



MedCare values solid business principles

'The only thing worse than no business is bad business', COO Mastandrea says

BY JOHN ANDREWS, Contributing Editor

The undulating HME landscape is enough to cause motion sickness in even the best providers. It is already tough to operate in the black without having to deal with consolidation, drastically lower reimbursement rates and auditors constantly rifling through records.

If there is a stabilizing force in this tenuous industry, it's adherence to solid business principles, says Patty Mastandrea, COO of Greensburg, Pa.-based MedCare Equipment Company, first place winner of the 2015 HME Excellence Awards.

"Like many of our counterparts, we are facing an increasing demand for our products and services, while getting paid less for them," she said. "To make matters more challenging, we believe there will be a continuing need and focus on services provided in the home. So one of the key challenges will be, how do we meet this growing demand and provide our customers with quality products and timely service, while getting paid substantially less for it?"

Two of the three MedCare vision statement pillars resolve "to be a highly efficient, cost-effective operation" and "to increase market share and enhance financial stability." By methodically following the rudiments of solid business practices, while embracing new opportunities, a progressive HME company can succeed despite the obstacles, Mastandrea said.



Patty Mastandrea, COO



John Sphon, CEO

For instance, MedCare has been re-defining its role in the healthcare continuum over the past seven years by focusing its attention on working and aligning with local health systems to become an integral part of an accountable care organization. The key to attracting the interest of potential partners is metrics—primarily safety, quality, productivity, human development and financial performance, Mastandrea said.

"We track internal and external performance metrics on everything from OSHA recordables, customer satisfaction surveys, equipment delivery times, readmission rates to hospitals, employee turnover rates, Lean education, driver training, and monitoring monthly safety suggestions," she said.

Mastandrea says competitive bidding will be part of the company's strategy only if it shows commercial potential.

"We will evaluate the bidding process and respond accordingly based on what we think makes good business sense," she said. "One of our mantras has been 'The only thing worse than no business is bad business.'"

Overall, MedCare "has evolved pretty rapidly" with its business model, Mastandrea says, because the company has followed a disciplined approach in finding the right partners who share their vision.

"We try not to look too far ahead or get distracted," she said. "But we will continue to look to grow our business where, when and with whom it makes good sense to

do so." **HME**