



Susan Rather and Jeff Tews are the owners of BrightStar Healthcare serving the greater Dane and Rock Counties in the Madison Region. BrightStar provides private duty in-home care, from companion care to skilled nursing services. They are just developing the side of their business that will do Medical Staffing (temporary and permanent placements) for facilities and clinics throughout Southwestern Wisconsin.

BrightStar Healthcare is a franchise business, and “second career” opportunities for Jeff and Susan. While the franchise system has helped them jump start their business, it is their commitment to compassionate care and exceptional service that has made the business a success. Their core values are rooted in the firsthand knowledge of how difficult it is to find quality professionals to help seniors remain independent in their homes, and how tough it is to manage care when families are busy or geographically removed. They opened their Madison office in December 2006, and a satellite office in Janesville in July 2007. With a current staff of over 150, they have served over 400 families, and provided temporary medical staff for more than a dozen facilities.



Susan and Jeff know that the key to providing great in-home care is the quality of the staff they select. They recruit and hire experienced and dedicated caregivers. They’re developing a culture where employees are compensated well, continuing education and process improvement are top priorities, and staff are empowered to provide great care.

In their staffing business, they will establish BrightStar Healthcare as a dependable and trustworthy source of health care professionals. They will target hard-to-recruit positions and offer a wide variety of healthcare professionals as temporary, contract, temporary-to-permanent and permanent placement services. BrightStar will give industry clients the confidence that qualified, professional personnel, including medical assistants, phlebotomists, nurses and nurse aides, therapists, etc. will be carefully screened and evaluated for quality, competence and attitude. Jeff and Susan are sure they will be able to attract medical professionals to Wisconsin as a great place to live and work.

Background: Susan has a Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology degree from University Wisconsin – Eau Claire and a Master in Human Relations from Oklahoma University. She had 25 years of working in medical facilities and laboratories in Alabama, California, Colorado, and Germany and most recently as the Laboratory Manager at the Veteran’s Hospital in Madison. Jeff has an undergraduate and MBA from the University of Minnesota and 30+ years in corporate positions at US West, Qwest and US Bank. Jeff and Susan met during a bike ride in Minnesota to support Multiple Sclerosis, and Susan eventually persuaded him to relocate to Wisconsin, where they married in 2005. The following year, Jeff took advantage of a reorganization at US Bank and decided to look for an opportunity running a small business. When they heard about BrightStar they decided it was a perfect opportunity to help families, create jobs, and establish a business in this growing industry.