The Unexpected Gift of Hospice

From the President of the Board

When I heard the title of our WITE “Toledo Stories” documentary was The Unexpected Gift of Hospice, I was struck by just how perfect that description is: Unexpected because most who use hospice are surprised by how positive the experience is and Gift because Hospice truly is a gift. A gift of comfort, time, reflection and peace; not just for our patients, but for the entire family. I personally have received this gift and can attest to the extraordinary care my family received from Hospice of Northwest Ohio.

A Gift to Remember

Sometimes the best gift you receive is the one you didn’t even know you wanted or needed — but it’s the one you remember. I believe Hospice of Northwest Ohio is that gift. I hope you will join me by continuing your support of our vision and mission.

Sincerely,

David Schlaudecker • President, Board of Trustees

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A HISTORY OF COMPASSION

That level of care and expertise is what consistently sets us apart from other hospice programs. Since its founding as the first licensed hospice in our state, Hospice of Northwest Ohio has been a non-profit organization with a history of innovation and compassion. Guided by our mission to provide not only specialized medical care, but emotional and spiritual care as well, we are truly transforming the way people view and experience the end of life.

It is because of your generosity that we are able to continue developing innovative programs to meet the changing needs of our community. Since our mission was formed because we identified a need for a home-based palliative care program. And our Special Care Unit will open later this year because we recognized that some of our hospice patients have unique care needs that require a different environment. With your financial support we have been able to create these gifts for our patients, their families and our entire community.

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Our Mission

Hospice of Northwest Ohio provides specialized medical, emotional and spiritual care to people of all ages – living with any end-stage illness – in Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. Equally important, we also provide support and education to their families and caregivers.

Our Vision

To provide care and education that positively transform the way people view and experience serious illness and the end of life.

Hospice of Northwest Ohio

Judy Seibenick, RN, MOL
Executive Director

PERRYSBURG CENTER / HEADQUARTERS
30000 East River Road, Perrysburg, OH 43551

TOLEDO CENTER
800 South Detroit Avenue, Toledo, OH 43609
MICHIGAN OFFICE
8132 Secor Road, Lambertville, MI 48144
419-661-4001 • 734-568-6801
www.hospicenwo.org

Making the Right Choice for Care

Carolyln Lucas described herself as “artsy and optimistic” even in the face of endometrial cancer that had metastasized to her spine. So, it is no wonder that she continued to live independently, surrounded by her art supplies and poetry, while undergoing cancer treatment. It was only when the pain became unbearable and spinal decompression surgery left her bedbound that she chose to receive care at Hospice of Northwest Ohio’s inpatient center.

Always realistic about her future, Carolyn understood that if she was not able to walk again, her goal of returning home would not be attainable. During her five-week stay, the experts at the inpatient center were able to manage her pain, but Carolyn could not walk and could not return home alone.

With the help of Hospice, Carolyn moved to a nursing home. The Hospice staff made the transition easier for her. Eventually she adjusted to the notion of not going home and came to enjoy being surrounded by her art and the knowledge that her sister could visit anytime. According to Carolyn’s sister Jan, “The relationships that Carolyn was able to form with the Hospice staff including the nurse, social worker, hospice aide and volunteer truly provided her with a continuity of care and, in time, these caregivers became friends.”

Carolyn passed away in December, six months after choosing hospice care. Jan shared in a note shortly after, “Thank you so much for all the support you gave to Carolyn in her last months and thank you for all the support you gave me as I tried to understand and adapt to everything that was happening.”

2018 Annual Report

Hospice of Northwest Ohio
Experience More from the Most Experienced.
Barbara Eikost Honored

A year ago, 175 medical students and residents rotated through our training program. These future doctors found great value in the experience and “feel better prepared to serve patients and families in the future.” We also provided continuing education to 1,100 practicing nurses and social workers. For the third year we partnered with Mercy Health – St. Vincent Medical Center to provide a full-year fellowship for a physician who became a specialist in hospice and palliative care.

The 13th Annual Dr. Sharon Erel Lecture attracted its largest ever crowd in 2018. More than 425 community members and healthcare professionals learned about dementia support and care from nationally recognized expert Teepa Snow. In addition, more than 50 staff and administrators from area nursing homes learned about legal issues and guardianships from local elder-law attorney Dean Hogan on our annual long-term care administrators’ educational event.

Outreach and education to community groups such as churches, senior centers and resource fairs touched more than 2,500 people in 2018. Topics ranged from caregiving to managing stress, the importance of palliative care and—ancient things in between! •

Meeting a Changing Need

During our 38-year history, we have had to address the unique needs of hospice patients with dementia, thought disorders, brain metastases or injuries that cause similar changes in cognitive function. In 2018, our board of trustees approved a plan to make Hospice of Northwest Ohio the first hospice in the area to offer an expertly staffed, 5-bed, secure unit for terminally ill patients requiring special care due to symptoms and behaviors associated with their illness.

This Special Care Unit is another example of Hospice of Northwest Ohio’s leadership, innovation and devotion to our mission. We will be the first area hospice to provide this much-needed unit for the terminally ill who have special care and safety needs. Renovation of existing space at our Toledo Center will begin in early 2019. Once complete, the unit will be maintained by donations, private insurance and Medicare / Medicaid. Currently, there is an urgent fundraising campaign underway to fund this renovation. •

Volunteers Are the Heart of Hospice

Our volunteers enhance the care we bring to patients and families in so many ways. Whether they are spending time with a patient at a nursing home, assisting with personal care in the inpatient centers, providing a much-needed break for a caregiver in the home or helping out in a number of other ways, their contributions are vital to our success.

In 2018, more than 225 adult volunteers contributed nearly 12,000 hours of their time toward patient care. Their efforts were valued at $921,000. Countless additional hours were spent working in the garden, sewing comfort pillows and lap quilts, providing office support, making supportive bereavement phone calls and representing us at educational events. •

Sincera™ Reach Increases

Reaching more people, our Sincera Supportive Care and Symptom Relief program managed pain and other symptoms for 524 seriously ill individuals in 2018 — an increase of 9% over 2017! The program leads the way as the only Joint Commission credentialed community-based palliative care program in the region. Partnerships with hospitals, cancer centers and physician offices have allowed us to reach patients sooner in their illness. In surveys, 97% of respondents rated Sincera a 5/5 — meaning they strongly Agree that the program’s recommendations and treatments were effective in treating pain and symptoms. •

Sharing the Vision

Hospice Executive Director Judy Seibenick was one of three community leaders who spoke on the “Power of Vision” at the annual meeting of the Employer’s Association, held in June. She was in great company, as the keynote speaker for the event was Scott Hamilton!

Judy serves as leader to more than 375 hospice staff members and ensures that our vision and mission are front and center every day. She continually seeks opportunities to spread the word about the importance of palliative care and hospice in the health care continuum and seeks new ways to advance the cause of hospice on both the local and national level. •

Finding Hope in Healing

While a hospice is required to provide grief support to all families who have had a loss, Medicare does not directly reimburse hospice for this service. Our bereavement programs are funded solely by the generosity of donors. Always provided free to anyone in the community, we offer the area’s most comprehensive bereavement programs.

Through a combination of one-on-one counseling, support groups, phone calls and mailings, our credentialed bereavement counselors, along with specially trained volunteers, assisted more than 2,500 people realize hope after a loss in 2018 — 40% of those who sought our help did not experience their loss on our Hospice program. Additionally, the team helped prepare 200 of our Hospice families for their loss through anticipatory grief counseling. •

Volunteers Make an Impact

After 30 years of use, it was determined that the footbridge over the pond at the Perrysburg Center needed to be replaced. In 2018, the family who made the original donation to construct it after 20 years of use, it was determined that the footbridge over the pond at the Perrysburg Center needed to be replaced. In 2018, the family who made the original donation to construct it.