



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Meet Our First Urgent Care Management Certificate Recipient

■ LOU ELLEN HORWITZ, MA

Carlene Cox is the Clinical Manager for Genesis FirstCare, the urgent care service offered by the Genesis HealthCare System in Zanesville, Ohio. She's also a UCAOA celebrity because she is the first person to have completed the Urgent Care Management Certificate (UCMC).

The UCMC program is a 40-hour educational program designed to improve and recognize proficiency in the core competencies of center management. We launched it in April—Carlene was done by August.

In September, I was privileged to talk with Carlene about why an already successful urgent care manager would pursue the UCMC, how she did it so quickly, and why she thought it was a good use of her very limited time.

Carlene Cox is the kind of person we love to get in urgent care—smart, driven, a natural over-achiever, and aware of the value she and her team bring to the community. Genesis FirstCare is fairly new—opening in 2006—but Carlene had been working for Genesis long before that.

She started at Genesis as a laboratory technician with an associate's degree. After a few years, she saw an opportunity to increase marketing of lab services to businesses in her community. Her idea took off like a rocket, and shortly thereafter she went back to school (while working full time) to obtain a degree in healthcare management.

Genesis's expanding relationship with businesses naturally grew into an occupational health program, which Carlene has managed since 1991. Along the way, she picked up the Certificate of Competency in Occupational Health Practice Management from our colleagues at the National Association of Occupational Health Professionals (NAOHP). When Genesis opened its two urgent care centers, Carlene was the natural choice to manage them.



Lou Ellen Horwitz is Executive Director of the Urgent Care Association of America. She may be contacted at lhorwitz@ucaoa.org.

When Carlene saw the announcement for the UCMC program she said, "It just seemed like a logical next step in my career. I hadn't been in urgent care that long—only 4 years—and I felt this would be an excellent opportunity to increase my skills."

As to her quick completion of the program, Carlene said, "I have to admit, I was hesitant at first. I wasn't sure if I would have enough time to do it all. We were implementing an EMR at the same time, so I was nervous about the commitment. With the support of my colleagues, I decided to set aside time on Fridays to complete it. It was so easy to use. I was amazed at how quickly I was able to get it all done."

Carlene also took advantage of the program as an impetus to use the access she already had to UCAOA content. "I had been to the last convention, and even though I could have taken tests on the sessions I'd seen there, I decided to take all new sessions instead. It was a great value because they were already paid for with my convention registration. That made the entire program a very easy sell to my organization because it was so cost-effective."

Genesis covered Carlene's registration fees for the program, and the physician practice group that staffs the urgent care center was also very supportive. "The support I received reinforced to the entire team that Genesis recognizes the value of the services we provide and is willing to invest in making it even better. It gave them added confidence in me, too, because they know that I am current in the field of urgent care."

When asked what she would tell other managers, Carlene said, "Don't let your initial hesitancy keep you from doing this. Recognize that we have a special niche, and it's our responsibility to stay knowledgeable about our niche. If you can set aside a set time for it, it's really convenient and, of course, informative. It also says to your staff that you believe in ongoing growth and development."

I'd say Carlene Cox is someone to watch. If you want to find her, she says to let you know she's on UConnect (<http://uconnect.ucaoa.org/home>) and loves connecting with her fellow urgent care professionals. ■