

GHA's Leapfrog Innovation in Whole Person Care

We are thrilled to announce that we have just launched an intelligent technology approach at Morrow Valley Farmstead to provide a personalized journey beyond staff being “always-on” fall detection and alerts to ensure immediate response, to predicting and minimizing fall risk. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), falls and fall injury are a risk of the elderly population. However, Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder are more at risk of falling and getting injured than their non-ASD peers. This multi-faceted vulnerability follows individuals with ASD throughout their lifetime. One can imagine that technology for fall detection designed for the elderly, which has existed for some time, would easily help GHA support staff overcome these challenges. GHA's approach strives to minimize the fall risk and prevent it, not just detect falls. GHA professionals realized early on that the same technology innovation would likely be a good fit for the individuals that the organization supports. The GHA Team embarked on a journey in search for innovation, specifically searching for a partner who shares in GHA's organizational

philosophy and is as passionate about the individuals' well-being as a primary focus. GHA Autism Supports is thrilled to partner with Alphind Healthcare to realize this journey. Alphind Healthcare is a global organization activating intelligence for Whole Person Care. Earlier this fall, the collaborative team launched Xealei™ at GHA's newest endeavor, Morrow Valley Farmstead. Every individual's residential suite at Morrow Valley is now equipped (continued on page 2)

“Healthcare practitioners around the world have a hard time ‘seeing’ the whole person through the siloed information systems they depend on. We’re so fortunate to have teamed up with GHA to accelerate the next shift in activating intelligence for Whole Person Care “

- Ez Bala, Founder & CEO
Alphind Healthcare



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'Tis the Season!

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"We are so excited to partner with Alphind to improve quality and enhance whole person care with this innovative AI technology. Xealei will revolutionize healthcare and GHA is fortunate to be at the forefront of this transformation"

-Janet Banks,
Chief Learning Officer
GHA Autism Supports

(continued from page 1...)

with Xealei™ that is woven, not worn, into the fabric of their environment. Xealei™, Motion Sensing Intelligence, is: 'Always On'; Touchless and silent; and Privacy-ensuring, unlike a 'big-brother' audio visual. Xealei™ is a continuously learning technology designed to calculate a fall risk score for predicting and help reducing fall risk. GHA Autism Supports values this partnership and is thrilled to work alongside Alphind Healthcare to accelerate the shift to Motion Sensing Intelligence -- the Whole Person Care way!



Japanese professionals tour one of the residential suites at Morrow Valley Farmstead to learn more about the latest technology.



THE "WHY" BEHIND THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder often...

- **Have more co-existing conditions** such as neurological, muscular, and cognitive disorders.
- **Are on medications** that may have adverse effects on their mobility and stability.
- **Suffer from impaired communication capabilities** that dramatically reduce their ability to call for help.
- **Don't tolerate instruments** that are attached to them.
- **Get easily irritated** by alarm sounds and lights.

City Catalyst Grant Enhances Outdoor Space



Thanks to the support of a matching grant through the City of Albemarle's Catalyst Grant Program, a new covered outdoor space has been upgraded at Second Street Sundries. Not only will the area be utilized for the customer base at the cafe and coffee shop, but the space will be a wonderful spot for hosting group activities for the individuals the GHA Autism Supports serves!



Braswell Trust & Landfall Foundation Award More Than \$70,000 for Stanly and New Hanover County Programs

We are excited to announce we received funding from the James R. and Bonnie L. Braswell Trust (\$65,000) and The Landfall Foundation (\$5,400) for the purchase of iPads and iPad Medical Rolling Kiosks to be used at our residential and day services programs in Stanly and New Hanover Counties. We currently use Therap Services, an electronic records platform, for health records, consent forms, billing, communications, etc. Adding iPads will allow staff to administer medications in a time-sorted method to prevent errors. In addition, the iPads at all sites will allow for caregivers to move about freely while providing care, thus making those we serve more comfortable in their settings. We have also received funding for QliqSOFT software that enables HIPAA-compliant secure texting for all devices to be accessed anywhere, allowing for encrypted, secure communication at all times. Qliqsoft Secure Texting can help enable safe, quick, HIPPA-compliant communication from any device between GHA care team members, physicians, and even families/guardians. QliqSOFT has been

installed on program devices and personal devices for management staff. Staff are busy preparing medical IT equipment for installation and training for staff members. We are so appreciative of both the Braswell Trust and Landfall Foundation for providing funds to purchase needed equipment providing a platform for all staff to enter records securely reducing our risk management and increasing quality assurance.



Autism and the Holidays

Helpful Tips from GHA Autism Supports

Psychologist Janet Banks

The holidays are a time for family and fun, but can also bring stress for individuals with autism. There often are changes in routines, extra people, transitions, noises, smells, etc. Some planning and preparation tips can help ease the tension:

- **Maintain typical routines when possible such as morning and bedtime schedules;**
- **Ensure favored items and sensory supports are readily available and have backups;**
- **Make plans to accommodate food preferences amongst the special holiday meal;**
- **If unlimited access to all the special food is an issue, plan for ways to limit access such as setting up in the opposite end of the house, being outside versus inside if weather permits, or placing the food in a contained area;**
- **Have chargers, backup batteries, wifi access, downloads, etc. for electronics;**
- **Find a quiet space away from people and festivities to reduce overstimulation;**
- **Keep holiday expectations realistic for the individual with autism even if that includes shorter visits or fewer activities;**
- **Have a quick escape plan in case things become chaotic or overwhelming;**
- **Look at your holiday plans through the eyes of your loved one with autism and incorporate what's meaningful to them to make it a happy holiday for everyone!**



For Quality Management, Gathering Survey Data is Just the Beginning!

Each year, Quality Management surveys all individuals GHA supports to be sure they are happy with their daily lives and satisfied with their services. Surveys are available in different formats including a written survey and a picture survey. Working with Residence Managers, Quality Management tries to match the survey format with the communication needs of each individual. Some individuals complete the form independently while other individuals receive staff assistance, as needed.

Thirty-seven individuals responded to the written format. Six questions with Yes/No answers were presented. For the written format, answering patterns showed positive responses to all survey questions and a very high level of happiness and satisfaction. A summary is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. 2023 Individual Satisfaction Survey: Responses to Written Format

Survey Questions: Written Format	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
Are the people you see every day nice to you?	37	100%	0	0%
Are you happy with what you do every day?	34	97%	1	3%
Do you feel safe almost all the time?	37	100%	0	0%
Do you know who to tell if someone is mean to you? If so, who?	37	100%	0	0%
As a result of services with GHA, is your life better?	34	100%	0	0%
Overall, are you happy with your life?	37	100%	0	0%

Sixty-three individuals responded to three questions using the picture format. Respondents answered by pointing to an emoji depicting very happy, happy, sad or very sad. A more varied pattern emerged from the answers obtained using the picture survey format. Table 2 summarizes these responses.

Table 2. 2023 Individual Satisfaction Survey: Picture Format Responses

Survey Questions: Picture Format	Very Happy Happy	Very Happy Happy	Sad Very Sad	Sad Very Sad
How do you feel about the people you see everyday?	60	95%	3	5%
How do you feel about what you do every day?	59	94%	4	6%
How do you <i>feel</i> about your life here?	59	94%	4	6%

After gathering all the survey data, Quality Management's process does not stop. The Department reinterviews individuals who report an aspect of their lives which needs attention. Every year follow-ups are completed and, if needed, GHA's Clinical Team provides support. Quality Management not only identifies situations which can be improved but also helps create improvement plans.

SURVEY SAYS...



GHA Autism Supports gratefully acknowledges the following individuals who made memorials and honorary gifts between September 1, 2023 and November 30, 2023. Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If you feel an error has been made, please contact the Development Department at 704-982-9600, x 125.

In Honor of Dawn Allen

Paul & Brooke Childress
Chet & Elaine Gurski
Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Norwood, Jr.

In Honor of the Jason Cory

Linda Barblow
Steve Cory

In Honor of Cannon Cowles

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Norwood, Jr.

In Honor of Seth Dickinson

Edward G. Dickinson

In Memory of Michael Forrest

Rick & Penny Brown

In Honor of

GHA Autism Supports Staff

Mike & Carla Shinn
Deborah Wilson

In Memory of

Bobby K. Harwood

Janet Banks
Charles P. Brown
Mark & Elizabeth Cook
Roger Dick, Uwharrie Bank
Davis & Tonia Diggs
Benny & Denise Drye
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Garner
Chet & Elaine Gurski
Philip & Susan Hinely
Charles & Peggy Hughes

In Memory of

Bobby K. Harwood Continued

Martha L. Hupp
Mr. & Mrs. Nicholas Garner
Stan & Annette Leggett
Sue Martin
Danny & Judy McDuffie
Beverly Moore
Maureen Morrell
Geoff & Beth Olivieri
Dee Pankey-Thompson
Tim & June Russell
Ann & Al Sadowsky
Craig & Ulla Skeffington
Brinn Smith
Thomas & Marie Southerland
Laurie Urland
Uwharrie Bank
Gina M. Watlington

In Honor of P. Lauren Hinely

Philip & Susan Hinely

In Memory of

James "Henry" Julian

Elaine Brady
Marie Carnes
Theodore & Judith Childress
Edward Ebmeyer
Rodney & Penny Hinton
Phil & Brenda Julian
Michael & Kenlyn Lyss
Tom & Rie Williams

In Honor of Zach Lowder

Tony & Martha Lowder
Dogwood Farms

In Memory of Michael

Jonathan McCrann, Sr.

John McCrann

In Honor of

Peggy McHolland

Bob McHolland

In Honor of Samantha Messer

Allison Crotty

In Honor of Cindy Moore,

**Madalyn Dockery
& Tylisha Walker**

Jane R. Williams

In Honor of Justin Morrell

Kathy Baumann
Julie Bryce
Tom FitzGerald
Diane Hartill

In Honor of Maureen Morrell

& In Memory of

Dr. Rob Morrell

Linda & Brad Griffin

In Honor of Braden Poplin

Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Norwood, Jr.

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In Honor of Sam Poplin

Joe & Ellen Story

In Honor of Nicky Sundquist

Shawnee Sundquist

In Honor of

Ron & Beth Swanner

Kay Cochran

In Memory of Patricia Tripp

Teresa Andrews

In Honor of Chris Walsh

Gregory & Candace Moore

In Honor of

Marsena Williams &

Tanglewood Home Staff

Dr. Linda Lawrence

Navigating Medicaid Transformation

Tailored Plans are North Carolina's planned Medicaid health plans for recipients with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and other significant behavior health conditions. Tailored Plans will provide coordinated care management, physical health, pharmacy, and behavior health services. This involves transitioning from fee-for-service health insurance run by the state to integrated Managed Care Organization health plans with care management. There have been several transition challenges related to Medicaid Transformation. To ensure beneficiaries can seamlessly receive care, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has delayed the implementation of NC's Tailored Plans several times, with plans to proceed at a date yet to be determined. Beneficiaries who will be covered by the Tailored Plans, including most of those whom GHA Autism Supports serves, will continue to receive care as they do today. It is a GHA priority to navigate Medicaid Transformation to ensure whole-person care and quality health outcomes for the individuals we support.

Autism Tree



We were excited to decorate a tree in the Christmas Village at Charlotte Motor Speedway as a recipient of their grant program through Speedway Children's Charities. We hope you'll visit the Speedway Christmas holiday light show and festive Christmas Village during the holiday season. Visit www.charlottespeedway.com for additional information.



We are pleased to announce the grand re-opening of The Shoppe at Sundries filled with handcrafted items made by individuals with autism. These one-of-a-kind pieces have a beautiful story and will brighten any holiday decor!



Make your holiday meal prep a cinch by purchasing catering trays at Second Street Sundries! Place your orders by calling 704-983-CAFE, and please give a 24 hour notice.

Staff Celebrated at Fall Events

We had the most fun celebrating Direct Support Professionals Week and GHA Staff on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. Staff were treated to lunch catered by Ole Greenie's Food Truck. Sweet treats were provided by the popular Holy Cookie Dough featuring edible cookie dough. Staff were able to play a few competitive games of BINGO for cool prizes. Staff attending received a GHA sweatshirt and gift card as a small thank-you for all they do to support the individuals we serve at GHA.

Celebrations continued at our other locations with dinner out and sweatshirts for staff. A big THANK YOU to the Human Resources Staff and others who helped plan and carry out such fun events and great thank-you gifts! Our staff members continue to go above and beyond making a difference in the lives of so many!



Albemarle Tidal Wave Hosts Fundraiser

For the third year in a row, the Tidal Wave Auto Spa in Albemarle chose GHA Autism Supports as the Charity Day beneficiary on September 15th. Charity Day is a nationwide initiative that is hosted at the 120 locations across the country focusing on the special needs populations in the communities where they operate. This year's event raised \$2,500! We appreciate the support of our many families and community members that stopped by for a car wash and left generous tips!



Editorial Team

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'TIS THE SEASON

to be jolly



*From our family at
GHA Autism Supports to yours,
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!*