

HDH News & Notes

Wishing you love and peace during the holiday season 



Helping Your Loved One Celebrate the Holidays

There isn't much help for people who are caring for a person who is at the end-of-life. The question is: How do we celebrate the last Thanksgiving and Christmas of a loved one?

Talk with the patient. This may seem obvious but it is surprising how often this isn't the first step. Patients know what is most important to them. They know how much energy they have so they can make choices that are good for them. This holiday season is about them so they get to choose. If they want to go out to look at the lights, or

bake cookies for their family, or go to a special worship service, they will most likely not be able to do any of these things without your help. One of your gifts to them is making their last celebration possible.

Maybe you will need to move the season up. Don't wait to have a family Thanksgiving – do it now. Change the menu to one which is appropriate for their diet as a way to show solidarity with them.

If your loved one is suffering from Alzheimer's or Dementia, then talking with them may not give you any insight. Choose or create events in which your loved is not over stimulated.

Even if all the family comes, make sure the patient is in a quiet corner with just a few visitors at a time and have an escape plan for when the patient becomes anxious or agitated. Introduce people, even family members, with their name and relationship. Reminisce about long ago events rather than trying to share up-to-the-minute news.

There are so many things which have changed and one way of coping with all of them is with a sense of humor. Don't forget to laugh! This last hint may make all the difference you need to make this bitter-sweet time a real celebration.

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Ten Facts about Hospice Care You may not Know

At some point, a person with a life-limiting illness will hear about hospice care and wonder if he/she will need these services. What everyone should know about hospice care is that it is a choice. In fact, all of hospice care is about choices.

To make good choices, you have to have good information. Talking with your physician is the best way to get the information you need to make choices about your care. Here are some things you might want to think about and discuss:

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide superior and compassionate care to our patients and their loved ones, so that they may complete their journey on this earth in comfort, dignity and harmony.

Some people mistakenly think hospice care is just about dying...that hospice is the place you call when there's nothing more that can be done. Nothing could be further from the truth. Hospice helps patients and families focus on living.

Hospice care brings comfort, dignity, and peace to help people with a life-limiting illness live every moment of life to the fullest. It also reaches out to provide support for the family and friends who love and care for them.

Last year, 1.56 million dying Americans were served by the nation's hospice providers. Yet, there are some important facts about hospice that people don't know. And this may be keeping people from getting the best care possible, when they need it most.

1. Hospice is not a place; it's high-quality medical care that helps the patient and family caregivers focus on comfort and quality of life.
2. Hospice is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, most insurance plans, HMOs, and managed care plans. Fear of costs should never prevent a person from accessing hospice care.
3. Hospice serves anyone with a life-limiting illness, regardless of age or type of illness.
4. Hospice serves people of all backgrounds and traditions; the core values of hospice—allowing the patient to be with family, including spiritual and emotional support, treating pain—cut across all cultures.
5. Research has shown that the majority of Americans would prefer to be at home at the end of life's journey—hospice makes this possible for most people.
6. Hospice serves people living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.
7. Hospice patients and families can receive care for six months or longer.
8. A person may keep his or her referring physician involved while receiving hospice care.
9. Hospice offers grief and bereavement services to family members and the community.
10. To get the most out of what hospice offers, it's better to have care for more than just a few days.



"Our Care speaks for itself"

Hospice Care Helps Patients and Families Focus on Living

November is National Hospice/Palliative Care Month. A time for raising awareness about the compassionate care that hospice provides to patients and families coping with serious and life-limiting illness. One of the most important things that people need to learn is that hospice helps patients and families focus on living.

This surprises some people.

Many Americans mistakenly think that hospice is a place you go when there's nothing left to be done to treat an illness. That couldn't be farther from the truth.

For well over 30 years, hospice care has improved the quality of life for people facing an illness that cannot be cured – and their family caregivers.

The hospice care team, made up of skilled professionals and trained volunteers, provides expert medical care to

keep patients comfortable and able to best enjoy time with loved ones. The hospice team answers questions, offers advice on what to expect, and helps families with the duties of being a caregiver. The team also provides emotional and spiritual support for the entire family.

Research from the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization has found that families report a better quality of life for a loved one who received hospice care.

There is additional research that further surprises people. Studies have shown that hospice and palliative care may prolong the lives of some people who receive care; and research demonstrates that hospice saves Medicare money. But those are not the reasons for a family to choose hospice services. With the help of hospice, patients and families alike can focus on

what's most important – enjoying life together and living as fully as possible. That's why you choose hospice.

This important message lasts beyond the month of November and is important all year round.

If you or a loved one are facing a serious or life-limiting illness, the time to find out more about hospice care is right now. There is more that can be done.

For more information, contact us at 541-882-1636.

Meet Denise Roskos, RN

Denise Roskos graduated from Oregon Health Sciences University with a bachelor's degree in nursing in 1994. With over 15 years of nursing experience, her preferred area of practice has been geriatric nursing. "I have a special place in my heart for our older folks".

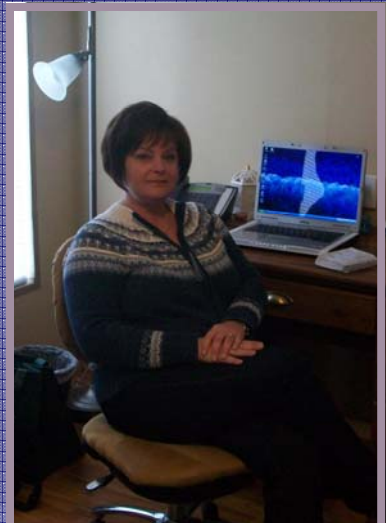
Denise has worked with High Desert Hospice for 4 years and feels that she is allowed to be the kind of nurse she always wanted to be. "We are allowed to spend enough time with our patients so that we can meet emotional needs, become a part of our patient's families and truly connect during a very confusing and life changing experience".

It is always amazing to hear about the clinical care that our nurses provide to patients in their homes. It takes a lot of experience and education to provide

that care, but nurses sometimes surprise us with talents we didn't even know they had.

Recently we decided to remodel our nurses' office. Between seeing patients, charting and talking with physicians, Denise helped our Social Worker, Bob, tear out the old carpeting, texture and paint the walls and lay a new laminate floor. She came back from the store one morning with fabric and reupholstered the chairs. The shelves received a new paint job and once the blinds were replaced, she added new curtain valances. The results were amazing and our nurses and aides now have a lovely new place to call home.

When not working at High Desert Hospice, Denise enjoys hunting with her husband and tending to her chickens.



Bereavement Support Workshop



A bereavement support workshop is being offered for anyone experiencing grief through the death of a loved one. The group will consist of workbooks and open discussion and will be lead by Louise Leshner. "Finding a new joy and honoring grief" is our focus. Those further along in their journey are welcome to share experiences that may bring hope to others.

The 1 1/2 hour sessions will be held on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month starting at 11:00 am at our office at 2894 Greenspings Drive.

There is no charge for the workshop.

Please call for more information.

High Desert Hospice LLC
2894 Greenspings Drive
Klamath Falls, OR 97601
541-882-1636

www.highdeserthospice.com

Patient Comments

I would highly recommend High Desert Hospice to anybody who needs care. They did a wonderful job taking care of our mother.

High Desert Hospice saved me. I couldn't have taken care of my Grandma without them and their wonderful advice.

Just knowing you were there was so comforting and the extra efforts you made to give us documentation for work leave was amazing. The quality of your care was palpable. They kept me as sane as was possible and allowed him to die easier, with dignity, and at peace.

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Sponsors:

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the Good Shepherd
541-883-3458

- o O'Hair & Riggs Funeral
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Volunteers Corner

Volunteers are an essential part of the hospice philosophy of care which recognizes that dying is not just a medical event but a personal one as well. Our volunteers are important members of an interdisciplinary team working to "de-institutionalize" the dying experience and provide a more humane system of care for the dying and their families.

Volunteers in hospice find it personally gratifying, intellectually stimulating, and emotionally meaningful to assist those in need at a critical point in their lives.

There is a wide range of oppor-

tunities available for High Desert Hospice volunteers which include:

- Support for patients. This can include visiting, reading, taking walks, writing letters, bringing in music, supervising visits with pets, even massage therapy for volunteers with the necessary skills.

- Respite and support for family members. Volunteers can assist with shopping or household maintenance, or allow family caregivers the opportunity to take care of necessary errands and get some time away from the house. Family members also appreciate a visit from a compassionate friend who understands what they are going through.

- A volunteer with clerical skills can serve by helping in the office with simple administrative duties.

**For information on how you can help, please contact
*Karen Little.***