

3/29/08

## **Shad Ireland: Hemodialysis Patient, Triathlon Participant**

### ***FMS spokesman's powerful message inspires and motivates***

Start off with a brisk 2.4-mile swim; follow it with a 112-mile bicycle race; end up running a 26.2-mile marathon. That's called a triathlon, and most would also call it a pretty grueling day's work. And if that isn't daunting enough, do it all as someone who has been a hemodialysis patient for 25 years and survived two kidney transplants.

Perhaps it all sounds like science fiction, but it's an almost routine accomplishment for Shad Ireland—a remarkable man with a mission. Drawing on his own life story, Shad has built a career reassuring and motivating those who face what may seem insurmountable challenges in the pursuit of their personal goals. He recently signed up with FMS as a compensated spokesman and will be bringing his inspirational message to clinics in each of our 60 regions beginning this summer.

First diagnosed with chronic kidney disease (CKD) at the age of ten, Shad struggled through two failed kidney transplants, the second leading to associated respiratory distress syndrome. He lost 70 pounds and, at one point, was given 24 hours to live. A lesser person might have simply given up—but not Shad.

### **“I Can Do That”**

Soon after recovering from his ordeal, Shad was viewing TV coverage of an Ironman championship in Hawaii and marveling at what seemed the almost superhuman athletic feats of the participants. Suddenly he said to himself, “I can

do that.” And it turned out that he could. By combining relentless determination with improved physical condition, he was able to complete the Lake Placid (N.Y.) Ironman® triathlon in 2003, a scant year after beginning his training for the event. With this amazing accomplishment, he became the first dialysis patient ever to compete in, and complete, a triathlon.

Today, at the age of 35, Shad continues his grueling workouts with an eye towards continuing to participate in triathlons, which he does regularly. He undergoes hemodialysis four times a week for about five hours per treatment at his home in Minnesota with the help of his wife, Roxanne.

But Shad hasn’t been content just to rest on his remarkable athletic laurels. In 2006, he founded Team Ireland, which sponsors as many as two dozen candidates of various athletic abilities who want to participate in triathlons. Some of the candidates are male, some are female. Some are healthy, some are challenged.

But all share one characteristic: a passion for taking on, and doing their best in, the demanding three-stage event. And Shad and his team are on hand to bolster their confidence—to provide them with the motivation that will spur them on to success. In the words of Team Ireland’s motto, “No limitations, only inspiration.”

### **Raising Awareness, Bringing Inspiration**

Team Ireland’s members promote speaking engagements, fundraising events, and participation in races throughout North America. Their ultimate goals are twofold: to help raise public awareness of CKD and other chronic diseases, and to bring a message of inspiration to people who need to know that they are not struggling alone—and that through persistence and determination, they can attain personal

goals that sometimes seem out of reach.

At the Team Ireland Web site, [www.ironshad.com](http://www.ironshad.com), you'll find extensive information about the program and many other related activities. There's biographical information about Shad, a schedule of upcoming triathlons in various locations around the country, plus audio and video clips, press releases, a schedule of speaking events, a list of renal resources, and much more.

As if all these activities weren't enough to keep him occupied, Shad also operates the Shad Ireland Foundation, which supports CKD patients who want to improve their physical fitness or work toward educational goals. You'll find their Web site at [www.shadirelandfoundation.org](http://www.shadirelandfoundation.org).

Shad's uncompromising credo is posted on the home page of the Team Ireland Web site: "I am an individual who is passionate about life, who is motivated by challenges, and who is committed to the inspiration of my fellow patients. I am an individual who is beating the odds by turning obstacles into achievements and celebrating every breath along the way.

"I am an individual who has accepted, and is successfully living with kidney disease and all of the experiences that go along with this diagnosis."

In the final analysis, Shad Ireland is out to prove that people with chronic illnesses don't have to surrender to their condition—that they can overcome their challenges and "cross their own personal finish line." To find out when Shad will be visiting your region this summer, go to the FMCNA Web site. You'll want to hear his powerful message and convey it to your patients—especially those in need of extra reassurance.                   # # #

4/5/08

## **FMCNA Responding to Critical Nursing Shortage**

### ***Programs address retention, career paths, recruiting, joint venture***

It's no secret that our company is facing a severe shortage of skilled nurses and technicians. "But this situation goes way beyond FMC," says Claire Callahan, FMCNA's vice president for human resources and organizational development. "It's a worldwide problem that's going to be around for the next ten or twenty years. Health care organizations everywhere will have to cope with it." And FMCNA is aggressively coping with it on several fronts.

The nursing shortage didn't just spring up overnight; it has been a growing concern for many years. In 2004, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations published a 47-page white paper, a call to action entitled *Healthcare at the Crossroads: Strategies for Addressing the Evolving Nursing Crisis*. The document basically revolved around this sobering statement in the introduction: "The impending crisis in nurse staffing has the potential to impact the very health and security of our society if definitive steps are not taken to address its underlying causes."

### **What's causing the shortage?**

What are these underlying causes? First of all, women—who comprise approximately 98 percent of the nurse population—today have far more career options than in the past; many therefore choose not to go into traditional fields such as nursing. And with the average age of nurses today approaching 50, the younger generation will not be able to supply the numbers needed for a basic one-to-one replacement.

Unfortunately, even a mere one-to-one replacement just won't be anywhere near enough to stem the tide. As the massive baby-boomer generation ages, growing numbers of the elderly will require increasingly sophisticated health care. The Joint Commission report states, "Given this anticipated demand for health care services, it is estimated that by 2020, there will be at least 400,000 fewer nurses available to provide care than will be needed."

Fully aware of this prediction and others equally bleak, FMCNA is responding proactively to address the nursing shortage with programs covering a variety of staffing issues. "We have a number of irons in the fire," Claire comments. "And although they're in the early stages, they do seem to be paying off already."

### **Helping managers increase retention**

We care about our 7,000 nurses, value their service, and want to maintain as high a retention rate as possible. In practical terms, nurse staffing turnover is a costly proposition because of the training needed to bring new hires up to speed. That's why our managers need to be constantly aware of the importance of retaining their nurses and the steps they can take to ensure a good retention rate. Accordingly, all current managers are being made aware of the steps they can take to increase retention, and training programs for new managers now place increased emphasis on this critical aspect of their job.

### **Helping employees build careers**

It's not surprising that higher job satisfaction translates into a better retention rate for our company. Reviewing the responses to our recent Employee Engagement

Survey, we found that nurses frequently requested more help in developing their careers. As a result, we've begun a program to develop career ladders for nurses and plan to extend it to PCTs as well.

### **Streamlining the recruitment process**

Over the years, we have had to rely almost exclusively on external staffing agencies to enhance our workforce. Now we have established the Vendor Management Service, which consolidates all of our third-party agencies under a single umbrella. This service will help us maintain a consistent recruiting process and negotiate better rates for the talented, experienced nurses we look for. We've also launched our own internal agency, which will reduce recruiting costs and enable us to train new hires in the FMCNA philosophies, especially those relating to patient care.

### **Partnering with FMC Asia Pacific**

Our efforts to address the nursing shortage even extend halfway around the globe. We recently entered into a joint venture with FMC Asia Pacific, establishing the Fresenius Institute for Dialysis Nurses in the Philippines. The idea is that upon completing their training at the institute, many of the newly minted nurses will want to come to the U.S. for further training and then full-time employment. While they're in this country, they'll also have the opportunity to send money to their families back home. The first training class began in December and the second in April.

Our partnership with FMC Asia Pacific opens up a spectrum of exciting opportunities. It extends welcome assistance to that organization in growing their

business; the new graduates are provided with training and a start to their careers; FMCNA reaps the benefits of an expanded and well-trained workforce. In short, it's clearly a win-win situation for everyone involved in the program.

Claire Callahan is understandably optimistic when she looks at the potential benefits of these new programs. "We're confident that the steps we're taking will eventually pay off in higher retention, greater job satisfaction, and a more efficient recruiting process," she concludes.

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4/21/08

## **A Golden Opportunity**

This second issue of *FMS Pathways* features coverage of our Area Managers' Meeting, held March 31-April 2. I'd like to share with you some of the key points that I communicated at that meeting.

FMS is poised for growth. The theme chosen for our meeting, "The G6 Summit: Going for the Gold," was particularly apt because the conference focused on accelerating growth through six strategic imperatives: grow our quality, our treatments, our partnerships with patients, our private payor mix, our people, and our partnerships with physicians.

We reinvent UltraCare service every day as we strive for quality through superior customer service and strong clinical leadership, with emphasis on encouraging patients to take charge of their own care. At the meeting, Area Managers were encouraged to lead the way, making the UltraCare culture their own and showing us all how to continually strengthen the program.

Working together, combining a variety of market development activities with efficient clinical operations, we can achieve our goal of above-market growth. I was pleased to be able to tell our managers that we are better positioned than any competitor to face whatever challenges may occur along the way.

Management should equal leadership. There's a big difference between a boss and a leader: A boss drives people and depends on authority; a leader delivers superior, sustainable results and lives by the company's values and practices. A

true leader is easy to recognize, because his or her people consistently deliver superior performance.

Looking at average revenue rate for the 4th quarter of 2007, we note that our commercial revenue was a bit more than four times greater than our Medicare revenue. We'll be taking a number of steps to add commercial patients and retain current ones.

We want to grow our physician relationships. That means recognizing and catering to their needs, which include convenient locations of dialysis facilities; an efficient dialysis staff; clean and well-maintained facilities; and open, honest, continuous communication.

And finally, we want to encourage our people to harness the power of lifelong learning and personal development. The power of knowledge and preparation. Of asking insightful and engaging questions. Of a positive attitude. Of building positive and trusting relationships. Of candor and discipline.

I invite you to read the comprehensive article about the Area Managers' Meeting inside this newsletter. I hope you'll find it interesting, informative—and most of all, motivational. We can succeed only through your dedication to the task, because growth is *everybody's* responsibility.

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4/24/08

## Top Area Managers Awarded Medals at AM Meeting

### *Zuga, Whichard win gold for outstanding leadership*

There was plenty of excitement at the Area Managers' Meeting, much of it centering on the 2008 FMS Area Manager President's Awards and Area Manager UltraCare Champion Awards. Both awards recognize "outstanding leadership at Fresenius Medical Services that serves as an example, inspiration, and leadership benchmark for FMS managers at large."

The President's Award is awarded to an FMS Area Manager "in recognition of outstanding quality and business contributions." It's open to any Area Manager who has been an FMS AM for at least one year and is responsible for inpatient, home, or outpatient care. The nominees were selected by a committee chaired by Mats Wahlstrom.

#### **"She makes a real difference"**

Winner of the President's Award Gold Medal was **Rhonda Zuga**, Area Manager for the South Business Unit. With a 22-year record of renal patient care, Rhonda currently manages five facilities and a large acute program, caring for 330 patients in the Jackson, Mississippi, area. She joined FMC in 1997 as a Clinical Manager and advanced to Area Manager in 2003. Every year since then, she has performed as one of the top five areas in the Business unit.

Among Rhonda's impressive accomplishments:

- In one of her clinics, she created a treatment adherence program that involved

patients, staff, and physicians. In the first month, missed treatment declined 75 percent.

- She served on the Patient Advisory Board of the NKF, overseeing the efforts of FMC for the local Kidney Walk. Speaking at a local high school, she recruited fifty students, who raised \$2,500.
- Once during each quarter, Rhonda has a Quality Day in each of her clinics, during which she and her staff review every patient's condition and needs. Not only does this process ensure that patients are well cared for; it also enables her to assess the staff's strengths and weaknesses.

RVP Jeff McPherson, who nominated Rhonda, commented that “not only has she delivered great results, she makes a real difference in patients’ and staff lives.”

**“She leads with honesty, integrity, and gracefulness”**

The President's Award Silver Medal went to **Phil Wilson**, AM from the Southeast Business Unit. Phil has been caring for renal patients for 29 years and currently manages two areas with nine facilities and an acute program for 577 patients in the Huntsville, Alabama, area. Since joining FMS in 1986, she has consistently demonstrated her abilities as a leader and a change agent.

“We all recognize her commitment to excellence and her desire to see everyone succeed,” said nominator Janice Sitzlar. “She’s a real professional who leads with honesty, integrity, and gracefulness.”

Four AMs were awarded Bronze Medals:

- **Balbi Godwin**, from the Austin Area, consistently ranks in the top five in her Business Unit and finished 2007 in third place. “Balbi is a strong leader who leverages the strengths of her team to help all the clinics,” says [*her nominator*]. “She leads by example, she embraces change, and she welcomes and uses new ideas and culture changes such as UltraCare.”
- The Northeast Business Unit’s **Dennis Himes** has been with Fresenius for over 20 years. Dennis recently played a significant role in helping to establish a new partnership with UMPC Health System by orienting UMPC staff to FMC policies, procedures, and quality goals. Demonstrating an open management approach, he keeps staff aware of what the competition is doing—and how we, as a company, are responding.
- With thirty years of dialysis experience, **Michele Rackley** has been a Fresenius AM since 1999. Michele consistently maintains her area’s standing among the top three of the Central Business Unit’s leaderboard. With one of the lowest staff turnover ratios in the CBU, she has fostered an open-door policy with her managers and facility staff, ensuring that issues are addressed before they become problems.
- “When you think of **Christine Seaton**, you think of commitment,” says [*her nominator*]. When RCG and FMS merged, Christine had to cover a large amount of territory in the Central Kansas Area, sometimes having to travel more than 150 miles to a clinic. After she became Area Manager in [*year*], retention increased from less than 50 percent to almost 83 percent by the end of 2007.

## “Living the UltraCare mission”

The UltraCare Champion Award is presented to one FMS Area Manager in each Business Unit in recognition of “living the UltraCare Mission with outstanding contributions to excellence in all that UltraCare represents.” Any AM who has been with FMS for at least one year and is responsible for outpatient programs is eligible for the award. Mats Wahlstrom and his committee selected one Gold Medal, one Silver Medal, and four Bronze Medal winners.

## “The quintessential team player”

This year’s UltraCare Champion Gold Medal winner is **Jim Whichard** of the Southeast Business Unit. Jim has been described as the quintessential team player, always willing to assist in any way and frequently volunteering before he is asked. Demonstrating his commitment to exemplary customer service, he routinely attends regular meetings with patient representatives at each of his facilities to address patient concerns.

Jim strongly believes that people make the difference; he’s committed to the recognition and appreciation of excellent performance. Accordingly, he begins every monthly management meeting with a review of the actions each of his managers has taken in the past month to recognize and appreciate the efforts of their staff. These meetings include not only the CMs but also representatives from other departments, exemplifying his belief in the team approach to care.

In nominating Jim, RVP Allen Mills noted that he has served as a mentor to new Area Managers. “His Area has an 87-percent staff retention,” Allen added. “All of his clinics are UltraCare certified and received a 2006 Center of Excellence

Award. It's no wonder that the Region management team considers Jim a peer leader."

### **"Dedicated and very loyal"**

**Ana Charves** of the Northeast Business Unit came away with the Silver Medal. Since joining Fresenius in 2004 as an Area Manager, Ana has compiled an impressive record in a few short years. Her Area, ranked 13th on the NEBU Leaderboard in December 2006, moved all the way up to first place in August 2007.

One of Ana's major strengths as an AM is her ability to develop a team environment by creating a strong unity between her clinics. "The facilities continually support each other," explain nominators BUP Donna McCarthy and RVP Monica Cobb. "When one facility is short-staffed, staff from another clinic are always there to help."

Bronze Medals were awarded to these Area Managers:

- The Abilene Area's **Jim Grohman** recently observed his 11th anniversary with FMCNA. "Everyone who works for him," says *[his nominator]*, "no matter where they are in the organization, has a feeling of importance and of being a vital part of his team." His Area ended the year Number One, out of the fifty areas in the SWBU, in both the 2006 and 2007 Leaderboard rankings
- **Cheryl Keely's** expectations, for herself and her team, are not just to achieve goal on all quality indicators—but to achieve all goals for all of our patients. Cheryl leverages the clinical expertise within her management team to drive

success in quality and finances. As a result, her area achieved first place in the overall Central Business Unit rankings for 2007.

- The year 2007 was unusually challenging for **Kathy Laws**, La Jolla Region/Area AM. When vast wildfires threatened life and property, Kathy stepped up to lead the local command center even as her own home was in imminent danger of burning. She organized emergency staffing, helped make decisions on potential clinic closings, and ensured that patients and staff were safe. In short, Kathy exemplified—and exemplifies—the UltraCare spirit.
- Described as “a role model and benchmark for the culture of UltraCare,” the South Business Unit’s **Bob Sine** manages six facilities in the Tamarac, Florida, area. With 17 years of service, Bob is known as a consistent leader with a passion for teaching that sets an example for all of his team members. “His calm demeanor and seemingly effortless handling of his area have been an inspiration to other managers,” says nominator Cindy Toombs, RVP.

Rhonda Zuga and Jim Whichard both received a crystal display piece and a \$3,000 check for winning Gold Medals in their respective categories. Both of these outstanding AMs, as well as all of the ten other medal winners, are to be congratulated for their significant contributions to our company’s success.

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