



# ERGOSOLUTIONS

Ergo Solutions

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**ERGO SOLUTIONS BUILDING REHAB LEADERS OF THE FUTURE.**



**Inside this issue:**

**“Existing without a voice” author** 2  
**Sharlette Snead**

**HOT TOPICS!** 3  
**ERGO OCCUMED OUTPATIENT GRAND OPENING!!!**

**A WORKING TEAM** 3  
**by Jenisha Byrd**

**Owners Corner** 4  
**“TEAMWORK”**  
**George Brownlee, CEO Ergo Solutions**

**Ergo Solutions Newsletter**



## WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO EXIST IN A WORLD WITHOUT A VOICE

*By Sharlette Sneed M.S. , CF-SLP*

***“If all my possessions were taken from me with one exception, I would choose to keep the power of communication, for by it I would soon regain all the rest”***

***— Daniel Webster***

What does it feel like to exist in the world without a voice?

Talking is something that we were created to do. It's automatic; most of us enter the world with a voice. It's like the air we breathe. It's our stamp; it's like a finger print unique, colorful, and meaningful, but for some it's not a reality. To suddenly be without voice, to be aphonic, is a life changing event.

I had never felt this impact until I met a 58 year old lady residing at Specialty Hospital of Washington Capitol Hill Nursing Center during my clinical fellowship year (CFY) as a Speech-Language Pathologist with Ergo Solutions. To maintain patient confidentiality I will refer to the patient as Rose. Rose is a tracheostomized patient who was diagnosed with subglottic stenosis, a severe narrowing within the laryngeal wall which significantly reduces the amount of air flow through the vocal tract rendering speech impossible. This diagnosis prohibits the use of a speaking valve. Although Rose is not a laryngectomee patient she is classified as a neck breather and has been so since January 2011.

I discussed this matter with my supervisor, Tanya Spinner. She suggested that Rose would be a great candidate for an artificial laryngeal device and recommended that I contact Herb Simon from the Laryngectomy Club of Montgomery County (LCMC). Herb responded by providing Rose and myself with an electro larynx and a crash course on the speaking device. Limitations in health benefits denied Rose the opportunity to purchase the device, however, LCMC graciously provided the electro larynx to her.

Rose put the electro larynx to her face and gradually counted out numbers one thru 5. This was the start of her regaining human communication and the reality of her being able to once again be heard. As she heard the new voice her face lit up. She's now regaining the voice she lost, her connection to human kind. It was truly an emotional moment for Rose as it was for me, tears came to my eyes. Family members entering the room heard her counting. They had looks of disbelief and joy and were praising God for hearing her speak. With skilled speech therapy she can now express herself more effectively. This is a start to a new beginning.

The Laryngectomee Club of Montgomery County restored the power of communication which was lost.



GRAND OPENING MAY 1, 2012!!!!!!!

# ERGO OCCMED OUTPATIENT CLINIC

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### A WORKING TEAM: FUTURE LEADERS BUILDING GREAT FOUNDATIONS IN ERGO



Marriage in the workplace can definitely have its benefits such spending extra time together on the way to work, having a spouse who understands your job and pay day on the same day ...lol. But when adversity hits it's not only affects one but both parties involved. Recently Tivell injured himself to the point that required surgery. Over night our lives changed and we both had to make sacrifices. From shifting financial obligations to be handled by one income, to moving in with our parents to help with Tivell 's recovery process.

The vow of marriage states it is for better or worse sicker or poorer, who thought this would be tested 6 months into our marriage. My stress level was through the roof ,but regardless of how bad the situation appeared I knew I had to push forward and do what was required to keep moving forward. I became Tivell's right hand and right knee, waking up at 5 am everyday to prepare meals, medication schedules or organizing appointments before hopping on the freeway to fight the traffic from MD to DC. As time past he improved and was able to return to work within 3 weeks light duty but I was not off the hook. The catch is he could not drive. But without complaint or hesitance we continued getting up at 5am hitting the road by 6 getting him another Ergo facility in NW Washington DC by 730 and me to our Capitol Hill facility in NE by 8am. Gratefully we work for a great company *ERGO SOLUTIONS* that granted us the flexibility to get Tivell back to work! We are thankful for our coworkers that reached out and helped in the rehab process.

Thanks Ergo for helping us keep and build a stronger relationship!



**Ergo Solutions**

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## The solution to your rehab needs

Ergo Solutions is an innovative, full-service company that specializes in rehabilitative management and consultative services. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality of therapy to every patient we serve, and at every level of care. Our first goal is to perform a professional and thorough evaluation of the patients injury or disability. We then work as a team to ensure the development of an accurate and beneficial plan of treatment. As the largest rehabilitation outsourcing group in Washington, D.C., we expand the potential of rehab everywhere we go. Ergo Solutions is owned and operated by therapists with a diverse knowledge of the rehabilitation field. We are committed to providing high quality services with strict adherence to regulatory requirements.

**WHEREVER YOU GO, GO ERGO™**

### Owners Corner

The four dynamic owners of Ergo Solutions, would like to thank the customers Ergo serve on a day to day basis. Each edition our newsletter will serve as a forum for one of the owners to share a word of encouragement and gratitude. This edition features Ergo Owner George Brownlee.



There is one element in the health industry that is very important and vital ..that is "Team Work". Without it, our patients will suffer....and with it...they will flourish. From the maintenance department to the administrative departments....we all must work together. We must put the interest of the patient before our own at all times. In rehabilitation we know that helping a patient walk, get dressed, swallow, or learning to speak again are our primary roles. Should this put us in a "box" and we do nothing else ? Of course not. If we have to get called to help the nurses get a patient out of bed and into a chair, or maybe take that extra five seconds to get the patient a cup of water....we should do so. We should never tell a patient "I will let your nurse know" or tell another member of the health care team "that is not my job"...unless it is something that is medically out of our scope of practice.

Another example where team work is relevant is something very simple. That is "communication". If we communicate our treatment plans or our ideas for a patient with the nurses, doctors, social workers, and any other person involved in the care..it makes it easier for all involved to know how to strategically schedule appointments, discharge dates, etc...in order for the patient and their family to not feel overwhelmed. Team work...when done correctly makes the patients experience an enjoyable one during a moment that can be hard to initially understand or deal with.





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