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Tell us about yourself and why did you choose this type of work?

I entered the health care profession because I am passionate about caring for others. I started my career as a nurse working in academic medicine; specializing in pediatrics, first at Boston Children’s Hospital then later at Yale New Haven Hospital. I was intrigued by the ways in which many of my patients were benefiting from new medicines. This experience prompted me to explore roles that would allow me to leverage my nursing experience in the pharmaceutical industry.

I joined Merck as an account manager in the early 90’s. During my 25 year career in the pharmaceutical industry, I held various customer-facing roles working closely with health care providers to introduce lifesaving medications and disease preventing vaccines.

What motivated you to seek this career?

My current role as a Physician Liaison found me. When the recruiter described the position to me, I thought, THIS is exactly the opportunity I’ve been looking for. The position allows me to help foster relationships among providers, hospitals and other systems to help create a seamless continuum of care for our patients. I get a tremendous amount of satisfaction knowing that in some way, I might be able to help ease some of the burden for what is an incredibly stressful time for our patients. That is what drew me to a career in nursing 20 plus years ago.

Describe some of your most important/proudest accomplishments?

One example is when I facilitated an emergency hospital transfer for a newly diagnosed leukemia patient to a facility that was on a “code help” alert and no longer taking new admissions. Another example is managing the formation and launch of a new call center for the Maine Health Cancer Care Network that provides a single point of entry making it easier for patients, family members, and providers and others to navigate our cancer care network. In addition, I designed and launched an expedited referral program between our Maine Health Cancer Care Network and Dana Farber Cancer Institute providing patients with rare cancers access to the newest treatments available at a renowned academic medical center.



What motivates you in your current position?

There's the personal satisfaction that comes from knowing the work I do has the potential to benefit so many people. I also enjoy the entrepreneurial aspect of this role - taking on new challenges and exploring new territory. At the heart of what I do is problem solving. Every day offers new challenges. I look forward to rising to meet those challenges every day.

What are your biggest challenges to working in this field?

I think I share one of the biggest challenges for anyone in health care - meeting the demands of the business side of the healthcare while maintaining the compassion that distinguishes a patient-focused healthcare model from others. That passion to care for others is what attracted so many of us, in both clinical and non-clinical roles to the industry.

What professional groups are you a member of, and how active have you been in those groups?

I am currently a member of AAPL and have an active role on planning committees for our webinars, regional and national meetings. I volunteer in my community for the National MS Society, American Diabetes Association, and similar organizations.

Why are you a member of AAPL, how long, what do you like about AAPL?

I joined AAPL about a year ago after learning about the organization from other physician liaisons through social media. Being new to my position, I found the mentorship program to be particularly helpful when I started working. My mentor provided invaluable insight into the nuances of the role that allowed me to quickly ramp up. The organization provides a platform for physician liaisons to brainstorm and share ideas with others which is so important in an emerging field like ours.

How do you engage in professional development and continue your education?

For starters, as I mentioned, membership with the AAPL. I attended a regional meeting in Boston which I credit with helping me land in my current role. I look for leadership training courses within and outside of my organization; that will help impact both what AND how I contribute to an organization.



What motivates you to put forth your best effort?

Having a positive impact on patient care- and helping to facilitate collaboration within the provider community that I serve. It's exciting to develop and then introduce new resources like the call center, or a new physician relationship to our network of 11 hospitals, or some type of service that we see an uptake in. By the third month of implementing the new call center; the volume of incoming calls increased by 150%.

What things give you the greatest satisfaction in your job?

I was hired for my ability to build relationships. I love knowing I am making a difference in the lives of many by doing what I enjoy and what comes naturally to me. That's truly a gift.

If you had a personal mantra, what would it be?

I am doing what I love and really love what I do!

In what ways are you are making a contribution to your health system, hospital or physicians in your region?

I think of myself as the connector. My goal is to help ensure the best patient outcomes by integrating the seamless delivery of services in a newly formed 11 hospital cancer care network.

What advice do you have for your colleagues who may be contemplating a career as a physician liaison or a move to a related-position?

Building relationships is key to being a physician liaison. I spend a lot of time listening to understand the concerns of others and how best to meet the collective needs of patients, providers and our affiliated hospitals.

September 14, 2017