

BEST IN CLASS PROFILE

MJ CARE



"I have a heart for people," said Mary Van Lare, Founder and Chief Executive Officer. "God has used me to create and build a different culture within MJ Care."

"Our mission is to provide rehabilitation and related services in an atmosphere of integrity, trust, and compassion, glorifying God in all that we do."

- MJ Care, Inc. Mission Statement

company facts

Founded: 1977

Location: Milwaukee, WI

Employees: 350

Website: www.mjcare.com

A Horton Group Client Since: 1999



Mary Bahr Schwenke, VP of School-Based Therapy Services, utilizes Telepractice, a new and innovative approach to therapy utilizing Internet technology.

Turning Our Initial Hello Into a Warm Welcome!

“All I ever wanted to do was have an opportunity to be on my own so I could provide the very best physical therapy for my patients,” states Mary Van Lare, PT, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of MJ Care, Inc. In July of 1977, that is exactly what she did.

MJ Care began and continues its unprecedented third decade of providing comprehensive physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology and Medicaid billing services to its clients everywhere. “In the early years, I never imagined that it could be more than just me doing physical therapy,” Mary stated. “In 1977, there was *only* physical therapy and an occasional speech-language pathologist in long term care – there was *no* occupational therapy to be found. Treatment was patient-focused, not reimbursement-focused.”

Mary’s journey and reputation grew successfully through positive word-of-mouth and having God “back me up,” Mary beamed. “I started with the best physical therapy program I could. From there, I ultimately moved into management with the ability to add occupational therapy and speech therapy services.”

A few years later, a school system contacted Mary for therapy service which eventually developed into full pediatric physical therapy care. “Everything grew slowly,” Mary said. “It was a 24-hour job, but I was able to work with so many dynamic associates.”

Staying the Course

Mary and her associates at MJ Care take extreme pride in their pursuit of excellence and client treatment and advocacy. MJ Care’s vision continues to bring excitement and opportunity during the overwhelming challenges and questionable reimbursement confrontations at today’s forefront. “The original

healthcare landscape has changed dramatically,” Mary said. Slashing of federal reimbursement, implementation of mandated regulatory changes that affect the availability and delivery of therapy, a dramatic drop in the pool of therapists available for hire, emerging national discussions about the entire redesign of our healthcare delivery system and a significant rise in health insurance costs are a few of the most relevant challenges she has confronted.

With Mary’s guidance, MJ Care has successfully discovered how to adapt, retool, troubleshoot, prosper and grow in such an uncertain climate. The company continues looking for new opportunities and possesses an unfaltering strength and resilience in the healthcare industry. Today, MJ Care is one of the ten largest woman-owned businesses in Wisconsin and was recently honored by Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle. Based in Milwaukee, MJ Care employs approximately 350 active full, part-time and PRN associates who work for the Long Term Care, School-Based Therapy Services, Temporary Staffing or School-Based Medicaid Billing divisions of the company.



“I saw the distinct opportunity to deliver valuable and innovative programs and services,” said Jerry Styberg, President and Chief Operating Officer, of MJ Care.



Recruitment events and long-standing university partnerships are key elements to MJ Care's successful company growth.

Don't Put All the Eggs in One Basket

Jerry Styberg, President and Chief Operating officer of MJ Care, came on board in 1997. At that time, Jerry saw so much more than just long term care. "I saw the distinct opportunity to deliver valuable and innovative programs and services. That has been our benchmark, our culture and our goal," Jerry said. "Plus, it has been very rewarding to watch MJ Care grow and be successful – Mary is extremely driven and her personality is always on fire!"

"We don't believe in putting all of our eggs in one basket," Jerry continued. "It remains important to us within the healthcare industry to change with the times, implement our ideas and stay on a financial bedrock."

MJ Care has recently streamlined and developed several new operational efficiencies and IT enhancements that continue to have a dramatic effect on the company's success in attracting, hiring and retaining highly-qualified therapists and taking advantage of new business opportunities.

Special focus and attention have gone into strengthened Intranet development. This allows therapists the opportunity to access current and updated policies, procedures and forms conveniently whether onsite at the clinic or anytime day or night.

MJ Care's recruitment strategy has been revamped and updated to more accurately reflect the mood of the current employment market as well. Several initiatives have made a significant contribution to the success of decreasing job openings and increasing the ability to fill newly created positions and expand staff at existing clinics and schools because of increasing case loads.

MJ Care has also recently expanded into another new business venture. After going through an extensive application process, the company was awarded a contract to provide therapy staffing to the federal government and Veterans Administration in medical centers, hospitals, clinics, schools and military bases throughout designated states. This new opportunity has attracted therapists who have experience working in this challenging



Dedicated therapists deliver personal treatment to a variety of individuals of all ages and in various clinic settings.

environment and others who want to experience this specialized opportunity first-hand.

New Initiatives

MJ Care's School-Based Therapy Services division has launched an innovative new service delivery model. Telepractice is the application of telecommunications technology to deliver professional therapy services at a distance by linking clinician and client. It has been recognized and supported by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) for use by speech-language pathologists and allows the extension of clinical services to remote, rural and underserved populations as well as culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

The company also embarked on a mission critical venture to enhance their customer billing software. By moving to a virtualization format, a process used by more than 120,000 companies worldwide, MJ Care now provides their associates and customers with some of the most advanced IT technology currently available.

"I believe in fostering a culture of empowerment within the company," said Jerry. "We promote leadership where our managers have the freedom to be entrepreneurial, expand their ideas and achieve their goals for professional growth. Advancing MJ Care forward with these new initiatives allows us to do just that."

Carrying Out the Vision

Mirroring lessons she learns from the biblical teachings of her deeply-rooted Christian faith, Mary strives to build people up and encourage them. She challenges her associates to draw upon their creative intellect, unique talents and life experiences to identify new opportunities for company growth or retool of existing systems. She does emphatically credit much of her success to the dedicated and passionate therapists treating in the clinics and schools as well as the management team working to carry out the vision of MJ Care. "I have a heart for people," Mary concluded. "God has used me to create and build a different culture within MJ Care."