

Next Chapter: Terri Graves

Terri Graves (practice administrator)

Terri Graves recently retired after many years as CRG's Practice Administrator. She and her husband, Steve, live in Greenwood, Indiana. We recently sat down to discuss her work at CRG and new plans for this next chapter in her busy life.

DP: How and when did you start working at CRG?

TG: I originally started in July of 1994. A friend told me about the open billing specialist position. I liked Dr. Julie Steck immediately. It was also a great pleasure to meet and work with Diane Widdifield, a school psychologist who was with CRG from the beginning. My favorite memory was realizing I would need training for the software I would need to use for this job. During our discussion about accepting the job, I requested that I have training for the billing software they were using prior to starting. Dr. Steck agreed and I attended three days of training prior to my first day on the job. I sat down Day 1 and was off to the races. By 1996, I had been promoted to Practice Administrator. In June 2003, I left CRG to pursue a life dream of obtaining my college diploma. I studied Creative Writing at IUPUI and also helped mentor courses there. I then returned to CRG in December 2007 to focus on intakes and marketing. That once again morphed into the Practice Administrator's role by February 2007.

DP: How has CRG changed over the years? What has stayed the same?

TG: CRG has grown to better serve clients and their needs. CRG's core values - its purpose and business model - have always been the same and strongly based on the team's values. I would sum up that model this way: CRG is client centered, with a focus on appropriate diagnosis and treatment, to promote each client's success.

DP: You have made many important contributions to CRG over the years. Which ones stand out as most memorable or enjoyable? What would you like your legacy to be here?

TG: I hope everyone who knows me would believe that I always put patients first. I always tried to have my colleagues in billing, the front office, even in management adhere to the CRG model. Plus, for a non-IT person, I did a good job helping colleagues with their IT issues. I have loved working with computers and the possibilities. This goes back to working at Anthem starting at the age of 19. When individual computers became the thing, I started out by learning DOS. Now that I think about it, I would hang out with the IT department on every job I've had.

DP: Compared to other behavioral healthcare practices, do you think CRG is unique in any way?

TG: I remember as far back as 1994, having great conversations with Dr. Julie Steck and Dr. Ernie Smith about what we all wanted CRG to be relative to the constraints imposed by the insurance industry. I asked Dr. Smith, "Do you believe your clients will see you regardless of what their in-network coverage permits?" We all felt, from patients' experiences and

comments, that the answer was, “Yes.” CRG has always believed in the importance of providing clients what they need to be successful vs. what will be covered by insurance. While some may say this is a risky business model, if the quality of care is high, it will be utilized. CRG families know this. I think CRG is unique in the value it has always put on accurate diagnostic work early on to guide treatment.

DP: Not to disrespect the men who work at CRG but, given this issue’s theme, do you think CRG’s culture in any way reflects its female workforce?

TG: When CRG was formed, there were an equal number of women and men at the helm. There have always been more female providers and employees. That said, I think the female leadership at CRG has been as equally impactful as the male leadership. Maybe the impact of its females has been the feel of CRG as family. The environment at CRG is warm, caring. I have never felt any gender or even “tier” bias at CRG. Everyone is treated with equal respect based on what they bring to the table.

DP: As you finalized plans for retirement, what kinds of emotions did you experience?

TG: It is difficult to leave a position after so many years. You have so many friends and enduring relationships, even with the clients. You feel a bit like you are bailing on them. However, it is exciting to look forward to a new adventure.

DP: What are some of your plans now for this next chapter in your life?

TG: I am working from home to assist my husband with his commercial real estate appraisal business. I continue to look for opportunities to cross off items on my bucket list (like a recent trip with family members to visit cranberry bogs in Wisconsin). I continue to enjoy annual experiences with my sisters and mom, such as our holiday shopping trip and lunch last Friday. Right now, I’m enjoying not having an intense road trip to make every day.

DP: Is there anything you’d like to say in this article to the clients and families who come to CRG?

TG: To both clients and CRG team members: Be a sponge. Absorb the opportunity to gain understanding and knowledge from your visits to CRG. There is so much beautiful knowledge here between clients, staff, and providers that you can apply to your life. So, again, when you go into a learning environment like CRG, be a sponge. Take it all in.