



## **Liza Nelson**

*Company/Organization:* Good Samaritan Society Home Health

*Hometown:* Grand Island

*Education:* RN, Board Certified Gerontological nurse

*Family:* a 9-year-old daughter who is a competitive swimmer and an all-around amazing kid. I've been married to my husband for 19 years. He's pretty amazing too.

*Hobbies:* Being a swim mom keeps me very busy with daily practice and swim meets over several weekends. In my spare time I love to ride my bike with my daughter on the GI hike and bike trail. To relax I enjoy tending my flowers and, of course, shopping!

*Favorite TV Show or Movie:* I love to watch Food Network.

*Favorite Vacation Spot:* I don't like to travel! I take a week-long stay-cation every year and hang out with my daughter at home.

*Favorite App or Technology:* Facebook!

*Why Did You Choose to Become a Home Health, Home Care or Hospice Provider?*

The better question is: why did I stay a Home Health nurse? I love being independent in my decision making, love teaching patients so they can better understand their health, and appreciate the extra time getting to know them. As an Administrator, I enjoy collaborating with staff to do the same.

*Mentor Who Has Helped Me the Most in My Career:* There are so many people I have learned from over the years. I was a CNA for 9 years before becoming an LPN, then an RN. I'd say my experience gained by starting where I did and moving up made me the nurse I am today.

*How Do You See Your Profession Changing in the Next Few Years?* I see it growing. Home Health is surely the preference. Discharge planners are getting better at seeing it as a goal for more patients. I am hoping it will be a goal to discuss home health as part of the discharge plan for all patients of all ages.

*Why Are You a Nebraska Home Care Association Member and What Value Do You Receive From Your Membership?* I am a member because I enjoy all it has to offer. I value the education and the collaboration of professionals working toward similar goals.

*Something About Me Not Everyone Knows:* I do yoga at least 5 days out of the week. I started a year and a half ago and it wasn't pretty to watch! I would consider myself advanced now. Actually, I'm a yogi vegetarian. I've been a vegetarian for 13 years.

*What Is a Best Practice or a New Idea You've Recently Implemented in Your Facility?*

Communication is a best practice no matter where you work. I feel open, honest communication is the basis of so many bigger things.

*Career You'd Like to Try if You Weren't a Home Health, Home Care or Hospice Provider:*

I'd love to own my own business. I'd either own a restaurant or a gift basket making shop.

*Share a Story About Caring for a Patient that Was a Rewarding Experience:*

As a new home health nurse, I was seeing patients 3 times weekly for wound care. This woman was tough, hard to get into her heart. Once I broke the surface, we became quite close. She trusted me. I saw her for about a year. She wanted to stay in her home at all costs. I noticed she started to decline with increased dyspnea and decreased activity tolerance. I urged her to see her MD but she refused. I had already explained her concerning heart sounds and cardiac symptoms to her but this didn't help my case for her to see her doc. After about a week of pleading with her to get some outside help I finally had a light bulb moment. I finally said "Take my stethoscope and I want you to listen to your heart." Her eyes grew big as she listened...she listened for quite some time. Her face grew sad and serious and she then decided to take my advice. She was hospitalized, sent to SNF, and passed in the SNF. I visited her and she still gave me a hard time but agreed it was best. I learned a lot from her about relationships with home health patients and how their healthcare is truly in their hands. It's up to the home health nurse to find ways to get them to trust us and our decisions and sometimes it takes something so simple.