



Your Contributions

AT WORK

2017

Each year, Family Hospice and Palliative Care is the grateful recipient of gifts made in memory of those for whom we have cared. Friends and loved ones choose to contribute to Family Hospice in recognition of the compassionate care received by our patients throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania. Your support is greatly appreciated and makes a difference for those in our care. Please read on to learn how these resources are used. While insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid cover the costs of most of our services, there are many “extras” that make the end-of-life journey just a little bit easier for those who travel the path. This year, the projects listed on these pages are being supported by gifts from our donors.



ANGELS ON CALL FUND

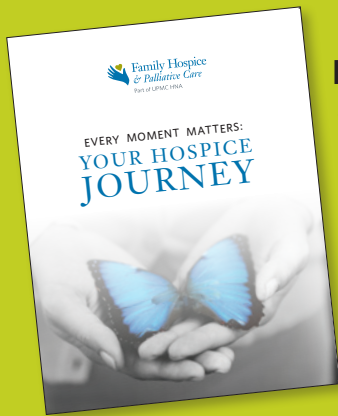
Our Angels on Call Fund was created in 2015 with a generous gift of \$1,000 from a Family Hospice staff physician. The Fund provides support for special needs of our patients who are economically disadvantaged, and for whom a special gift, experience, or service will make a positive difference in the life of the patient and/or their caregiver.

Here are some unique examples of how the Angels on Call Fund has impacted our patients and families:

- Support to purchase materials to enable a patient's son to construct banisters inside and outside the patient's house so that his dad could remain at home.
- Gasoline gift card and funds to kennel a pet so that parents could travel to Pittsburgh to visit their 14-year old son who was in hospice care.

- Baby monitor to enable a daughter staying in an upstairs bedroom to hear her mother, a hospice patient and fall risk, move about in her first-floor bedroom.
- Support for an elderly couple, both of whom were on hospice care, to travel to their son's home for Thanksgiving. The father was unable to travel by car and needed to be transported by ambulance. Since the trip was not deemed “medically necessary”, there was no source of reimbursement for the trip. The Angels on Call Fund made this family reunion possible.

This is an ongoing charitable mission that welcomes additional gifts from our donors. While most wishes supported by the Fund are modest, thousands of dollars each year are expended to grant these special requests.



PATIENT ADMISSION NOTEBOOK

This year contributions enabled Family Hospice to develop a new patient admission book, which serves as a comprehensive resource for our patients and their caregivers. The spiral-bound notebook offers a compilation of various resources designed to support the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient and caregiver(s) broken down into detailed logical sections. The notebook will walk the patient and caregiver(s) through every aspect of the end of life in order to help them all to be as prepared as possible when death occurs. The objective is for this resource to address the needs of the patient and their entire support system and provide the tools needed in this inevitable stage of life.

BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

The death of a parent or loved one can be life altering for children who are often referred to as the “forgotten mourners”. Studies show that children often suffer more from the loss of parental support and engagement than from the death itself. Family Hospice helps to lessen some of this impact through additional services to our families.

Charitable resources fund supplies to utilize with children prior to the death of their loved one that encourage conversation regarding the child’s overwhelming emotions. Expressive art projects and recordable children’s books for capturing a loved one’s voice will be used to help children prepare for the impending loss. Other purchases provide caregivers with information on how to support grieving children. Grief resources in Braille and large print aids in education and support. Our donors help us to sustain these services to our patients’ loved ones both before and after a death has occurred.



CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

While many clergy and lay ministers are called upon to provide spiritual care to the terminally ill, few have been equipped with the necessary training. Recognizing this gap in ministry preparation, most seminaries and religious denominations now require their candidates to undergo clinical training at a certified clinical pastoral education (CPE) center. Family Hospice and Palliative Care’s CPE program will be the only site in Western Pennsylvania to offer training in end-of-life care to clergy seminary students and lay ministers.

Donor support funds this program, which ensures that our pastoral caregivers and pastoral counselors,

and future hires, meet the highest standards for working as pastoral caregivers in healthcare institutions. Interns who move on to lead their own congregations will be better prepared to minister to their members with terminal illnesses. Each of five interns will receive supervised training in pastoral care for those at end of life and will provide 300 hours each of direct patient care. This will offer additional spiritual support for our patients and their families, especially during evenings and weekend hours.

Dr. Christopher Hughes, Hospice Team Physician, and Rev. Dr. Edward Pehanich, CPE Supervisor, discuss the upcoming training program.



ADDING NEW BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS

Family Hospice bereavement specialists offer various supportive services to those who have experienced loss. Often following the death of a loved one, caregivers, friends, and family members find it helpful to receive support in a group setting. Family Hospice recognizes the importance of reaching out to those who are grieving and offers a schedule of ongoing support groups. These meetings are free of charge and open to anyone in the community, regardless of whether their loved one was cared for by Family Hospice.

The overwhelming majority of bereavement support groups are for “general loss”, which do not address the needs of bereaved persons who have suffered specific and sometimes unique losses. Often a death resulting from drug overdose, suicide, or HIV/AIDS is challenging to discuss amongst other bereaved persons. Additionally there very few support groups that address the death of a child - either a young child or an adult child - or the death of a young spouse or partner.

Donor support is being used to hire a part-time social worker to assess special bereavement group needs and to facilitate services to these constituencies. When implemented, these groups will allow the participants to directly relate to others who have suffered a similar loss and to learn healthy coping skills for how to manage their grief.

SPECIAL GIFTS FROM OUR FRIENDS

The Friends of Family Hospice is a very special group of women who annually raise funds through a Treasures Sale held in the fall. Throughout the year, our Friends collect gently used, good quality furniture, lamps, jewelry, artwork, collectibles, books, and other household items that are sorted and priced throughout the summer, and sold at a weekend sale each October. With the proceeds from the sale - supported by so many of our neighbors in the community who come to shop - the Friends choose to fund projects that enhance the care provided to our patients and their family members.

This year’s projects include the following:

- Pins for our “We Honor Veterans” initiative to gratefully recognize our hospice patients who are veterans for their service to our country
- Futons for our Lawrenceville Inpatient Center, enabling family members to rest comfortably while they keep their loved one company throughout the night
- Shower bed in which staff can roll the patient into a large shower stall
- Support for the purchase of updated furnishings for our family café in the Mt. Lebanon Inpatient Center



You can support the Friends of Family Hospice by patronizing the sale, scheduled this year for October 14-15 at the Mt. Lebanon facility and by donating un-needed items to the wonderful assortment of treasures to be sold.



Berenice Hooton, Friends of Family Hospice volunteer, displays one of the donated items for sale at a previous Treasures Sale.

EXPANDED ACCESS TO HOSPICE CARE

Medicare rules require patients to forego curative treatment in order to receive hospice care. This is widely regarded as a “terrible choice” between curative and comfort care, leading some patients to put off access to hospice. As a result, many patients enroll in hospice much closer to the end of life, when in fact, earlier hospice access could relieve pain and suffering and provide support to patients’ family members and other loved ones. The consequence is lost opportunities both to improve patients’ and families’ quality of life and to decrease healthcare costs. With donor support Family Hospice is launching an innovative program that will enable patients to obtain extended access to interventions such as dialysis, IV cardiac medications, radiation, and even chemotherapy, rather than not admitting or discharging patients who choose to continue these therapies.

RELIEVING PATIENTS’ PAIN AND SHORTNESS OF BREATH

Earlier this year, an anonymous donor made a significant gift, enabling Family Hospice to purchase a portable ultrasound machine. This technology can assess swelling caused by fluid in the abdomen and/or chest. The build-up of fluid can cause pain, shortness of breath, and swelling in the upper body as a result of the progression of various chronic conditions. Often the symptoms can be relieved once the cause is correctly determined.

This ultrasound machine will allow many patients with these symptoms to be diagnosed and treated in the Inpatient Centers, avoiding transfers to the hospital. Additional resources from our donors are providing support for training our doctors and nurses in the use of this new technology. Funds are also covering the cost of supplies needed to perform this procedure. The portable ultrasound technology will initially be used at the Family Hospice Inpatient Centers in Mt. Lebanon and Lawrenceville with plans to also use the technology for home-based patients in the future.

THE CAROL SAYERS VOCKEL FUND FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTEER EDUCATION

This named fund was created in 2015 in honor of one of our longest serving volunteers, Carol Sayers Vockel. As a passionate volunteer, founding member of the Friends of Family Hospice, and committed donor, Carol wanted to see resources donated in her name used to support the ongoing education needs of Family Hospice volunteers, as well as activities that serve to educate and inform the general public about the importance of hospice as an option for those approaching the end of life. Resources have been used to host guest speaker events, as well as outreach events for area clergy. As a leader in hospice care in Western Pennsylvania, Family Hospice has a commitment to help educate, inform, and lead on end-of-life issues. Funds from the Carol Sayers Vockel Fund support this important goal.

If you are interested in giving to Family Hospice there are several ways in which to do so.

- You may give of your time, joining with hundreds of other people in becoming a Family Hospice volunteer, or by joining with the Friends of Family Hospice who conduct fundraising and community awareness efforts on our behalf. Call Nick Petti at (412) 572-8806 for more information.
- To make a financial contribution, you may use the envelope enclosed with this newsletter and respond with your check, cash, or credit card information. Alternatively, you may give online at FamilyHospicePA.org. Click the “Donate Now” button.
- If your civic group, faith community, or club raises funds for nonprofit causes, we would be pleased to be a recipient of your charitable efforts. Contact Christine Jamison, Special Events Coordinator, at (412) 572-8812 who can help you with your fundraising activity in support of Family Hospice.
- If you are interested in making an estate or other planned gift, please contact Lynn Helbling Sirinek, Director of Development, at (412) 572-8874.

Your gifts of time, talent, and treasure enable us to provide the most compassionate, comprehensive care possible to our patients and those who love them. Thank you for your ongoing support.