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*Eileen DeCesare, RN  
President / CEO Emeritus*

## Volunteer!

Professional Healthcare Resources is always looking for more ways to give out to the community, besides the professional services we provide. Our volunteer involvement is one of the things I am most proud of: we recently raised over \$7,000 to support Susan G. Komen for the Cure for breast cancer, and many of our staff members will be running or walking in the National Race for the Cure on June 2 in Washington, DC. I also support the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, and am excited to think of the ways in which cancer research can be funded and survivors can be supported. But, most of all, I am excited to announce the launch of EVA PROJECT. I want to encourage the Professional Healthcare staff, and their families, and you, to write letters, visit, or send books, DVDs, and other reading materials to the soldiers recuperating at Walter Reed Army Hospital. This project, and my encouragement for all the volunteer work that we do, is that this is all about people helping people, extending the blessings we are receiving as a company to others, while also acknowledging the sacrifices that our armed forces have made for our security and safety. Someone once said, "You can not do all the good the world needs, but the world needs all the good you can do," and I think that is exactly the right thought to carry forward as we continue to think about ways we can help others. Keep it up!

Eileen DeCesare, RN, MS, CNA, LNC  
President / CEO Emeritus

## The Nurse Fell Through the Floor! A Providers' Bill of Rights

A manager at a home health agency recently related a sad story about a nurse on the staff of the agency who made a routine visit to a patient who lives alone in her home. The physical condition of the patient's home was compromised. As the nurse was making her way to the patient's bedside, she literally fell through the floor of the patient's home! Unfortunately, she suffered severe injuries and required back surgery.

Consequently, the staff of the agency appropriately decided to discontinue services to the patient. When the staff notified the patient's attending physician he demanded that the agency present this case to the agency's Ethics Committee for consideration. The agency did so. The Chairperson of the agency's Ethics Committee insisted that the patient was "entitled to care" and that, therefore, services to the patient must be continued.

This incident serves as a sobering, perhaps even horrifying, reminder that providers that render care in patients' homes, including home health agencies, hospices, home medical equipment (HME) companies, and private duty agencies, are on patients' turf over which they may have little control. Although a great deal of attention is appropriately paid to the rights of patients, this incident also makes it clear that PROVIDERS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO!

Here are just a few of providers' rights:

- Providers have the right to be free from threats of violence and actual violence.
- Providers have the right to provide services in patients' homes that are structurally sound.
- Providers have the right to be free from threatening behavior and/or physical injuries from animals.

*(over)*

- Providers have the right to be treated with dignity and respect by patients and their families at all times.
- Providers have the right to be free from unwanted remarks, either positive or negative, regarding their personal appearance.
- Providers have the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and ethnic origin by patients and their families.
- Providers have the right to work in patients' homes without being subjected to sexual remarks, advances, and/or harassment.

This list is by no means complete. The crucial point is that patients and providers have rights and that providers' rights must be safe-guarded as carefully as home care providers often protect the rights of their patients. It may, in fact, be fair to say that providers have no higher duty than to protect their workers.

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Stacey A. Middleton  
McLean, Virginia

Dia Loken, RN, Branch Administrator  
Professional Healthcare  
7619 Little River Turnpike, Ste 600  
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Dear Ms. Loken:

I am writing to express my extreme gratitude with an employee in your company. Her name is Delores O'Connor. She has been taking care of my mother, Marilyn Middleton for almost two months. My mother has a complicated and complex medical history. To the surprise of many physicians involved in her care she is still alive. With the care that Ms. O'Connor has continued to provide, we expect my mother to be with us much longer than we were ever imagined.

This nurse, from day one, has gone over and beyond the call of duty. She has made herself available to our family at any time, day or night for anything. Even if I had a question, or concern, (that was probably silly in hindsight), Ms. O'Connor never makes me feel less than intelligent. She always takes her time explaining things to me; she is prompt, informative, and always pleasant. Her skills are exemplary. And her compassion, patience, and kindness are unbelievable!

I make these comments with confidence. As I am a LPN. However, I am also the daughter of a very sick mother. I have been overwhelmed at times in attempting to provide the care that she needs. Sometimes, all my medical knowledge goes out the window, as it does when we care for a loved one. Without the reassurance, availability, and top-of-the-line nurse that Ms. O'Connor has proven to be, I don't think I could continue to be involved in my mother's care.

In our medical community, be assured that your company will be recommended to all my patients, their families, as well as the physicians I work with.

I thank you again for your extraordinary employee!

Sincerely

Stacey A. Middleton