



# Profiles OF CARING

The care you need, the comfort you deserve.

3171 NE Carnegie Drive  
Lee's Summit, Missouri 64064

## Omega Health Care

Lee's Summit, Missouri  
816-268-4130  
816-268-4134 fax  
Aurora, Missouri  
417-678-0458  
417-678-0459 fax

## Sunflower Health Care

Stilwell, Kansas  
913-544-1104  
913-544-1105 fax  
Lansing, Kansas  
913-680-0800  
913-680-0804 fax

We encourage you to find out more about how Sunflower and Omega Health Care can make life better for your patients. Simply call the office closest to you or visit our website at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com).



VOLUME 1

# Profiles OF CARING

The care you need, the comfort you deserve.



NUMBER 1

## Helping patients and families: It's Bob Patterson's mission.

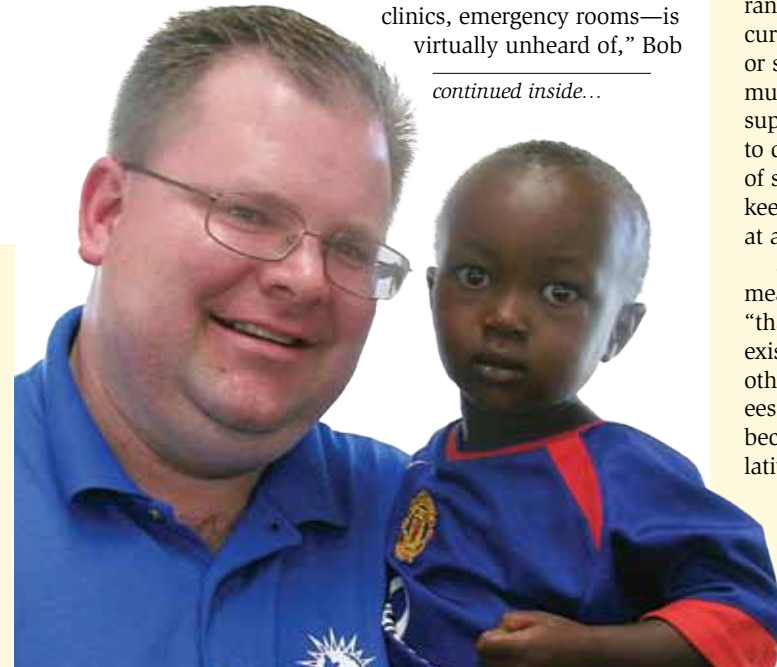
Whether it's in the comfortable suburbs of Overland Park or a remote region in Africa, Bob Patterson is dedicated to helping patients and families get the medical care they need.

As Manager of the Stilwell Office of Sunflower Health Care, an area hospice provider, Bob Patterson is the first point of contact with patients and families, and he prides himself in assessing their needs and putting them at ease with the care they will receive.

But, Bob's commitment to his fellow man doesn't stop there. The former assistant pastor and hospital chaplain steps outside most people's comfort zones, on his own time, to travel around the globe to places such as Uganda, where state-of-the-art medical care is notably absent. In this central African nation, the average life expectancy of its 23 million people is just 43 years.

"In rural and small-town Uganda, organized medicine as we know it—hospitals, staffed clinics, emergency rooms—is virtually unheard of," Bob

*continued inside...*



## A special kind of caring

### A letter from the president

Sunflower and Omega Health Care are relative newcomers on the Kansas City scene. We believe we fill an unsatisfied need in today's society: care that puts people first, ahead of profits.

At Sunflower and Omega we instill a pride in service that I don't think you'll find among our competitors. We encourage our staff to "go above and beyond" the call of duty.... whether it's running an errand, helping patients secure community resources or simply providing some much-needed emotional support. And, we strive to deliver that same level of service to physicians, keeping them in the loop at all times.

Simply translated, it means we'll rarely say "that's not my job." We exist to make life easier for others, and our employees enjoy working here because we give them the latitude to do just that.

Russ Rogers

## Bob Patterson, continued...

said. "When you go to a country that has a total lack of infrastructure in terms of health care, you really appreciate what we have here in America."

The 10-day medical mission trip, in May 2008, was sponsored by Operation Renewed Hope, a church-sponsored group out of Fayetteville, NC. The group transported about 40 doctors, dentists, nurses and nursing students to several remote towns, where they saw conditions ranging from skin rashes to malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS.

"We saw things that don't generally occur in the United States," said Bob. "There were unusual fungal conditions and skin rashes. We even saw two cases of elephantitis, a conditioned infection which grows multiple tumors on top of one

another."

"Other conditions were not so unusual, but had gone untreated and got worse," Bob explained. "They don't know how modern medicine can prevent and treat many conditions. All they know are the treatments, such as mud poultices, that have been

passed down from generation to generation."

Not unlike his front-line role at Sunflower Health Care, Bob served as patients' first contact in the special clinic in Uganda, where patients had hiked through mountains and jungles or traveled as far as 60 miles by bus to receive medical care. Some were political refugees from neighboring countries; others traveled with small children by their sides. With the help of

interpreters, Bob greeted patients and directed them through registration. When a serious condition presented itself, he made sure patients moved directly to physicians.

He said one of the toughest situations came when they had to turn away patients because they were scheduled for a clinic in another town. In that instance, they pledged to return and provide care again.

For some, it might have been a "never again" experience. For Bob, who was raised in Mexico by missionary parents, it was "a dream come true," and he hopes to return to Uganda on a future Operation Renewed Hope mission.

"I had read about and been fascinated with Africa since I was a kid, but it was much more than personal fulfillment for me. It was getting outside my comfort zone to help those who have very few others willing—able—to help them. I felt I was doing

something for people who truly appreciated it."

Bob says he feels the same way about his hospice patients. "When we go into a patient's home, we are there to help them through an experience that is totally foreign to them," he said. "They don't know anything about me or about hospice care. We familiarize them with hospice—and meet needs they sometimes didn't realize they had. That's something like what I felt in Africa."

Bob says the peace of mind and trust he and his hospice team provide helps to ease the pain in multiple ways, as did his work in Africa. And, from his viewpoint, it's a job whose rewards are measured in much more than dollars.

"If I were independently wealthy and didn't need a salary, I would still be doing what I'm doing today. I get that much fulfillment from my job."

For more information about hospice care or about Bob's medical mission, call (913) 544-1104. ■

## Medicare relaxes guidelines for hospice care

In recent years, Medicare has relaxed its guidelines for hospice care, expanding coverage for more patients.

The new guidelines allow physicians to qualify patients based on their assessment of the patient's condition and prognosis. Under the new parameters, Medicare provides hospice coverage for life-limiting illnesses with a 50 percent or greater chance of death, within six months, if the patient were to stop all treatment.

Nevertheless, according to Sunflower/Omega staff members, many physicians and potential hospice clients are not taking advantage of this expanded coverage.

"Medicare has many guidelines, and it takes a while for changes to be fully understood and adopted. The general public—and many health care providers—still believe patients must be close to death before hospice is covered by Medicare," said Monica Thieman, clinical director with Sunflower Health Care in Lansing, KS. "That simply isn't the case any longer."

In addition to providing care for more patients for longer periods, hospice care sometimes has another surprising benefit—helping patients improve so much they discontinue hospice care.

"Since we visit patients in their homes on a regular basis, we can monitor their progress more completely and, with the physician's input, make recommendations that help them function better" said Monica. "As a result, we sometimes have a patient who improves so much that, at least for the time being, we are no longer needed."

For more information about how hospice can help you give your patients the care they need and the comfort they deserve, contact your local Sunflower or Omega office at one of the locations listed on the address panel. ■



## Our Clients are saying...

"Dear Omega Hospice,

Thank you so much for helping take care of my nana. It was especially wonderful how Carol came and gave her baths and how Brenda came and stayed up with her at night. Thank you also for the flowers that you sent, I loved the carnations. Thank you so much.

Sincerely, Noah (age 10)

Read more about what our clients are saying at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com)

