

# FORUM

The Stieglmeyer-Group's company magazine



## For excellent care in Eastern Westphalia

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### **Markus Wendler, Managing Director of PVM, strives to supply people in need of care in the best possible way**

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### **Mr Wendler, please introduce yourself.**

Together with my colleague Ilja Skora, I am Managing Director of PVM GmbH in Bielefeld. PVM stands for "Patienten Versorgung Management" [patient care aid supply management]. I started out in 1986 by training as an orthopaedic technician here in Bielefeld. So, I've been firmly anchored in health care in the Eastern Westphalia region for more than 30 years. Five years later, I moved to another medical equipment retailer and built up a new branch. I've been working with Ilja Skora since this time, with him on the operational and me on the sales side. In 2001, we started our own business: PVM. The name "Patienten Versorgung Management" sets out our philosophy: We don't want to simply deliver a bed and a wheelchair to the patient; we also want to help him deal with the formalities beforehand and with the subsequent long-term support issues. If an elderly person moves out of hospital to be cared for at home, for example, we offer help with discharge management to all those concerned. We always keep in contact with relatives, GPs, care services and care homes. We've built up an extensive and robust network in Bielefeld. This will become even more important as the care sector crisis pushes us further into shortage management. The social services already have to phone as many as 10 care service providers to organise the care of one person.

## **How can you and PVM help in this situation?**

We help to balance out the shortage of care staff to a certain extent by providing technically optimised care equipment in the apartments. Many care services now refuse to take on more complex responsibilities if the resident doesn't have a height-adjustable care bed or a bath lift. The personnel would otherwise be unable to undertake the work without damaging their own health. For us, it's important that our services are there when they're needed. When PVM is involved, carers can rely on having the necessary structures in place.

## **Which Burmeier products do you work with?**

We have care beds and bed inserts from the Dali, Economic and Lippe ranges: amounting to around 2,200 items in total. At the moment, there are 40 beds in the warehouse that are awaiting their next deployment. All of the other beds are with people in need of care, within a radius of approximately 50 km around Bielefeld. We used to cover a larger area, but have completely withdrawn from this. I'd rather go into depth in the core area than cover a greater distance more superficially. Even the route to Dortmund along the A2 motorway could be risky where tight schedules are concerned. The demand – and the problems – are large enough in Eastern Westphalia with its population of 1.2 million. We've been working with Burmeier beds for decades. They're notable for their robustness and long service life. The fact that your company is geographically close is also an advantage. The Burmeier lorry with new beds drives by here every two weeks. I also have a strong affinity with your staff when it comes to care policies – and we've already fought a few battles together.

## **Do you have any requests of Burmeier?**

The new Dali, which we are currently testing in the field, is already very promising – due to its click-system safety sides, for example. Naturally, everything has to be digital and smart these days, but often the issue of simple handling for users and installers is forgotten. With the Dali, this seems to have been very successfully covered. We have five customer service technicians who usually travel alone and will find that their load is lightened by the Easy-Click system. The euphoria regarding apps and digital assistance systems, on the other hand, will take a bit of time. All too often today, the 75-year-old wife is caring for her 85-year-old husband, and they are not always familiar with smartphones. This topic is still important for the future, though. When it comes to digital aids, we would like to be able to assess the condition of the beds that are out in the field without leaving our headquarters. If a customer calls and says: "The bed doesn't move any more", the first thing we have to ask is whether the plug is plugged in or if the socket is connected up to the power supply. If we were able to "call up" the bed, this would be a great help. We're discussing this with Burmeier at present.

## **What projects do you have lined up for the future?**

We're currently working on setting up care consultation. The billing of services, either via the health insurance or care insurance, is so complicated that many people fail to understand it. If an elderly person falls but is then discharged from hospital after just a few days, the relatives have to arrange all these things very spontaneously. Municipal advisory services are often too slow and difficult to reach, particularly for older people. This is why we are currently working on offering our customers such an advisory service. We visit them at home and talk to them so that we can support them in the best way possible in these often difficult hours.

**Thank you very much for talking to us.**