

www.fghospice.com
(334) 834-9800
540 Clay Street
Montgomery, Alabama

National Issues in
Palliative Care:
Quality Partners
Initiative

Faith and Grace
Sponsors
Camp Bluebird

Volunteer
Appreciation
Dinner

Oral Histories:
Preserving
Our Stories

Is Hospice Right
for Your Family?



IS HOSPICE CARE THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOUR FAMILY?



Hospice care, a form of palliative or pain-management care, was developed in the later part of the 20th century to address the needs of patients for whom curative therapies are no longer beneficial. Hospice patients can have any terminal diagnosis including (but not limited to) cancer, heart, lung or liver disease, dementia, stroke,

Alzheimer's, or frailty and decline due to old age. Our nation's hospices are the leading providers of care to patients with AIDS.

Most don't know that hospice patients are never turned away because of an inability to pay. Most hospice care is paid for by Medicare or private insurance, and anyone who qualifies for Medicare Part A is eligible for complete hospice coverage. Said Andy Duncan of

the NHPCO, hospice care saves the Medicare program an average of \$2,300 per patient. "Given that hospice has been widely demonstrated to improve quality of life of patients and family members... the Medicare program appears to have a rare situation whereby something that improves quality of life also appears to reduce costs." But is hospice care right for your family?

Continued, page 2

NATIONAL ISSUES IN PALLIATIVE CARE: QUALITY PARTNERS; STRONGER, TOGETHER

This summer, hospice regulation and accountability will change when Medicare releases its 2008 Conditions of Participation for Hospice Care. To aid hospices in the transition, the NHPCO has launched a national Quality Partners initiative to improve standards of care in the industry. Faith and Grace is proud to be one of the hospices dedicated to a higher standard of palliative care participating in the NHPCO program.

"Quality Partners provides opportunities for the development of new self-assessment and data col-

lection tools, performance measures, national support and education for hospice assessment and data collection efforts, and a forum for sharing ideas and best practices," said Andy Duncan of the NHPCO. "Recognizing that strength is found through partnerships, NHPCO is committed to working with state hospice organizations and individual hospice programs to promote excellence throughout the hospice community."

The ten-part initiative includes guidelines on patient and family centered care, ethical behavior and

consumer rights, clinical excellence and safety, inclusion and access, organizational excellence, workforce excellence, compliance with laws and regulations, stewardship and accountability, and performance measurement. A detailed assessment questionnaire challenges participating

Continued, page 4



FAITH AND GRACE HOSPICE, INC. SPONSERS CAMP BLUEBIRD FOR CANCER PATIENTS AND SURVIVORS

Hospice is right for your family if:

...you or your loved one has a terminal illness with a prognosis of six months or less.

...you are concerned about pain and its management.

...your family can designate a primary caregiver.

...you need a support system of dedicated nurses to help provide adequate care and communication with your physician.

...you want social and spiritual support, or bereavement counselling to help your family through a difficult time.

...you are concerned about the cost of hospitalization and prefer to remain at home.

There was lots of laughter and love shared at Children's Harbor on Lake Martin as campers prepared to leave Camp Bluebird, an annual camp for adults living with cancer. Held this year from April 22 through 24th, the camp was for many campers an opportunity to relax and enjoy fellowship and share encouragement with other cancer patients and survivors.

Over the three short days, the campers were treated to a series of fun crafts and activities with a "Clown-in' Around" theme. In addition, campers enjoyed



Cont: Hospice Care

Hospice is only appropriate for patients with terminal illness. Patients who improve in hospice care or whose diagnosis becomes chronic rather than



Nancy Oliver, CNA, and Susie Peagler.

a tour-by-boat of Lake Martin and participated in the annual Camp Bluebird birdhouse construction project. Campers

also enjoyed an instructional demonstration of Tai Chi by the Alabama Taoist/Tai Chi Society.

Dr. Keith Thompson of the Montgomery Cancer Center gave an educational talk on oncology research, and encouraged the campers to look forward with hope to the many exciting trends and developments in cancer care. Campers spoke enthusiastically about their own hopes for the future throughout the week, and the positive attitude of hope was contagious.

During "Happy Hour," JoAnn Erhardt, a social worker with Faith and



Grace Hospice, Inc. led the campers in a discussion of the importance of hope in the healing process. "Our emotions are controlled by our thoughts and behaviors, so a positive attitude will result in feeling better, and feeling healthier." That, the campers agreed, was the spirit of Camp Bluebird.

The highlight of the week for many of the campers was the Family Night costume party. Campers donned rainbow-colored clown wigs, and painted their faces for a rollicking party which included karaoke. Campers and their

Continued page 4

terminal are discharged and return to curative therapies. The hospice team evaluates the patient's case at regular intervals to determine if the patient is appropriate. For more information on hospice care, please visit nhpco.org and fghospice.com.

Now is the best time to learn more about hospice care and ask questions about what to expect. Although end-of-life care

may be difficult to discuss, it is best for loved ones and family members to share their wishes long before it becomes a concern. This can greatly reduce stress when the time for hospice becomes apparent. By having these discussions in advance, uncomfortable situations can be avoided. Instead, educated decisions can be made that include the advice and input of loved ones.

SNAPSHOTS: OUR VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DINNER



Above: Rev. Mark Loudermilk blesses the hands of Kelly Rawlinson. The Rev. blessed each volunteer and gave them a special wooden cross.



Right: Faith and Grace social workers Tom Searcy and JoAnn Erhardt serve dessert.



Above: Nurse Angie Crew serves rolls to volunteer C.W. White.



Polly Kranzusch, Peggy Price, Mildred Rousch enjoy catching up.



Volunteering
call (334) 834-9800
and ask to speak to
Gloria Burton

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT: PRESERVING OUR STORIES

Faith and Grace Volunteer Dick Gamma recently received a very special assignment. A veteran state archivist and history buff, Gamma was asked to serve the patients of Faith and Grace Hospice, Inc. by implementing a system for recording and archiving

their life histories. "Many of our patients truly represent the greatest generation," said Volunteer Coordinator Gloria Burton, "and we are thrilled to offer them an opportunity to record their perceptions of the events of their lives."

The staff will make tran-

scripts of the histories available on the organizational website after July 1st, and many will be submitted to a National Archive. To learn more about this exciting project, or to volunteer your time and talents, please visit www.fghospice.com.

VOLUNTEER STUDENT GROUP SURPRISES PATIENT FAMILY BY CLEARING AWAY MOTORIST TRASH

Samuel Spears, a World War II veteran and Faith and Grace patient, was surprised this April when a group of nine students from Montgomery Academy gathered on his remote country road to clear away years of trash, debris, and inconsiderate dumping on

a private road that leads to his home. "It's just a good place to dump garbage without being seen," said Gloria Burton, who described the layers of mattresses, clothes, television sets and yard trimmings as an unfortunate mess. While the students worked

all morning, the job was not nearly complete. Volunteers from Landmark CoC Firehouse Ministry returned on May 28th to collect four loads of garbage, and more remains. To pitch in and help clean up this mess, please call and ask for Gloria Burton.

Opportunities for
Volunteer Service:

Patient/Family Care

Office Support

Special Events

Bereavement

Professional Services

Individual Expertise
in art, music, or any
other skill you'd like
to share

Volunteers receive a
complete orientation
and documentation
of hours served.

cont: Quality Partners hospices to consider how their organization measures up in more than 1000 indicators. In addition, participating hospices pledge to uphold the six aims described by the Institute of Medicine.

Quality Partners provides hospices with a robust framework for conducting quality assessment and performance improvement activities. As will be required by the Medicare proposal, all hospices must have a mechanism or a framework in place that identifies their program's strengths and weaknesses, and which allows the hospice to take action geared towards performance improvement.

Through the ten components of quality that are the basis of Quality Partners, participating hospices will have the framework and the tools needed to continually assess, monitor, and improve the quality of care and services their hospice provides.

"The changes mean that hospices will have greater flexibility in determining how to best address their own specific challenges in providing quality care," said Faith and Grace Director Maggie Thompson. "We are excited to have this opportunity to examine and refine our services in a way that best serves the needs of our community."

cont: Camp Bluebird families shared stories until late in the evening, when the night sky was lit up with a breathtaking fireworks display by the AT&T Telecom Pioneers.

The next morning, campers gathered for a final time on the dock at Children's Harbor to honor and remember friends and family who have fought cancer in the past. Counselors dropped a beautiful vine wreath in the lake and helped the patients one-by-one to the edge, where they placed a flower in the water at the center of the wreath. The moving ceremony helped to remind everyone that, like hope, memories are always with us.

Faith and Grace Hospice, INC. is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization.

Jerome Belser, RN
Case Manager

Gloria Burton,
Volunteer Coordinator

Angie Crew, RN
Case Manager

JoAnn Erhardt,
Bereavement Services

Rosa Lee,
Patient Care Assistant

Allison McEntire,
Outreach Coordinator

Nancy Oliver,
Patient Care Assistant

Brenda Pringle,
Office Manager

Helen Sandy, RN
Case Manager

Tom Searcy,
Social Worker

Maggie Thompson, RN
Hospice Director

Dr. William von Taaffe,
Medical Director

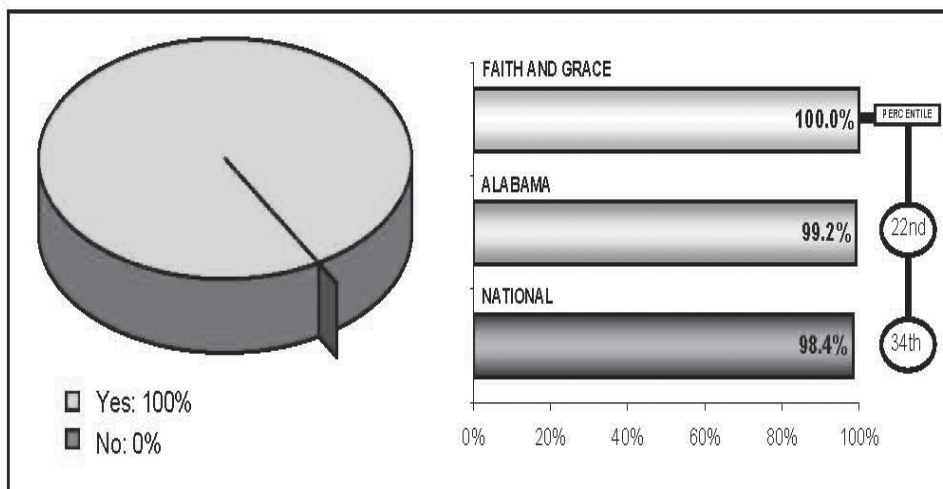
Rev. Lisa Winston,
Chaplain

THE RESULTS ARE IN! NHPCO SURVEY DEMONSTRATES 100% FAMILY SATISFACTION WITH FAITH AND GRACE HOSPICE

NHPCO FEHC REPORT SUMMARY FOR FAITH AND GRACE

Quarter 1, 2008

Would the families of former Faith and Grace Hospice, Inc. patients recommend this hospice to others? (G3)



The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization collects data quarterly from participating institutions. The above results were reported in May, 2008.

A caring partner to patients, families and physicians.