

# CAREER SPOTLIGHT

## Healthcare

### Certified Nurse Aide • Physical Therapist Assistant



#### Meet Certified Nurse Aide, Odessa Sulkowski

Odessa Sulkowski is a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) at the Grandvue Medical Care Facility near East Jordan. Sulkowski provides direct care to residents and assists them with activities of daily living. She says the job is physically and emotionally challenging and she has to be able to **think on her feet** because each day is different. Sulkowski says a lot of times she just has to “think, think, think and go, go, go, without a lot of time to sit down.” Grandvue’s director of nursing says “**teamwork is essential**” for CNAs. She says they also need to be **adaptable** and have **good communication skills**.

*“My favorite part of being a CNA is going home at the end of the day knowing that I helped someone.”*

—Odessa Sulkowski, Certified Nurse Aide,  
Grandvue Medical Care Facility

#### Meet Physical Therapist Assistant, Amy Barkley

Amy Barkley is a Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) at Northern Michigan Regional Hospital in Petoskey. In her job Barkley helps patients with their rehabilitation after things like surgery or a stroke. Barkley says you need to be **adaptable** to be a PTA because every patient is different. She says you also need **good communication skills** to help patients understand their therapy and to encourage them if they get frustrated. The hospital’s manager of inpatient therapy says PTAs need **critical thinking skills** and the ability to “**work collaboratively** with other members of the healthcare team.”

*“I love working with the patients and seeing the progress they make from the start to finish for their therapies.”*

—Amy Barkley, Physical Therapist Assistant,  
Northern Michigan Regional Hospital

#### About Healthcare Careers

Combining medical technology and the human touch, the healthcare industry diagnoses, treats, and administers care around the clock, responding to the needs of millions of people—from newborns to the terminally ill. In northern lower Michigan, job opportunities exist requiring higher skill levels than they have in the past.

*“The days of the little old lady in the wheelchair that just needed a little bit of assistance to button a button, those days are gone. Now we have very acutely ill residents that are admitted to the facility from hospitals. So we do have to demand more of our staff; they have to have more skills.”*

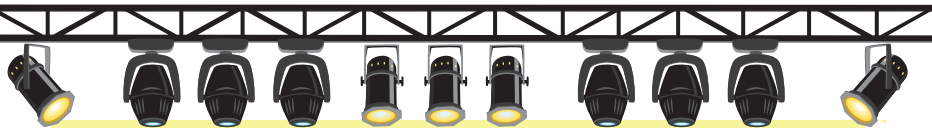
—Carol Timmer, Director of Nursing, Grandvue Medical Care Facility.

*“We have to demand more of our staff and they have to have more skills.”*

#### Career Skills for the New Economy

- Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving
- Collaboration & Leadership
- Adaptability
- Initiative & Entrepreneurism
- Effective Oral & Written Communication
- Accessing & Analyzing Information
- Curiosity & Imagination
- Personal Accountability

Based on information from *The Global Achievement Gap* by Tony Wagner (2008, Basic Books, New York) and adapted from *The Seven Survival Skills for Careers, College, and Citizenship*, Tony Wagner, Harvard University.



The Career Spotlight is available online, providing more in-depth information & videos:

[nwm.org/career-spotlight](http://nwm.org/career-spotlight)



Networks  
Northwest  
Talent / Business / Community



Career Spotlight is a project of the  
Northwest Michigan Talent District Career Council