



Saint Anthony's offers Hospice volunteer training

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ALTON – Area residents interested in becoming a Hospice volunteer are invited to a special training program sponsored by **OSF Saint Anthony's Hospice**, on September 18 and 19, from noon to 4 p.m. each evening in the **Auditorium of OSF Saint Clare's Medical Office Building**, 815 E. Fifth Street.

“We are looking for special people to share time with someone who is dying.” said Alanna Mansfield, Regional Home Health and Hospice Manager. “If you can spend some time with talking, listening or just holding a hand, you’re the type of volunteer we’re looking for.

The Cassella Hospice Volunteer Training program for OSF Saint Anthony’s Hospice shares a hospice philosophy of providing care for the terminally ill person and their loved ones in the comfort of their own home or home-like surroundings. The training program is named in tribute to longtime area residents, John and Janet Cassella, who left an estate gift to OSF Saint Anthony’s Hospice in 2011.

Hospice care allows the terminally ill person to live out their last days among the people and things they love as comfortable and pain free as possible.

The family of a Hospice patient recently shared, “My father was never lonely after we admitted him to hospice. Between the volunteers, nurses, social worker and chaplain, he had company every day and sometimes several times a day.”

OSF Saint Anthony’s Hospice offers two programs to help individuals in their final days. “The *No One Dies Alone* allows us to match up volunteers with the family and/or patient, based on their individual preferences and desires to participate,” Mansfield says.

During the volunteer training sessions, volunteers will be trained in all aspects of hospice including confidentiality, spirituality, communication skills, understanding of diseases and conditions, pastoral care, and bereavement.

Volunteers work in collaboration with other members of the OSF Saint Anthony's Hospice team to meet the needs of the patient and their family. Volunteers may provide support and companionship for patients and families as well as helping with other needed tasks, some of which are listed below:

- provide companionship for patients and families
- provide emotional support for patients and families
- remain with the patient during scheduled periods of absence of the primary care person
- write letters for the patient or family
- listen
- play cards or games with patient or family members
- read to the patient
- watch television with the patient
- provide TLC
- fulfill other needs identified by the patient, family or volunteer
- help with clerical duties and/or fundraising in the OSF Saint Anthony's Hospice office

Bereavement Services are also offered because the caring does not stop with the death of the hospice patient. For at least a year following death, the OSF Saint Anthony's Hospice bereavement staff and volunteers provide supportive contacts designed to assist in coping with grief and adjustment to loss.

Light snacks will be available at the training. To register or to learn more information, please call 618-463-5636.