

Canadian Healthcare Premiere Edition Professional

Qualicare Andrea Nathanson R.N.

Qualicare
Healthcare for people you care about

Meet Columnist Andrea Nathanson R.N.: She Leads With Determination, Expertise, and Healing Empathy

Special to Canadian Healthcare Professional Magazine

As a 20 year old, fresh out of nursing school, Andrea Nathanson's career got off to a strong start. She remembers: "...I sat with patients at their bedside and they told me how scary it was for them. I listened and realized I could change their experience by giving them a little time and a few kind words." Since then, she has not betrayed her initial idealism. Andrea still inspires positive changes in her clients and associates. Now with over twenty-four years of experience both in medical and social healthcare, she is just as passionate and devoted to her patient's holistic health as ever.

Nathanson has assembled a like-minded team of "idealistic

caregivers" at Qualicare. As its founder and Executive Director, she along with her husband and company president Wayne Nathanson, employ a team of RN case managers and caregivers who provide unparalleled expert care for their clients.

Andrea handles all matters of healthcare, supervising five case managers and overseeing all of their care and services. "I do the intake assessments." There is no charge for the initial phone consultation. Our services begin with an initial "options assessment" where short term and long term goals and methods are clearly considered within a family's means. "Once we as a



Andrea & Wayne



Qualicare client Orella
with Andrea.

group agree to the goals I will set up a path to how we get there” says Andrea.

COLLABORATION COUNTS AT QUALICARE

Qualicare’s success is a collaborative effort that combines dauntless medical advocacy and patient care with constant support within the organic family unit. According to Wayne, since its founding five years ago, Qualicare has doubled the average number of its clients, caregivers, and revenue each year. Growing at the same rate are the number of referrals the company receives accounting for about seventy five percent of their business. Half of these come from clients and acquaintances, and half are from doctors. These facts speak eloquently for Qualicare’s reputation within the medical establishment and government health agencies.

“Doctors think of us in situations where they struggle with the system’s constraints” asserts Andrea. With Qualicare in mind, they ask their patients: “whether they need extra help.” With our guidance and support, we can improve their chances of successful outcomes. They know that we will action their orders and follow through, calling or emailing to keep them posted. They feel like they are looking after patients the way they would like to but can’t accomplish alone” says Nathanson. “We are very fortunate to interact with some of the finest specialists in Toronto and have been able to ask for their help with other clients that need their expertise”.

“Qualicare has always acted

as a very strong advocate for the patient and family”, according to Dr. Joel Bordman, a Toronto G.P. who has handled a number of palliative cases with Andrea. “Her ability to organize and navigate through the medical system is a benefit for all” says Bordman.

“Over the last few years, I have had several patients cared for by Andrea Nathanson and her team” says Dr. Russell Goldman of the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care at Toronto’s Mt. Sinai Hospital. “The two things that stand out in my mind are the high degree of personal attention the team provides to patients and families and the quality of the personal support workers that Qualicare is able to provide. Through this combination of attention to detail and commitment to high quality staff, Qualicare truly lives up to its name.”

Andrea’s idea to create Qualicare incubated during the Nathanson’s own family health crisis. Wayne’s father was challenged with ALS, and the family fought right alongside him. “We’ve been through our own share of difficult times; we’ve shed the tears and come out alive and thriving” declares Andrea. “In the merit of my father in law, we now have the opportunity to help others and at times save people lives” she says.

Spirituality is a big part of it. “I think that’s starting to become a part of our reputation” says Andrea, “that we look at clients physically, emotionally and spiritually. No one has ever said to us: don’t look after me spiritually! We’re open to try and tap into something greater that may help our situation”.

Qualicare will go to any length to give a patient what they need. One client is a forty-four year old woman battling breast cancer that has metastasized. She is divorced with no supports and reached out to Qualicare to make sure she had plenty of nurturing after her surgeries. On the eve of her Chanukah holiday, Judy (not her real name) came up with an unusual request. Although it was short notice, she asked Andrea if she could find someone to help her make Latkes – the traditional festival potato pancakes – for her visiting daughter. Not only did Andrea manage to find the person to help, but she instructed her to purchase a beautiful bouquet of flowers as a gift from Qualicare to enhance the occasion.

Judy called and said: “I’m sitting here looking at my gorgeous roses... and the woman you sent was wonderful! Andrea, for all the bad times I’ve been through, every time I’ve phoned you you’ve made it easier for me...you’ve totally been there for me, and it has really made this horrible experience manageable.”

CONCIERGE HEALTHCARE SERVICE

The company describes itself as a “concierge healthcare service”; the place to call for all the best options: doctors, caregivers, medical consultants, and supplies. They will even move a client’s residence or modify their home for safety - if that is what’s needed. They will facilitate appointments with the right specialists; present case profiles; coordinate medical treatments; make sure that complete home care is in place

before a patient can safely be discharged, and much more. “The hospital is not a good place to be for too long. We want our clients to get back home, to a place of familiarity and nurturing, as fast as possible” says Nathanson.

Clients range from the elderly dealing with strokes, cancer, dementia, or who are in need of rehabilitation; to younger patients who may be post-operative or have psychiatric problems. “Any time I sit and talk to somebody, they’re the most important person on the planet and I want to do whatever I can to make their situation more manageable and optimistic. This certainly includes attention for their families upon whom we always keep a close watch. We want them to remain well though the process so the next generation will be strong and able to cope with life cycle events in a healthy way.

Andrea Nathanson will be a featured columnist in monthly editions of the Canadian Healthcare Professional Magazine. Her column will include topics such as:

homecare assessments, profiling and goal setting; assisted discharge planning; helping patients through palliative care; keeping patients out of the hospital; navigating the healthcare system; homecare options; healthcare strategies, and “Moving Solutions”™; and the growing phenomenon of seniors stranded by their retiring physicians. It’s a full agenda and we look forward to hearing from her.

You can find out more about Qualicare at: www.qualicare.ca