



Deb Holman, HHA, has assisted Helen Daugherty in her home for Home Nursing Services for over 10 years.

# Continuum of care

Ten years later, local business offers advocacy and aide for an aging population.

article by Rebecca James • photos by David Kirk

If given a choice, most people prefer to make their own decisions regarding where they live, especially if it means staying in their own homes. Today, many older adults don't feel they have a choice.

"For many people, the difference between being able to stay at home and moving is just getting a little bit of help," says Dorian Maples, who, with her husband, Rick, own a group of businesses dedicated to allowing these people to stay at home.

Angel Corps, Home Nursing Services, Heritage Medical Staffing and Dorian Maples & Associates offer a continuum of care to older adults and persons with disabilities.

In 1995, Rick, then a partner with a local accounting firm, left the profession and purchased a fledgling home health care business — Summit Medical Home Health.

"All the demographics indicated home health care was a growth business — shorter hospital stays, people living longer, baby boomers trying to cope with caring for their aging parents," Rick says. "I liked the idea of a business dedicated to helping vulnerable people. The problem was, I had no idea what I was doing."

Dorian, a Registered Nurse with home health care experience, came on board shortly thereafter, and they began to restructure the business, streamlining the organization and raising its standards of care.

"We had about 30 clients and 30 caregivers," Dorian says.

Now, the businesses have more than 200 caregivers serving approximately 250 clients. Nurses, home health aides and attendants provide personal care in clients' homes throughout nine counties in north-east Indiana. Homemakers and compan-

ions prepare meals, do laundry, accompany clients to medical appointments and sit with clients during hospital stays.

After creating Home Nursing Services in 1996, Rick and Dorian noticed many of the most qualified caregivers had experience working in nursing homes, but were attracted to the one-on-one aspect of home care. The emergence of home care was creating a shortage of nursing home workers, so in 1997, they created Heritage Medical Staffing to provide temporary staffing to nursing homes.

"Although we were responding to a need in the long-term care market, we were pleased to discover we were able to grow our pool of caregivers by offering another employment option," Dorian says. "Sometimes caregivers need a break from home care or an assignment to fill the gap until another case becomes available."

In 2001, Rick and Dorian noticed another

er unfulfilled niche — non-medical care. Angel Corps was created to provide attendant, homemaker and companion services for those clients whose care does not require medical supervision. Cases range from constant care to occasional visits. Some of the more unique assignments include accompanying clients on family vacations or flights to visit relatives; taking clients to church services, a family event or even a trip to the Embassy Theatre. Angel Corps became the fastest growing segment of their business, and in response to demand, they recently opened an office in Auburn to better serve the areas north of Fort Wayne.

In 2003, Dorian began a geriatric care management business, offering yet another service.

"It was a role I played in my own family," Dorian says. "Family members would call with questions, or ask if I could accompany them to a doctor's appointment, visit their in-laws in the hospital or nursing home, or help assess whether they should still be driving. I worried about families who didn't have a 'Dorian' to call."

Dorian discovered this was a growing niche around the country, and became the first nurse in Indiana to obtain certification as a Professional Geriatric Care Manager.

Much of what the companies do are the things many families do themselves; only more and more people find themselves unable to do so, because of time constraints, distance or abilities. Dorian's role as a professional geriatric care manager often develops into that of a "surrogate daughter," as she monitors an older adult's care in a nursing home, and reports back to the client's children who may be geographically spread out. Families have hired her to be "on-call" when they must leave a loved one alone while they are out of town; others have hired her to mediate family dis-

putes regarding parental care. As a registered nurse, Dorian interprets information from medical appointments and communicates with family members.

"Families seem to love prompt e-mail reports on their parents' care," Dorian says. "The response has been very positive."

"The businesses are really growing together now," Rick says.

"For older clients, we feel like we offer a 'continuum of care,'" Dorian says. "From a little help at home, to nursing care in their homes, to assistance within a health care facility. And for our caregivers, we feel we offer a 'continuum of employment.' Many alternate between home and facility care, while others have progressed from companions to aides to nurses."

Rick and Dorian continue to look for ways to raise their standards of care. In response to the constant need to serve clients with various forms of dementia, they have implemented a requirement that all employees undergo the "dementia-specific" training developed by the Alzheimer's Association.

After leasing their office space at 528 W. Washington Blvd. (the former Rogers Markets headquarters), the Maples have purchased the building from the Rogers Company.

"We've come a long way in the past 10 years," Rick says.

And as for the next 10 years?

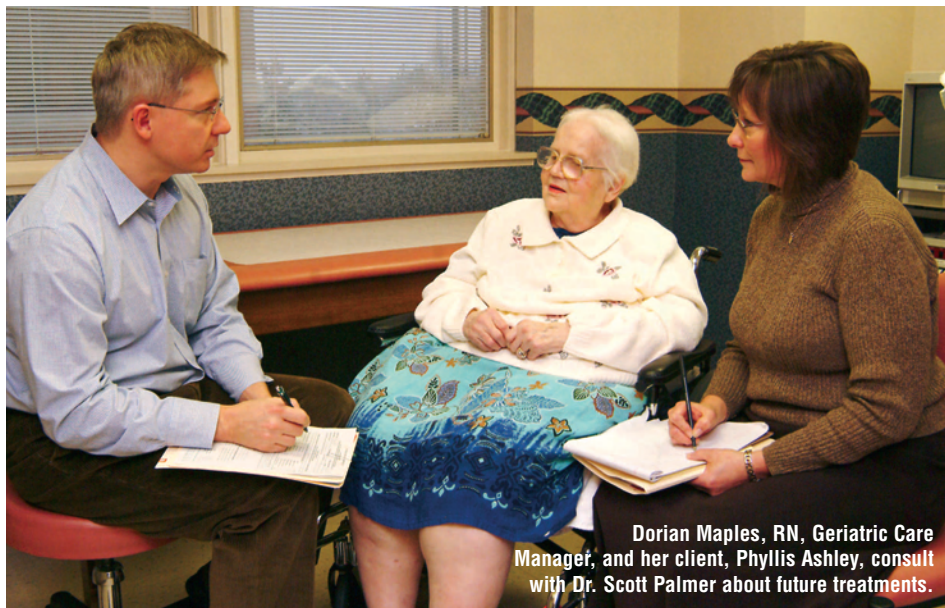
According to Rick, they get their best



Since 1995, owners, Dorian and Rick Maples have continued to expand their businesses by meeting the needs of older adults.

ideas by listening to their clients and employees.

"If we keep paying attention, we'll know what to do." •



Dorian Maples, RN, Geriatric Care Manager, and her client, Phyllis Ashley, consult with Dr. Scott Palmer about future treatments.

## for your information

**ADDRESS:**  
528 West Washington Blvd.  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802

**OWNERSHIP:**  
Rick and Dorian Maples

### Home Nursing Services

**TELEPHONE:**  
(260) 424-1237

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 10

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 80

**SERVICES:**  
Medical home health care.

### Heritage Medical Staffing

**TELEPHONE:**  
(260) 424-1329

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 8

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 60

**SERVICES:**  
Temporary staffing of health care facilities.

### Angel Corps

**TELEPHONE:**  
(260) 426-4357

**WEB:** www.CorpsOfAngels.com

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 4

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 75

**SERVICES:**  
Non-medical home care.

### Dorian Maples & Associates

**TELEPHONE:**  
(260) 918-1141

**WEB:** www.IndianaGeriatric.com

**YEARS IN BUSINESS:** 3

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 3

**SERVICES:**  
Geriatric care management.