

# Above & Beyond...

Your source for news and information to take our collective care to the next level



Becky Hertzog

Dear Senior Living Colleague,

Hospice & Community Care strives to ensure that all its patients and families receive top-quality care and comfort at end of life and have open communication with all those involved in their plan of care. Our ongoing quality initiatives and communication strategies are designed to help your residents and their families, as well as your staff.

In September 2022, our team leaders began making welcome calls to all our new patients or their families within four days of admission onto hospice care. The purpose

of the calls is for team leaders to introduce themselves and the team, provide a point of contact, and to increase connection with patients and families to gain a better understanding of family dynamics. As a result, we are addressing concerns in the moment more quickly and helping provide a smooth transition onto Hospice service.

We use concerns shared with us from our patients, families, and contracted providers to identify areas in need of improvement. Concerns help us identify breakdowns in our process and evaluate how we can improve our care. We welcome your staff to let us know when processes are not working so we can improve our services and our communication with your facility.

This month, we unveiled the Hospice Handbook, chock-full of vital information for patients and caregivers. The handbook covers everything from what to expect during care to symptom management, from how to use equipment to care in senior living facilities. It also introduces the after-death survey process and reinforces the importance of reaching out to Hospice staff with any concerns.

If you have any questions or service concerns, please contact me at (717) 735-8719 or [bhertzog@hospicecommunity.org](mailto:bhertzog@hospicecommunity.org).



Scan to view the Hospice Handbook.

Becky Hertzog  
Director of Quality and Compliance

## Hospice & Community Care Embraces Dementia Friends Initiative



Hospice & Community Care provides specialized dementia care for patients and families with loved ones in various stages of the disease. Quality of life is the foundation of the hospice philosophy and studies show that patients with dementia and their families can benefit greatly from the care and support provided by a palliative and hospice approach.

In early 2023, Hospice & Community Care began participating in the Dementia Friends initiative created by the Alzheimer's Society. According to [dementiafriendsusa.org](http://dementiafriendsusa.org), by helping everyone in the community understand what dementia is and how it affects people, each of us can make a difference for people touched by dementia. To become a Dementia Friend, Hospice staff participate in a one-hour training that covers five key messages about dementia and touch on what it is like to live with dementia. "The goal is to give our staff more information about dementia care and a way to interact in a more positive way with people living with dementia," shared Donna Wilkie, Co-Chair of Hospice & Community Care's Dementia Resource Team.

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## Signs Your Resident is Nearing End of Life

Our goal is to increase support to our residents and their families on Hospice services as death is near. Please call us at (877) 506-0149 if you notice any of these physical or behavioral signs that your resident may be actively dying.

- ❖ Less able to arouse/minimally responsive
- ❖ Inability to speak
- ❖ Noisy respirations, unable to clear secretions
- ❖ Inability to swallow
- ❖ Increased apnea
- ❖ Open mouth/jaw drop or mandibular movement with breathing
- ❖ Decreased urine output
- ❖ Lower blood pressure (loss of radial pulses)
- ❖ Increased heart rate
- ❖ Delirium
- ❖ No po intake, sips

### **Dementia Friends Initiative** *continues*

In addition to the Dementia Friends initiative, Hospice & Community Care's staff also receive specialized training in caring for people with dementia. Our team includes nurses who are specialized in dementia care, including certified geriatric, palliative and hospice care nurse practitioners. Later this year, members of our Dementia Resource Team and some Hospice staff will become Certified Dementia Practitioners.



## Palliative Care Futurist: Matching Care to Our Patient's Needs

*featuring* Diane E. Meier, MD, FACP, FAAHPM, Founder, Director Emerita and Strategic Medical Advisor, Center to Advance Palliative Care

**Friday, September 29, 2023 • 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.**

### **Hospice & Community Care**

**685 Good Drive Lancaster or via Zoom**

Join us to learn the similarities and differences between hospice and palliative care; identify patients appropriate for each service; recognize the outcomes of palliative care for patients, families, clinicians, and health systems; and identify the essential characteristics of high-quality palliative care services to assure the highest quality of care.

There is no cost to register.

This program is funded by the Charles L. Deardoff, MD Medical Education Endowment Fund. To register, go to <https://www.eeds.com/live/112389>.

## Education for You and Your Residents – *Making Your Wishes Known*

**This program explores the reasons planning for future health care is so important.**

Elements of advance care planning are discussed, as are suggestions for sharing your wishes with others. Completing an advance directive using the **Five Wishes®** booklet as a guide will also be explored. This program is ideal for your residents in independent living, as well as your employees.

Contact Karen Stauffer, Community Educator, at [kstauffer@hospicecommunity.org](mailto:kstauffer@hospicecommunity.org) for more information.



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