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A Vision of Caring

Ideal Healthcare Services

If Tammy Lewis could go back in time and advise her younger self, she knows exactly what she would say: "Take risks, step out on faith and believe you are who God has called you to be."

Lewis, an RN, is CEO of Ideal Healthcare Services, a home care agency that provides personal care and companion services to elderly and disabled adults in 11 North Carolina counties. But her younger self was not nearly as confident as the woman she is today. "I had the vision of creating this company back in 1994, but fear held me back for over 10 years," she says.

Fortunately, Lewis' desire to help seniors ultimately proved stronger than her fears, and she launched Ideal Healthcare in 2005.

Over the next few years she successfully applied for an SBA loan and, with the support of her mentor, County Commissioner James West, honed her business skills as a member of the City of Raleigh Pacesetters program.

The most important business lesson of all: Delegate. "Once I started to delegate some of the work to other people, everything ran a lot smoother."



Tammy Lewis

Natural Born Caregiver

Caring for others comes naturally to Lewis. You might say it's part of her DNA. One of her earliest childhood memories is of watching two great-grandmothers succumb to cancer – and of the loving care each received from family members. "That's what I want to do when I grow up," she recalls thinking.



The belief that everyone deserves the same level of care her great-grandmothers received has guided Lewis' every career decision, every interaction with a patient, client or family member during her 20-plus years working in hospitals, long-term care and home health, and in her current role at Ideal Healthcare.

"Our mission is to provide all clients with a compatible companion/aide who will enhance their quality of life and help them maintain their dignity," Lewis says. Home visits from physicians and nurse practitioners are also available. To ensure that every client and family member feels loved and safe, Lewis personally visits each one prior to the start of care.

Like any business, Ideal Healthcare has had its ups and downs, and Lewis and her team continue to face their share of challenges. Still, there's nothing else she would rather do.

"This is the best job I've ever had, simply because it doesn't feel like one," Lewis says. "I'm incredibly lucky to have work I truly love." By all accounts, the people she cares for are lucky, too.

Most of Ideal Healthcare's clients still live in their own homes, but some reside in independent living facilities like Jordan Oaks, in Cary, N.C. Unlike many other home care agencies, Ideal Healthcare allows clients to meet and choose from several CNAs. All in-home aides employed by the company are licensed, bonded and thoroughly screened.

COMING THIS FALL: Ideal Healthcare Services' new, four-week training program for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA). Also new is a family practice for employees.



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