

In Hospitals, Homes

Metrolina Healthcare Service

Provides Nursing Care To Patients

By Teresa Simmons
Post Managing Editor

As 84 year old Odessa sits in her chair watching cars go by, she wonders when her next visitor will come. A car finally pulls into the driveway and out steps an attractive lady with 14 years of nursing experience.

"Hi, Mrs. Odessa," the lady smiles. "I'm from the Metrolina Healthcare Service. I'm Shirline Smith, owner of the service."

Thus, another home will take advantage of the many services offered by the Metrolina Healthcare Service, located at 2506 Beatties Ford Road (Dalebrook Pharmacy).

Usually the case may be that an elderly person, somewhat incapacitated, needs someone to stay with them eight hours a day. "But this service is not only for the elderly," Mrs. Smith stresses. "We can send someone out for a few hours (usually not less than four;) or someone to stay overnight. Our services include nursing care to patients in hospitals, homes, or other medical facilities, aid with newborns, aid with maintaining the home such as housework, shopping, child care. You can also receive live-ins...when the mother and father have to travel, there can be a substitute mother there to take care of the children and to take them to their various activities." The service is 24 hours and can provide emergency care when needed.

Metrolina Healthcare Services employs Registered Nurses, Certified Nurses, and medical assistance, and Licensed Practical Nurses for nursing care. The service can also be used by physicians of hospitals in need of skilled nurses.

Homemaker assistants or companions are hired by Mrs. Smith for qualified child care and general housekeeping tasks.

"All of our employees are carefully selected. Most have experience in home care and some just have that special touch and feeling for people."

Mrs. Smith evaluates the needs of the clients from the start. "Evaluations of the workers are asked for," she continued, "and each employee is required to keep a daily diary of the activities of the elderly including what medications they have taken. The assistants or nurses take the elderly to the doctor as well and bring the report of the doctor back. They are also required to observe the correct diet for the client." Mrs. Smith goes into each home weekly for routine checks.

Workers are insured and bonded, which means that if the employees resort to stealing from the home of a client, the stolen goods are covered. "But we have been in business over a year...since November, 1983, and we have not had one incident of theft," Mrs. Smith revealed.

The service also provides equipment for in-home care of patients. "Home respirators, wheel chairs, etc., the latest equipment in personal care will be provided by our service."

It is also important to know that child care can also include house care. "If we have a person sitting for your children, why shouldn't they start a load of clothes in the washing machine for you or start cooking dinner. Our clients leave instructions as to what they want done and what they want touched or not touched." In this way, the privacy of each client is not disturbed.

With all of these services and advantages, the question of cost can



Shirline B. Smith, R.N.
.....Agency owner

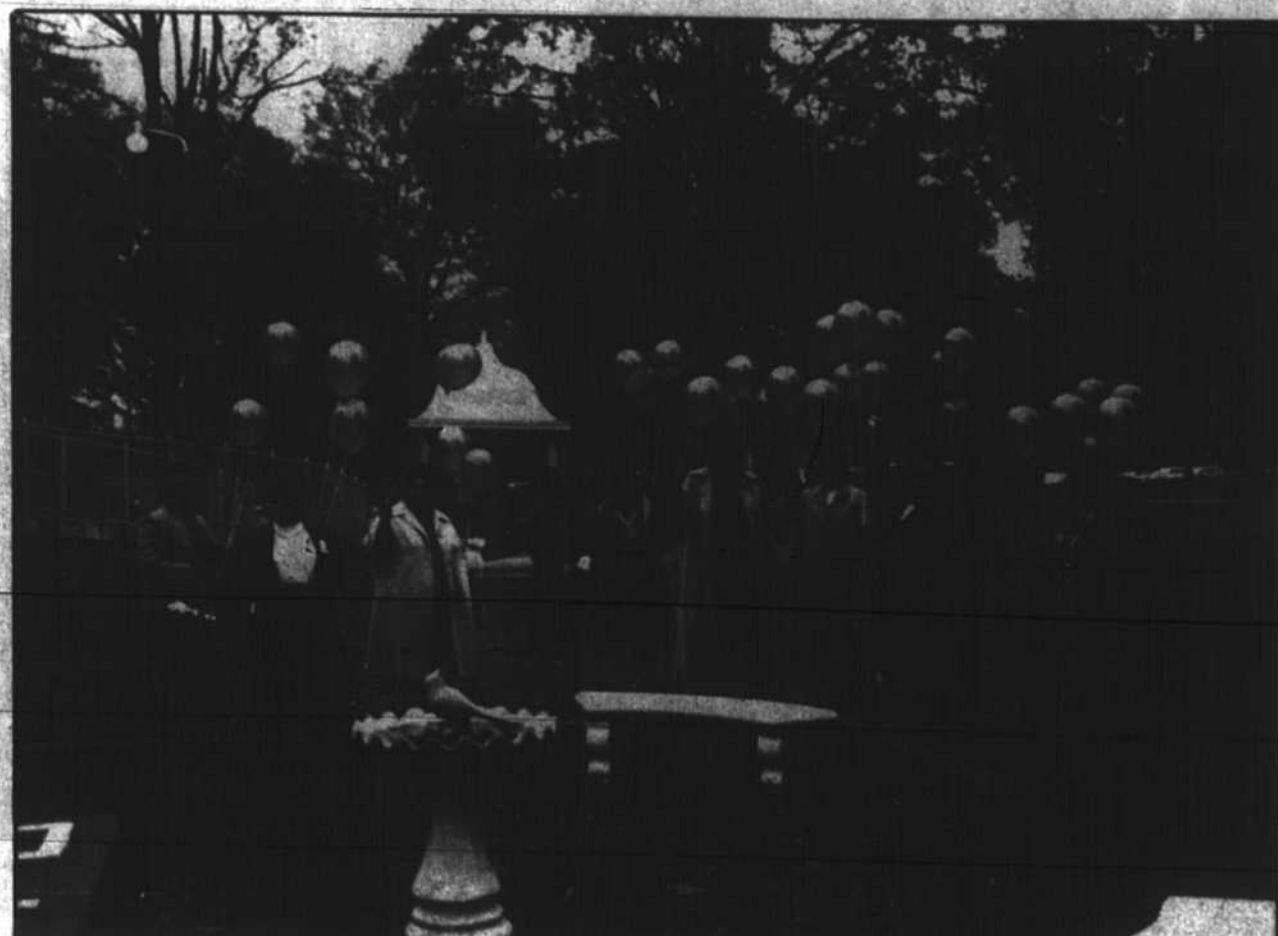
often scare prospective clients away. "The prices are reasonable," Mrs. Smith states. "When you think of what you are receiving...the relief...you can't put a price on

that." Various forms of insurance can help with this service as well.

As soon as the health care agency becomes certified with a Certificate of Need (CON) from the Department of Human Resources in Raleigh, Mrs. Smith will be able to take in Medicaid and Medicare clients. According to Mrs. Smith, there has been a freeze on certifying businesses such as hers. The freeze will be lifted in January.

Mrs. Smith, an R.N., graduated from Columbia Hospital in Columbia, S.C., attended Central Piedmont Community College and the University of S.C. (Spartanburg). She has worked in the Charlotte area for the past 14 years in various capacities from head nurse to supervisor. She is the mother of three and attends Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

In essence, Mrs. Smith's agency provides care for the elderly, home maintenance, child care assistance, in hospital, medical facility and private duty for the sick as well as updated equipment for the ill and companions for the elderly or others.



Zeta Phi Beta Sorority members prepare to release balloons containing messages of love. From left to right are Maxine Davis, Dorothy Allison, Barbara

Hendricks, Nettie Myrick, Emma Wade, Joyce Ballard, Sadie Crawford, Madie Simpson, Sarah Schofield, Angela Taylor and Helen Kirk.



CPCC's Illiteracy Program Receives Commendation

Central Piedmont Community College's program for fighting adult illiteracy has received a certificate of recognition from the Adult Literacy Initiative of the U.S. Department of Education.

Adult Basic Literacy Education, or ABLE, is a free program using one-on-one tutors and computers for teaching some of Charlotte's 50,000 adult illiterates to read. ABLE centers are located at Freedom Mall, Double Oaks Community Center, and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in the Plaza-Midwood area.

The Adult Literacy Initiative was established by President Reagan last year to raise public awareness of the illiteracy problem and to encourage participation in literacy activities.

The group also acknowledges significant contributions of time, talent and other resources to fighting adult illiteracy.

"It's significant that the Literacy Initiative has been established in the first place," said ABLE director Cindy Wilson. "And it's a real honor that we were nominated."

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