

Experience With Seniors Prompted Nursing Career

Katie Sovie RN, working as a nurse

Baldwinsville resident Katie Sovie works as an RN at the CNY branch of HCR Homecare. She has always had a soft spot for older adults, including her grandparents. Even in grade school, she used to help them when they were sick, rubbing their feet and backs and offering whatever assistance she could. "I am a people person and love caring for people," Sovie said.

She began helping her uncle take care of her aunt in 2012. When Sovie's aunt became seriously ill and was admitted to the hospital, she and her uncle went to visit her. "He needed a wheelchair at the hospital when he was visiting her and a nurse was snotty about it," Sovie recalled. "He needed it; he was visiting because his wife was dying. That was a final push for me."

She enrolled at Cayuga Community College in Fulton to become an LPN and received her registered nurse credential in 2015 after graduating from Crouse. She initially worked at Upstate's downtown campus for three years, and then shifted to HCR Homecare two years ago. "I really liked the hospitals, but I have two young kids and working nights and weekends — it wasn't for me," Sovie said. "Now that I'm here, I don't see myself anywhere else."

She likes that she can apply more of her nursing skills in homecare than in a hospital setting, which has specialty teams that do things like insert IVs and care for wounds. "I didn't get to do much of those," Sovie said. "I didn't get to do many different things. I like the flexibility to be there and be the mom I want to be and be the nurse I want to be."

Winter travel is one of the drawbacks to providing home care; however, she said the company requires only necessary visits when the weather is bad and assigns the nearest employees to make those visits. "I have a four-wheel-drive vehicle so the snow doesn't bother me," Sovie added.

She said that anywhere a nurse works, staffing ratios is every nurse's complaint. "There are a lot of things I want to do but we can't because we have so many people who need us." "It is hard to leave work at work and not bring it home because you get attached to patients, especially with homecare."

She has cared for some of her patients for the nearly three years she's been with HCR. "When they get ill, it's almost like a family member," she said. She uses skillful scheduling to ensure she can cover all her patients' needs and keep her staff informed. "I enjoy caring for people and making them happy," Sovie said. "I've had so many people tell me things like, 'You've restored my faith in humanity.'"

Sovie believes that while nursing school prepares students for nursing, "no one can prepare you to sit with a patient who's dying and have the right words to say. Classes can't prepare you for that. I have a friend whose daughter is going to nursing school and I help her as much as I can. I love nursing, but if you're not all in, it's rough."

She also lists an outgoing personality, good work ethic, dedication and caring as important traits for nurses. "Sometimes, it's just that extra touch to make someone's day, especially now with COVID-19," Sovie said. "People are lying in a bed and their family can't even visit. In hospitals, some are facetimeing through a biohazard bag so people can see their family member who's dying."

In her free time, she helps her sons who race quarter midget racecars all summer long and ride snowmobiles all winter long.

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