

## Larry Schrupp— The Home Infusion Delivery Driver Who Saved the Day

These days it's not uncommon for home and specialty infusion patients to receive their medications and supplies via common courier. Delivery drivers are often reserved for special circumstances, such as same-day deliveries to patients being discharged in the afternoon and rushing freshly compounded chemotherapy to an ambulatory infusion center or physician's office for immediate administration.

Larry Schrupp is one such "crunch-time" driver for Fairview Home Infusion in Minneapolis, Minnesota. But thanks to his warm and caring demeanor, Schrupp also makes regular deliveries to a handful of the provider's "high-touch" patients. Typically on service for the long haul, these patients have expressed discomfort with having a parade of different delivery personnel at their doors—such as one patient who is elderly and lives alone, and another who has severe facial disfigurement due to cancer. Schrupp, the recipient of several customer service awards, makes them feel comfortable. And, after



*Fairview Home Infusion delivery driver Larry Schrupp and patient Yvette.*

seven years, he has gotten to know many of them very well—well enough to know when something isn't quite right.

### A Sixth Sense

One of Schrupp's weekly deliveries is to Yvette, a parenteral nutrition patient living alone in the suburbs. The two have a routine where Schrupp carries the heavy IV bags inside and stocks her refrigerator. "We have our conversations," says Yvette of their visits. "He's here every week, so he checks on me."

After 17 years of complex illness, multiple surgeries, and extended hospitalizations, Yvette often experiences pain. "When I don't feel well, I have a whole different posture—my demeanor is different," she explains. "And Larry knows. He picks up on it."

Schrupp has asked the home infusion nurse to check in on Yvette from time to time when he thinks she's not feeling well. But just recently, he arrived at Yvette's house and immediately had a sense that something was markedly not right. Yvette, who he

**Editor's Note:** Alternate-site infusion providers are on a continuous journey towards achieving excellence. A path of quality care, paved with many examples of leadership and commitment—some highly visible, some not as readily apparent (but, nonetheless, deeply rooted and vitally important). Beyond the unmistakable center-stage roles played by home infusion pharmacists and nurses within our field, perhaps the most unexpected treasures for us all to discover and explore can be found in the stories of the skilled employees that work behind-the-scenes to make a home infusion company successful—the devoted "faces behind-the-scenes."

Could your business thrive without the knowledge, skills and experience demonstrated by the personnel in the warehouse, the technicians, intake staff, dietitians, drivers and other critical individuals who display the passion and caring for the patient through the work they do every day? In Faces Behind-the-Scenes, INFUSION recognizes and examines these indispensable faces behind-the-scenes!

says is very intelligent and usually engaging, was “off.”

“I asked her if she was okay and she said ‘yes,’” recalls Schrupp. “Some days she has a lot of pain. At first, I thought maybe this was just a bad day.”

Still vigilant, he continued unloading the delivery. And, as he prepared to leave, Yvette said, “Goodbye Jerry,” calling him by the wrong name.

“I went back into the house and noticed that her eyes were glazed over and she looked disoriented,” Schrupp continues. “I asked her again how she felt and told her I was concerned. She acknowledged that something wasn’t right, so I immediately called 9-1-1.”

Schrupp knew that Yvette keeps a packed bag at the ready because she’s in and out of the hospital so often, so he got the bag and remained with her until help arrived. “Larry stayed at my house until they came to get me and even locked the door as we left,” exclaims Yvette, who was taken to the emergency room and immediately admitted to

the hospital. “He made a good decision,” she adds, noting that she remained in acute care for three weeks following the incident.

“We are so thankful for Larry and his lifesaving actions. He has gone above and beyond many times,” says Jeff Prosch, R.Ph., Assistant Director of Infusion Services at Fairview Pharmacy Services. “This event shows how important a fully engaged team is to delivering superior patient care.”

### Person-Centered

“To this day, she thanks me for saving her life,” says Schrupp. “Anyone would have done the same thing.”

Yvette, however, doesn’t let him shrug off the accolades that easily. “This is heart!” she declares. “Larry is someone who cares—he has heart and soul,” she observes. “It’s part of his character. He is a genuinely caring person. This is not just a job for him.”

Going above and beyond, Schrupp truly saved the day for at least one patient. But his approach

to customer service makes a difference to many patients every day. Fairview patients frequently call the office to offer praise and appreciation, noting that they can count on him to make the delivery on time and help them when they are unable to unpack and store their IV medications appropriately. One patient called Schrupp a “ray of sunshine”—saying he always finds at least one kind thing to say to her each time he makes a delivery.

Schrupp’s authentic and caring approach to his work serves as a vivid example that being “person-centered”—no matter what role one may play on the team—is the key to high-quality care, and excellent customer service. “Old-fashioned customer service is hard to find these days with technology the way it is. It’s rare to build a relationship with people,” says Yvette, who has seen more than her share of medical providers over the past two decades. “I guarantee Larry treats every patient like he treats me—it’s just the way he is.” ■



Who’s working “behind-the-scenes” to make your organization great?

Share your stories and help us celebrate—and learn from—the unsung heroes of the alternate-site infusion community.

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