

HSHS Celebrates National Hospice And Palliative Care Month

by Kelly Barbeau

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SPRINGFIELD, IL – Throughout the month of November, HSHS Home Care will be joining organizations across the nation in recognizing National Hospice and Palliative Care Month (NHPCM). This year's NHPCM theme is “meeting you where you are.”

For more than 40 years, hospice has helped provide interdisciplinary, supportive care to millions of people, allowing them to spend their final months wherever they call home and surrounded by their loved ones. Hospice teams craft plans of care that ensure pain

management, therapies, and treatments all center on the patients' and their loved ones' goals and wishes. Hospice care also provides emotional support and advice to help family members become confident caregivers and adjust to the future with grief support for up to a year.

“At the heart of hospice is meeting patients and their loved ones where they are during difficult times when support is needed most,” said Ben Marcantonio, COO and Interim CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO). “National Hospice and Palliative Care month recognizes the crucial role hospice and palliative care providers play in caring for their communities year-round.”

Each year, over one million Medicare beneficiaries receive care from hospices across the United States. When a patient is not eligible for hospice care, they may benefit from community-based palliative care, often offered by hospice providers. Palliative care is patient and family-centered care that optimizes quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering. Palliative care throughout the continuum of illness also involves addressing physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual needs and facilitates patient autonomy through access to information and choice.

“Receiving a life-limiting diagnosis can be devastating and confusing. We want families to know that when they need us, HSHS Home Care will meet them where they are,” says Shawna O’Dell, RN, MSN, FACHE, HSHS Home Care vice president of post acute care. “This means providing care wherever a patient might call home as well as providing education and support to empower caregivers.”

Throughout the month of November, HSHS Home Care will provide information about hospice care through social media and health fairs in the communities it serves in Illinois and Wisconsin.

HSHS Home Care provides hospice care to communities in 29 counties in eastern and western Wisconsin and 34 counties in central and southern Illinois. In the Green Bay area, HSHS Home Care partners with Unity Hospice to provide services. More information about hospice, palliative care, and advance care planning is available from the HSHS Home Care website at hshshospice.org or on NHPCO’s CaringInfo.org.