Chuck relaxes and reports, "Feels better."

Later, as Marian packs up to leave, Chuck remains in his chair, resting comfortably. Debbie walks Dr. Husted and Marian to their cars, parked in the dirt driveway under the tall pines. "These people," she says quietly, "are the answers to our prayers."



Photo 5: She gives Chuck a routine checkup.

Photo 6 and 7: Marian and Housecall Medical Director Dr. Benneth Husted attend to Chuck's irritating eye condition.

Photo 8: A family and Housecall Providers portrait.

Updates and Milestones

Terri Hobbs: Promoted to executive director, effective July 1, 2011

New Employees in 2011

(in order of hire date)

Antonia Garland, Patient Assignment Coordinator

Michael Ann Hodge, Hospice CNA

Therese Hiller, Family Nurse Practitioner

Lea Ann Pallas, Medical Records

Susan Smith, Family Nurse Practitioner

Elizabeth Jones, QAPI Coordinator

Taylor Clark, LCSW, Hospice Social Worker

George Goodstein, MD

Cari Dawson, Hospice Spiritual Counselor

10 Year Anniversaries

Dr. Andrew Sperlin, MD

Anna Potwora

Terri Hobbs

Gayle Moran, ANP

Graduation

JC Provost, FNP – received a doctorate in Nursing Practice, 5/11

Meagan McFarland, Nurse Practitioner

Meet Patty Murphy: Living life the left-handed way

If you ever sit in on a meeting with the medical director, the executive director, and the board president of Housecall Providers, something may catch your attention: All three are left-handed.

More than a coincidence? The Board President, Patty Murphy, isn't so sure.

"Housecall is kind of a left-handed place," she says. "I know I've always worked in a left-handed way, an unusual take on the accepted version, and we certainly do things a little differently around here."

Since 2001, Patty has worked closely with the other two lefties—Benneth Husted and newly appointed Executive Director Terri Hobbs. She has been a staff nurse practitioner and board member, and now she is board president. The draw for this type of medical care has been strong.

Growing up in Spokane, she had an early experience with patient helplessness. Her mother developed a brain tumor when Patty was in her twenties, and she watched as the physicians, who were all-powerful in that era, took over and treated her mother in a manner that her mother never wanted. The family was fortunate to be able to have paid round-the-clock caregivers while her mother lay in a coma for two years, but Patty never forgot how difficult that time was, not only for the patient, but also for the family and caregivers. Her gratitude for the experience propelled her into nursing.

She served as a home health/hospice nurse for 15 years, then returned to college to obtain her Masters in primary care. The newly minted nurse practitioner, after a stint in internal medicine, gravitated back to care at home after an instructor at OHSU suggested Housecall Providers. She signed on the dotted line.

"It's very hard work," she says. "The cases are the most complex

you'll find. Your office is in your car. The best thing about Housecall Providers, though, is that it forces you to combine every skill you ever learned as a nurse and as a medical clinician. It challenges you. And you're not just working with patients, but with the caregivers and the family. But we lefties like a nontraditional approach."

For Patty, Housecall Providers' mission resonates as strongly with her today as it did a decade ago. "Here, health care is just so much more personal. We offer primary care to people who are fragile and aged, an underserved population that desperately needs what we bring to them. I like to think of our mission as providing health care that is clinically excellent but also appropriate to what the patient, and the patient's family, wants."

Patty appreciated that Housecall would welcome someone who wanted to work part-time, something that she looks for in a job. Currently, she works under contract in several different types of medical practices. Her schedule allows her to pursue her love of travel—and to volunteer at Housecall Providers as board president. After all, the nonprofit that is reviving the doctor who makes house calls has to have that steady left hand at the tiller.



Terri Hobbs: Politely persistent *Continued from front cover*

medical and advocacy issues. Terri is a proven manager who has handled every responsibility we have given her, and we are certain she will help take Housecall Providers to the next level.”

Terri spent most of her youth in East Multnomah County, with the exception of two very formative years. When she was in fourth grade, her family moved to a remote cattle ranch outside of Kamloops in British Columbia, Canada, that her parents and grandparents had purchased. Though she only spent two years on the ranch, the experience changed her. “It was hard work, but it was an adventurous life,” she says. “My brother and I had to entertain ourselves, and we learned to love the outdoors.”

She went straight into the workforce after high school graduation, landing her first health care position as an office worker with Beeson Chiropractic at age 18. “We had 100 patients a day. I scheduled them, got them into the patient rooms, handled the money, did whatever had to be done. That’s where I learned how to multi-task.” She also found that, when it came to such tasks as collecting money owed the practice, the polite/persistent approach seemed to work more often than not.

After seven years with the chiropractic clinic, she was hired away by Dr. Thomas Hickerson, a family physician in Damascus. Terri spent 11 satisfying years there, the last eight as his office manager. When his practice was acquired by a large health care organization, she began to look for a new challenge. It came from an unexpected quarter.

Husband Barney had an aged uncle who passed away around that time. He left behind a wife who needed assistance. Terri left the medical office for her first foray into elder care.

“She was in an adult foster home in North Powder, a five-hour drive from Portland.

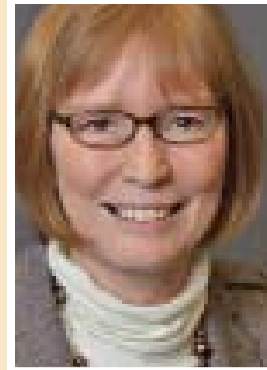
We’d make the trip out there to see how she was doing and to take care of her business affairs. That was my first indication that older people need advocates to get the care they want and need.”

When the aunt passed away, Terri decided working with elderly patients was her calling. Her decision was cemented by one of her next “older ladies,” a feisty but fading woman named Beulah. She’d been a nurse working at the Manila Hotel in the Philippines when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. She had been a POW there, knew Generals MacArthur and Eisenhower, and was trying to complete a book about her life before she died. Terri stepped in not only to care for Beulah’s health, but also to shepherd the book to completion.

“We got it done some months before she passed away,” Terri recalls. “We had many opportunities to discuss her views on caregiving. She taught me so much. It very much formed my views on the subject.”

Her experience with Beulah and others under her care prepared her for her next step: Housecall Providers. She took over billing duties in September 2001. With her politely persistent approach now fully engaged with a mission she loved, she quickly began to bring a sense of order to the growing nonprofit. This was an exciting and busy time for Terri. She was also working to set up and manage a new practice for a local family physician, as well as doing business consulting for other medical practices on an as-needed basis.

Over the years her negotiation skills have been particularly useful on the job. When Housecall was about to move into its current building, the move was put on hold because certain city permits hadn’t been obtained. Terri took the permitting job out of the hands of the construction manager and headed down to Portland City Hall to plead Housecall’s case. “I told them, ‘We’re a nonprofit, and we’re about to be homeless if we don’t get these permits.’ I sat in their



Our founder, Benneth Husted, retains her position as medical director and will focus more on advocacy and clinical matters.

offices for several hours until I had talked to several different people in charge of the permits we needed. They assured me they would do what they could. We had them the next morning, and we were able to make the move on time.”

A sense of mission and of people at work who care about each other keeps her engaged. When her husband, Barney, was seriously injured in March 2010, Terri was told by his doctors that she would have to clean and dress his wounds at home upon his release from the critical care unit.

“I just didn’t know if I could do it. I told Benneth, and she said, ‘We will take care of him, don’t worry.’” Benneth put together a team, which included two others from Housecall Providers plus Barney’s PCP, who cared for Barney in the first four crucial days of his home care. “It’s what people here do for each other,” Terri says.

The years have forged Terri and Benneth into an effective and amicable team. “We have different strengths, we really like each other, and we are committed to serving our patients. That’s why we’re a successful partnership,” Terri says. “Benneth is a true visionary. It is an honor to work at her side. I can say that I have loved this organization from Day One. I believe in what we do, and we make such a difference in the lives that are entrusted to us.”

housecall providers

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Our mission

Housecall Providers is a nonprofit medical practice dedicated to delivering, coordinating, and advocating for the quality medical care that homebound seniors and persons with disabilities need to experience healthful lives in their own homes.

Housecall Providers Hospice, in concert with primary care, serves our community by offering physical, emotional, and spiritual support to persons completing life's journey and those who love them. We strive to add quality of life to this sacred time.

"It was a miracle." Housecall Providers grants Chuck Perry's only wish

As Chuck Perry's health began to deteriorate sharply in 2010, his frantic family members tried one response after another to make Chuck safe and comfortable while getting him the medical attention he needed. All involved moving Chuck from the home he had lived in for 40 years. "He hated those places," says daughter Debbie Hodges of the facilities they tried to place Chuck in. "He wants to be home. That's all he wants—just to be home." When Debbie found out about Housecall Providers, she contacted us immediately. Executive Medical Director Dr. Benneth Husted made the long journey from Portland to Chuck's home deep in the forest off Skyline Drive to assess his situation. She accepted Chuck as a patient. Now, Chuck gets the care he needs—in the safety and comfort of his own home. "It was a miracle," Debbie says.



Read more about Chuck and how Housecall Providers cares for him on page 4.