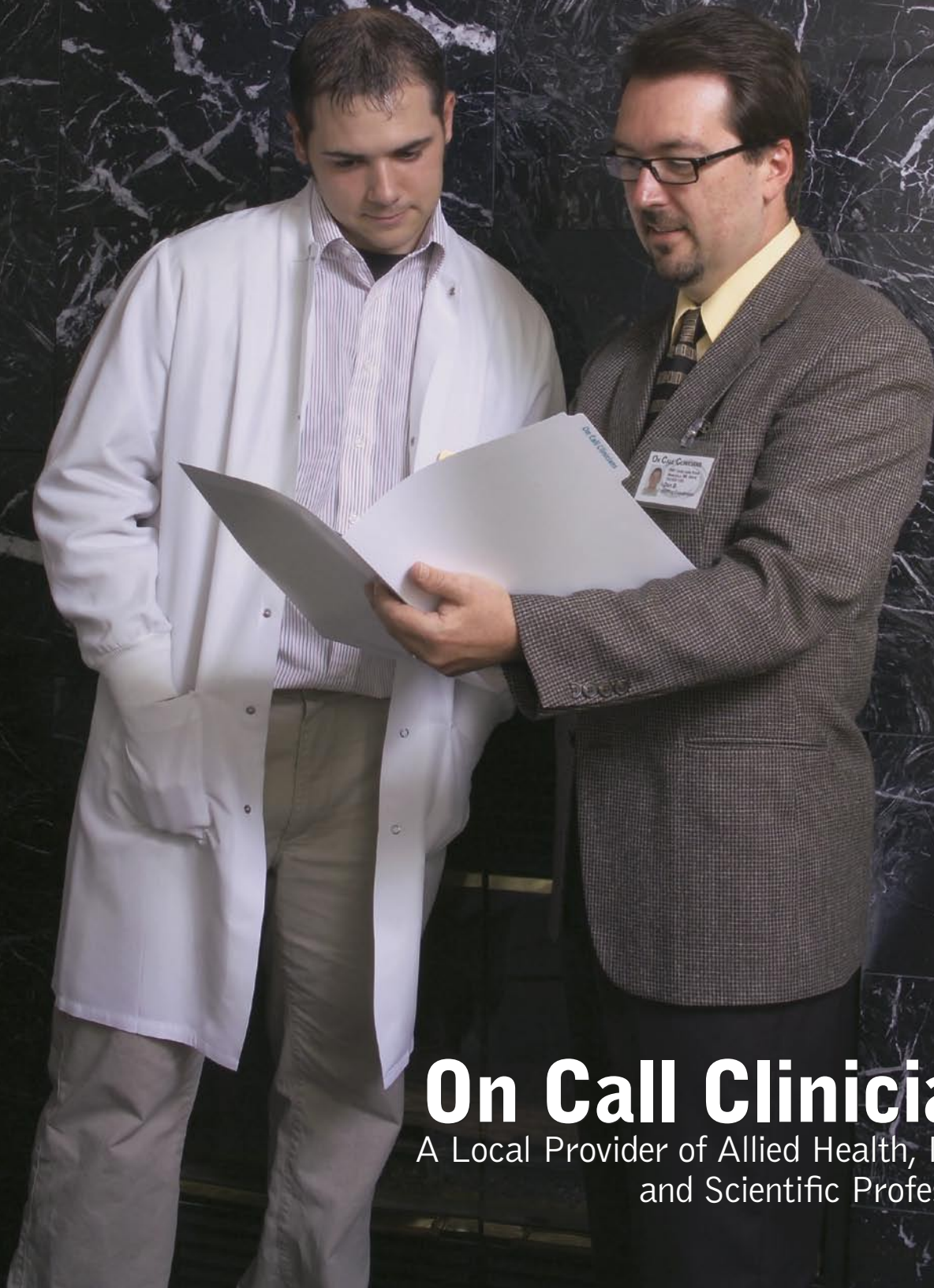


M.D. NEWS

Special Feature



On Call Clinicians

A Local Provider of Allied Health, Medical
and Scientific Professionals

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By Marian Deegan

The quality of medical treatment delivered by the health care professionals of the Twin Cities is second to none. On Call Clinicians believes that the staffing and business needs of our health care providers should be served with the same dedication to quality and excellence.

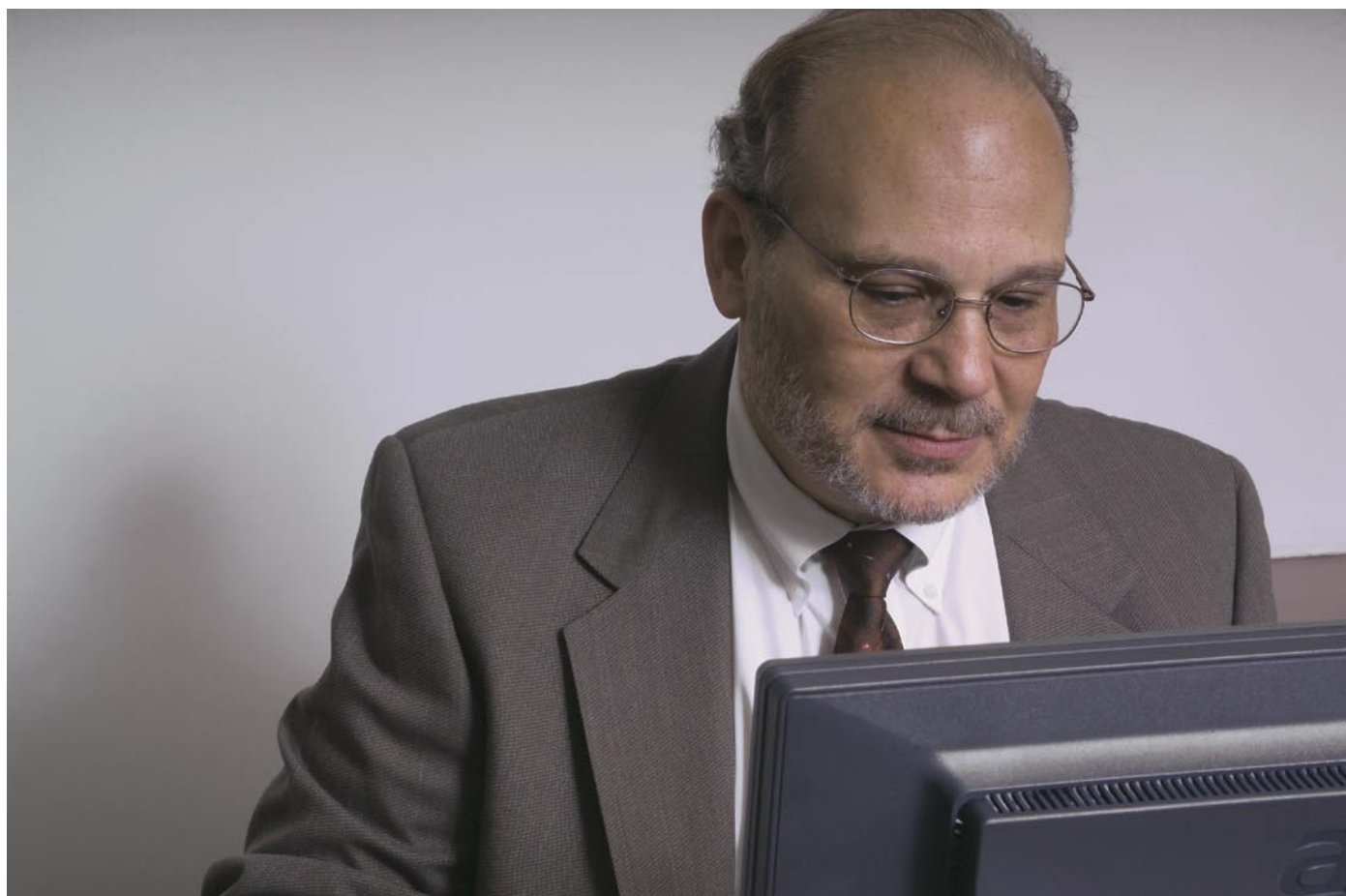
Founded by current President Judy Goldetsky in 1989, On Call Clinicians provides consultative recruitment services to health care and bioscience clients. At its inception, On Call Clinicians concentrated on niche staffing of rehabilitation professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech pathologists. Informed by her own clinical background and health care management experience, Judy built a recruitment team distinguished by a unique triumvirate of credentials. They married expertise in both health care and business management with a

passion for relationship-based service.

“Our recruiters have backgrounds in health care, management, health administration and medical science,” Judy explains. “Our service emphasizes relationships with both our clients and our candidates. The results speak for themselves; 50% of our clients and candidates are generated by referral.”

As the need for qualified health care professionals increased and the reputation of On Call Clinicians grew, the firm experienced growth rates of 600% per year. Services expanded to meet client needs. Recruitment resources grew to include pharmacists, physicians, clinical trial specialists and medical office support staff. A new division, Clinician Connection, was added to offer direct-hire placements and consulting services. On Call responded to the practice management demands of health care’s

Dr. Gary Goldetsky develops a practice management plan to effectively manage revenue cycle issues.



emerging consumer-driven care model by launching On Call Medical. This management service division provides medical claims processing, patient billing, collection services, staff training, revenue cycle analysis and electronic medical record system implementation.

“Our name has become a bit of a misnomer,” chuckles Business Manager and recruiter Pamela Wolfe. “We may have begun as a temporary medical staff service, but today we offer a full spectrum of services to meet practice needs from the moment a patient walks through the door to the time that their account reflects a zero balance.”

“We have yet to feel the full momentum of the emerging consumer-driven model of health care,” notes Vice President Dr. Gary Goldetsky. “Our services are applicable to the consumer-driven as well as the insurance-driven model of health care. Clients need competent medical professional staff under either model.”

Although the shift to a consumer focus doesn’t affect On Call’s staffing services, it is driving the development of their practice management services. Primary care and independent specialty practices are care providers first; many don’t have the time, the personnel or the business background to address increasingly complex management issues. Some practices join large hospital systems to gain management expertise and resources. On Call Medical offers independent practitioners another option: support services that address practice management needs while enabling practitioners to preserve their autonomy.

On Call Medical sponsors quarterly client “leadership lunches” to discuss practice challenges. These lunch meetings are intimate; eight to 10 client representatives attend to hear health care



Donna Peterson, PharmD, consults with a patient regarding possible medication interactions as a valuable aspect of care coordination.

management issues addressed by speakers, including psychologists, physicians, attorneys, practice managers and recruiters. “We create an environment where clients feel comfortable discussing their concerns,” says Dr. Goldetsky. “These meetings help us to better understand how we can help.”

Practice management and billing services are closely related and tailored to individual practice needs. “Some clients want us to address billing and collection issues, and then turn solution implementation over to them,” Dr. Goldetsky notes. “Other clinics ask us to assume clinic management as an outsource project. We can help a practice evaluate whether they can handle billing internally, or whether a specialized outsource system is needed.”

A new Minnesota state law will require practitioners to submit all claims and remittances electronically by the summer of 2009; this has put electronic billing implementation concerns front and center. “We handle electronic medical claims now and expect this portion of our business to grow,” says Judy. “We have familiarity with appropriate software and can provide skilled personnel to handle proper coding of data entry to maximize allowed payments.”

On Call’s recruitment resources offer an extensive database of medical professionals with specialization in medical rehab, pharmacy, medical office support, primary health and clinical research. The firm serves a client list, including most hospitals within a 300-mile radius of the Twin Cities metro, numerous private family and specialty practices, long-term care facilities, medical research and development companies and schools. Though headquartered in the Twin Cities, On Call places candidates across the country for clients with multiple national locations.

On Call pharmacists expand their clinical skills by working in a variety of settings through On Call.



On Call Clinicians is distinguished by the rigor of its candidate screening process. Each potential candidate is evaluated via a phone interview, followed by submission of paper credentials. Candidates of interest are invited to multiple-stage on-site interviews with two recruiters who review background, work history, skills, accomplishments and a behavioral profile.

“A resume is only words,” Pamela explains. “Technical skills represent probably 60% of placement success. Our placement process relies on a three-dimensional understanding of tangible and intangible qualities. Meeting a candidate reveals intangible dynamics of personality, enthusiasm, appearance and motivation. Interview 10 people with the exact same credentials; only one of them will be the right fit for a particular client.”

Candidates undergo OSHA and HIPAA certification, CPR training and fire safety. On Call handles vaccination requirements, state department of health background checks, reference and criminal background checks and drug screening. “None of our field staff are placed until all of these screening steps have been completed,” Judy states.

Field staff certification is renewed on an annual basis and is supplemented by performance evaluations. On Call Clinicians’ computerized system tracks certification, licensure and continuing education to ensure that employees are up to date.

“We have never had a malpractice incident,” notes Dr. Goldetsky. “We take pride in our reputation for consistently well-educated and experienced staff.”

Providing hard-to-find medical specialists in today’s competitive health care environment is no easy task. Judy laughingly confesses that clients often want to know their secret for finding qualified personnel. “We don’t do any magic,” she says. “It’s just that we spend 100% of our time on recruitment. Our health care clients focus on running their practices; we focus on recruiting. Our calendar is filled with professional organization and community events. We do 30-40 job fairs a year and sponsor continuing education programs. We cultivate relationships with students while they are still in school, sponsoring resume-writing seminars and mock interview training. Qualified candidates refer other qualified candidates. It’s our job to consistently connect with health care professionals.”

On Call candidates are offered a rich variety of employment options. “If someone wants supplementary work,” says Pamela, “we are a wonderful option. For people unhappy in their present position, we offer a temporary-to-hire option that allows both candidate and client to develop a comfort level prior to a final hiring decision. By managing the legalities, we make the process easier. Some candidates want to maintain clinical skills while they

Lynne Mader, Medical Office Manager, evaluates patient charts to ensure complete documentation and accurate patient billing.



work full time in other nonhands-on settings. Fresh graduates approach On Call wanting to try out different settings. Others come with in-demand and hard-to-find skills. Our candidates include new grads, retired professionals and everything in between. Today, health professionals are putting more emphasis on meeting life needs, increasing skills and getting satisfaction from what they do. We give our candidates a lot of choices.”

Flexibility is a growing demand among medical professionals, and trends indicate that flexibility will only become more important. “Pharmacy and university medical school graduating classes are now over 50% women,” says Judy. “Women traditionally need flexibility more than men. We work with candidates to find opportunities that will accommodate a shorter workday for daycare commitments or caretaking obligations for elderly parents. Candidates also seek us out during personal life transitions like relocation, partial retirement and career transitioning. We have special services for candidates who want to travel and ask us to find jobs for them at various destinations. One adventurous candidate wanted to work in Alaska, where her cousin was a bush pilot. We found a six-month position for her, and she was able to

work while exploring Alaska with her cousin.

“Flexibility applies to clients as well as candidates,” Judy notes. “We are there when clients suddenly get busy; when a practice needs an R.N. to help with a higher patient load on Mondays; when they need hard-to-find specialists; when they need extra staff for a few days to finish a medical records project. We flex with client needs so they don’t have to over hire.”

The strong contingent of medical device companies in the Twin Cities helped to shape On Call Clinicians’ niche in clinical research staff. Pamela oversees research staff placement, collaborating with device development companies and investigative clinics.

“Cardiology and urology devices and potential pharmaceuticals are frequently tested in the Twin Cities, creating a constant demand for clinical research professionals,” she explains. “Medical device study sponsors need in-house monitors specializing in clinical research to audit, oversee correct protocol procedure and ensure that data is comprehensive. Medical device companies also look to us to supply clinical research associates, data specialists and administrative study coordinators. On the investigative side

On Call provides Cassandra Mazzko, physical therapist, with a flexible schedule to meet her unique work/life balance. Cassandra Mazzko is seen assisting a patient with her therapeutic exercise program to improve balance and coordination.





PHOTO BY DAVID GINSBERG

Diversity of experience among the On Call team enables them to meet the specialized needs of each client.

of research, clinical and surgical practices rely on us for supplemental medical assistants, R.N.s, physicians and phlebotomists with clinical research training.

“Our emphasis on client service has created some great synergy,” she says. “One of our clients is a clinical research facility. Study initiation for their trials occurs rapidly with patient load peaks that require a quick increase in staff. During trials, this clinic admits 50 patients a day, doing physicals, medical histories and specific testing for the research protocol. Our working relationship has evolved to the point where they trust us to screen and select staff. We have an agreement to pretrain our staff in their facility so that On Call’s staff can be waiting and ready to report during peak needs. It has become a really nice collaborative working relationship for the client and our staff.”

Placement Manager/recruiter Mary Walker sums up the firm’s philosophy. “Our services are built on layers of client relationships. At the first layer, we provide our clients with the staff they need. From there, as we learn more about the dynamics of each client’s practice, we may be able to offer additional services to support their work.”

“We are a locally owned resource, and we are very connected to our community,” Judy agrees. “We never forget that we are

the patients of the clients we serve, as well as business partners. We relate to our clients from both a personal and a business vantage point.”

“When I interview,” Pamela observes, “I keep in mind that the candidate I’m speaking with might be providing care for me or a member of my family. If the candidate is on the patient accounting side, I’m thinking about how he or she would interact with me if I had a question about a medical bill. Our recruiting process has a very personal component. We don’t accept candidates unless we feel comfortable with the idea of that candidate taking care of us or our families. We’d rather pass on a staffing request than place a candidate who wasn’t qualified for a position.”

“Our clients and our candidates have a variety of recruitment services to choose from,” says Dr. Goldetsky. “Many of them have been with us for years. They trust our expertise in the business of health care to respond to their needs by creating win-win solutions. These relationships are the most rewarding aspect of our work.”

On Call Clinicians, Inc., a Twin Cities-based company since 1989, provides creative solutions and flexible options to their clients’ and candidates’ needs. Read more in our special feature on how On Call Clinicians are passionate about finding and matching outstanding health care professionals with the right positions. ■