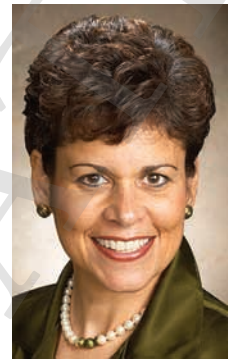


Cathy Thomas Hess, BSN, RN, CWOCN

Cathy Thomas Hess, BSN, RN, CWOCN, President and Director of Clinical Operations of Wound Care Strategies (WCS) recently shared how the company's success comes from an ability to connect with clients, see the big picture, and put together solutions that make sense. Not based on conventional ways of thinking, but instead, aggressively challenging norms to ensure the best strategies, practices, and advice, Wound Care Strategies provides patients with precision strategies and systems to benefit business, keeping each client's unique need first.



Chimere G. Holmes

Q: Please describe your work experiences that prepared you for your current position as President/Director of Clinical Operations at Wound Care Strategies.

A: I have defined success for myself in very personal ways. My nursing experiences in the early 1980s led me to shift my focus and become a certified wound, ostomy, and continence nurse (CWOCN). I began to realize that my passion in nursing, along with the many experiences, was a great combination to place me in leadership positions throughout my career. My clinical and operational experiences in acute care, home care, long-term care, durable medical equipment, and outpatient departments served as the foundation to my consulting career, which led to me launching my company in 1995. Using my core skill sets, I developed a paper documentation system, which is sold nationally, that provided organizations with the ability to manage their clinical, reimbursement, and regulatory processes effectively and efficiently. In 1999, I had the comprehensive paper documentation system developed into a computerized documentation system offered to outpatient wound care clinics as an integrated electronic medical record (EMR). This EMR, known as Tri-assess® Premier Software (TPS), was offered solely to the wound care clinics we assisted in developing, reengineering, or transitioning. In 2005, we began receiving calls from existing wound care clinics that were interested in using TPS as their EMR of choice. Today, our clients have the option to tap into our wide range of clinical and operational solutions to improve their business operations while using TPS. I can attest that our clinical tag line, "It's not about the software, it's about your process™" holds true ever since I developed our company. Without the right clinical, regulatory, and operational processes in place, one's documentation may not be complete. The TPS tagline, "In goes the software, outcomes the better™" describes our technology goal, which is to capture the clinical, functional, and financial outcomes necessary for our clients to manage their business.

Q: What should our readers know first and foremost about Wound Care Strategies?

A: WCS provides the central framework for delivering the art of wound care and the science of integrated software as a total

package within a turnkey solution. Every client's department is unique in their process and workflow, which is why we listen and are personally involved in mapping best clinical and operational practices for each client. It does not matter if the hospital serves 80 beds or 800 beds—process is process and because each client is unique, our work is exciting everyday!

Q: Please tell me how you were first introduced to the arena of wound care and why you enjoy working in this arena.

A: After graduating from the University of Maryland, I worked in a level one trauma hospital that served a diverse group of patients managed by awesome clinicians and physicians. I was able to see patients everywhere from the emergency room, to the intensive care units, to the general medical floor. What I realized was that the unique ability to niche in wound, ostomy, and fistula management was a clinical skill set that had no boundaries within a hospital. The final clinical solution determined best for the patient had to be documented impeccably for physicians and clinicians to follow. This started what I call "the art of documentation" which has greatly expanded into what we offer clients today – Tri-assess® Premier Software.

Q: Please expand on how WCS values its strong software/technology presence.

A: Compliance, quality of care, and software interoperability are the trendsetters in our industry today. TPS continues to evolve based on the government's research that using an EMR would serve to improve patient care, increase patient safety, and simplify compliance in the US healthcare system, as well as reduce costs in the long-term, minimize errors, and increase productivity and administrative efficiency. Given the fast pace of our society, and ever-changing clinical and regulatory constraints, it is practical for clinicians to use an EMR to record assessment, documentation, clinical, and financial outcome data. Data collected can then be used to advance critical pathways, improve product formularies, validate contract fees with payers, mitigate liability, and improve patient and physician satisfaction, which can increase business opportunities. We provide this platform and interoperability for our clients to meet, and exceed, these regulatory mandates through the use of TPS.

Q: What are some of the company's biggest accomplishments thus far? What are some of your key products that clearly distinguish your brand?

A: Since 1995, WCS has served clients all over the country - from critical access hospitals to large integrated health systems, durable medical equipment, homecare, and long-term care settings. Our clients seek WCS for pioneering advances in clinical tracking and generating superior clinical and operational practices overall. We assist clients who are starting a new department or reengineering an existing department, and bridge their documentation with TPS. Originally TPS was a stand-alone site license hosted by the hospital. This past year, WCS transitioned to a SAAS service model with release of TPS 7.0., a versatile and customized software solution integrating a software delivery system, revenue cycle management, a business process improvement solution and regulatory compliance.

Wound Care Strategies' key products allow our clients the opportunity to take their department's management process to an even smarter, more efficient work platform that no other wound care software comes close to matching. The following qualities are what our products offer each consumer:

- Current and meaningful use and accreditation standards for operational and technological efficiencies: up-to-the-minute for newly changed governmental regulations.
- Enhanced role-based navigation, security management, customizable required fields, audit and compliance tools and reports, a reports generator to access and define the data for client reports, a clinical management dashboard, and fully refined scheduling, among others.
- Superior interoperability through our HL7 interface engine that allows importing of a variety of demographic, clinical and financial data (such as Admission, Discharge and Transfer (ADT) information, lab results, and patient medical history data) – with no staff intervention required. By eliminating redundant data entry (and the chance for errors in the transcription process), automated information flow increases and improves staff's efficiency, leading to greater patient safety. It also provides timely access to information being captured.

Q: Please describe the mission/vision of your organization.

A: Our mission is three-fold, with each component being as integral to our success as the next.

Product Mission – Provide customers with the most clinically and operationally intelligent, interoperable software; delivering process-driven results, allowing clients to work at their optimum.

Community Mission – By becoming a B Corporation (The “B” stands for “Benefit”) and affiliating with other B Corporations, WCS intends to use the power of business to solve

social and environmental problems. The way we treat our employees and our customers is critically important. We want to always serve them with the utmost respect, dignity, and kindness. B Corporations are unlike traditional responsible businesses because they meet comprehensive and transparent social and environmental performance standards.

Economic Mission –Wound Care Strategies values the Triple Bottom Line of people, planet, and profit and we have built our business around these core fundamental ideals with the choices we make, from offering our software solution through cloud computing, software as a service, thus eliminating needless paper, lowering the need of additional computer servers and energy.

Q: How exactly does your personal vision fit with the company's goals?

A: My vision has always been to integrate clinical and operational workflow and best practice into a streamlined documentation system. Today, our company is committed to transforming the wound care EMR environment by integrating cutting edge clinical intelligence and operational solutions that address process and workflow. From a technology perspective, whether it's working with a client on understanding the clinical and operational process, compliance standards, or workflow, installing best documentation standards through EMR management is paramount.

Q: Please explain what must take place on a daily basis at WCS in order to accommodate patients, clinicians, and healthcare facilities.

A: The combined expertise of our team is leveraged to provide our clients with a solid foundation for successful outcomes. Our clinical and IT support staff work directly with our clients using small, specialized teams for personalized, one-on-one interaction based on agreed goals. Each client's organization and processes are unique and must be taken into consideration when installing their EMR and/or clinical, operational, or reimbursement process. We take pride in the lives we touch through our clinical and technological work and are committed to maintaining our approach to assist clients in moving forward.

Q: Looking ahead, what are some incentives or products the company is working on?

A: Wound Care Strategies continues to listen to the consumers' needs and wish lists. Our goal is to offer a disease state management that compliments the wound care department's work. With our new releases, we continue to improve our existing application and offer a time-saving feature, which includes: scheduling, evidence-based guidelines, physician collaboration options, patient & physician portals, expanded benchmarking analysis and reporting capabilities, interoperability offerings, and much more. At WCS we are confident in our vision and mission that the best is yet to come.

For more information, visit
www.woundcarestrategies.com.