

SMALL
company

Spinal Dynamics of Wisconsin Inc.

When Cindy Marti was deciding three years ago whether to open a physical therapy clinic or accept a position at another health care setting, she asked her three sons — then ages 10, 8 and 6 — for their input. The two older boys concluded that she should accept the job offer because it would mean more money and less work.

But when her youngest asked which would be more fun and she said starting her own clinic because she could make it a great place to work, the older boys changed their minds and the recommendation to launch the business was unanimous.

Spinal Dynamics of Wisconsin opened its doors in 2003, specializing in the treatment of the spine. After working in the physical therapy field for nearly two decades, Marti was clear about the kind of culture she wanted to establish in her clinic.

"When you do the right things — when you do right by your people — you succeed," Marti said. "It was integral to the kind of culture I wanted to work in, and it was integral for my business plan to succeed."

An important aspect of the culture is allowing staff enough time to deliver excellent patient care by allocating one full hour for each patient visit. The private practice can afford to provide extra patient attention because it has low management expenses, Marti said.

"Because we have a flat (management) structure, people can have the time they need with each individual patient," she said. "That makes for much less burnout."

"I am their boss, so to speak, but I spend 80 percent of my time in the trenches with them," Marti said. "I treat patients side-by-side with them and I think that establishes a lot of rapport."

In a field marked by shortages of quality therapists and health care's challenging

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Cindy Marti
President

fiscal and political environment, keeping quality employees can be a struggle. Marti's track record in recruiting and retaining employees speaks to the clinic's environment.

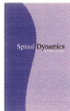
"Treating patients in pain is a serious business," Marti said. "It's a serious job, but we have fun doing it, and I think that is why we have the endurance for it."

— Denise Dorn Lindberg



SCOTT PAULUS

From left, John Hojnacki, Cindy Marti and Linda LaBorde.



2300 N. Mayfair Road, Wauwatosa

Type of business: Outpatient physical therapy clinic that specializes in the spine

Year founded: 2003

Employees: 14

President and founder: Cindy Marti

Special employee benefit: an important aspect of the clinic's culture is allowing staff enough time to deliver quality patient care

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