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PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



National Hospice/Palliative Care Month

Southwest, Michigan, November 6, 2008 - November is National Hospice/Palliative Care Month, a time when professionals and volunteers work to raise awareness of this important care.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization reported that 1.4 million patients were served hospice providers last year. These hospice providers helped patients and their family caregivers live as fully as possible. Hospice providers ensure that people coping with a life-limiting illness will live with dignity, comfort, and compassion.

“Throughout our lives, all of us encounter difficult and challenging situations. Most of us can remember someone who helped during those times--a grandparent, a special teacher, even a stranger who became a friend,” states Linda Beushausen, Hospice at Home President & CEO. “Hospice programs help our neighbors live with dignity and comfort. Hospice and palliative care programs provide pain management, symptom control, psychosocial support, and spiritual care to patients and their families. They also serve as important sources of information about care options,” continues Beushausen.

“When families think of the care their loved one received with hospice care, they think of the compassion on the face of their hospice caregiver as she or he made their loved one more comfortable, or the smile on the face of the volunteer listening to an old family story or joke,” commented Beushausen. “National Hospice/Palliative Care Month provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate these services in our community.”

Facts you need to know:

1. Hospice is not a place but a special kind of care focusing on relief of pain, symptom control, and spiritual and emotional support. Care goes out to the patient and family caregivers.
2. Hospice is not about “giving up” but instead focuses on quality of life, making the wishes of the patient and family caregivers a priority.
3. The majority of hospice care takes place in the home, where the person can be surrounded by family and familiar settings. Yet, inpatient services are available if symptoms cannot be properly attended to at home.
4. Hospice costs are covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and by most insurance programs and HMOs.
5. The expenses of all medicines related to the life-limiting illness are covered under the Medicare Hospice Benefit.
6. Hospice provides support and caregiving training to family caregivers in the home.
7. Bereavement support is available to anyone in the community through Lory’s Place.
8. The most common statement made by families who chose hospice for their loved one is, “we wish we had known about hospice sooner.”

Hospice at Home is the non-profit community hospice focusing on the patient and family regardless of the patients' diagnosis, treatment choices, life expectancy, or ability to pay. It provides quality care to people adjusting to living with a serious illness, to people facing death, to people anticipating the death of a loved one, or to people healing their grief after the death of a loved one. Hospice at Home places an emphasis on the emotional, social, and spiritual needs of those who need care and those receiving support services. Serving Berrien, Cass, Van Buren, and Allegan Counties, the care is coordinated by a team of physicians, nurses, home health aides, social workers, spiritual care counselors,

bereavement coordinators, and trained volunteers. Extending this care, Lory's Place, a bereavement and education center that builds hope and strength for every grieving family, is available to anyone in Southwest Michigan or Northern Indiana.

For more information about Hospice at Home or National Hospice/Palliative Care Month, call 269-429-7100 or 1-800-717-3811, or go to www.hospiceathomecares.org.

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