



Journey

FALL 2008

Vol. 2, Issue 2

The quarterly newsletter of
**Family Hospice
and Palliative Care**

Help Us Save Our Journey...

On the evening of August 26, Family Hospice & Palliative Care held a “Community Celebration in Honor of the Medicare Hospice Benefit” and to seek our community’s assistance to save the Medicare Hospice Benefit. The Celebration commemorated the accomplishments and successes that patients and families have been able to experience through the Medicare Hospice Benefit, which Congress enacted in 1982. For 26 years now, seniors have had an entitlement to hospice services through Medicare Part A and Congress has strongly supported the Medicare Hospice Benefit and has consistently vocalized, “No cuts will occur to the Medicare Hospice Benefit.”

In the last *Journey* Newsletter, I discussed the potential “bumps” in our hospice journey, which symbolized the proposed federal administration cuts to hospice providers’ reimbursement. On August 1st, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced through regulation that it will cut Medicare hospice reimbursement rates. These new cuts will go into affect October 1, 2008. **This rule would cut hospice reimbursement by more than \$2.3 billion. Average hospice reimbursement would be reduced from current levels by more than 4.5%, but in many areas the reductions will be as high as 12 to 15%.**

Believe me, this is no longer a “bump” but an ever-deepening “pot hole.” Hospice providers receive a per diem every day for each patient on their hospice program. The per diem for Adams County is \$126 per patient per day. If the patient is on hospice services for 30 days, the hospice will receive a little over \$3,800. From that \$3,800, the hospice must pay for the hospice team (visits from the nurses, hospice aides, social workers, and chaplains), and additional services they may need, such as massage therapy, physical/occupational therapy, speech therapy, dietary consultations, and bereavement support. The hospice provider must also cover all medically-necessary expenses that are related to the terminal diagnosis, which include medications, medical supplies, durable medical equipment, labs, diagnostic testing, treatments, procedures, and hospitalizations.

So how will these cuts affect hospice providers?

According to a recent Med PAC (a commission established by Congress through the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 to study and evaluate Medicare programs) finding, the National Median Margin for hospice is 3.4% and with such a thin margin, a cut in rates will put undue pressure on providers of this high quality end of life care. As Medicare represents 80 to 85% of a hospice program’s revenue, these cuts for some hospice providers could result in hospice closures, reduced patient and family services, and reduced patient access. The cuts would mean less money to care for patients at a time when

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Do you have questions for our doctors? Send your questions to oreeves@fhpc-in.org or mail to Family Hospice and Palliative Care, 265 W. Water St., Berne, IN 46711.

What Diagnosis for Hospice Care?

Sometimes people wonder if a person has to have a cancer diagnosis in order to receive hospice services. It's a natural question, as it used to be that the majority of hospice patients had cancer. But the intent from the beginning of hospice—25 years in this country—was that people with any “terminal diagnosis” could be eligible for hospice care. We all die eventually and we die of many different causes – many “terminal illnesses.” Any terminal illness is eligible for hospice care.

Family Hospice presently cares for patients with various cancers, also people with terminal heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, dementia, and a variety of other terminal conditions. Even people who have no terminal disease, but who are simply failing and “wasting away” can receive hospice care. We call this “Adult Failure to Thrive” or “General Decline.”

So just remember, any reason for a dying process could qualify for hospice care.



Dr. Bernie Wiebe
Medical Director
Board Certified in Family Medicine and in Hospice and Palliative Medicine

What does Palliative Care offer to individuals diagnosed with Dementia?

We need Comfort-Focused symptom management in patients with Dementia. A patient with Dementia may have apparent distress: restlessness, confusion, sleepiness, changes in activities, etc., and commonly may not be able to tell us what they are feeling. Pain to some degree is very common in patients with Dementia. Total Pain involves the physical types of pain plus emotional, social, financial, and spiritual components, which in some degree is in all the patients and families facing Dementia.

Medications are generally given with hopes of helping, but no medication helps everyone. We know, though, that medications or combinations of medications can actually add to side effects or to “not feeling well.” This is a more difficult problem if the patient cannot tell us how they are feeling. Trials of reducing or adding certain medications may be needed to try to determine if the presumed benefits do outweigh apparent side effects. In other words, does the patient do better, worse, or is there no change when a medicine is added or discontinued. Medications and non-medication interventions might help the patient function better for a time, but we don't have the medications that can reverse or stop the overall progression of most Dementias.

Palliative Care stands, in the above context, offering medication trials and other interventions that attempt to improve the patient's and family's comfort and quality of life as we try to live as best possible with and in spite of this and other “ills” of this world.



Dr. Roger Lemmen
Palliative Care Director
Board Certified in Neurology, in Pain Management and in Hospice and Palliative Medicine.



800-355-2817

www.fhpc-in.org

Services of Family Hospice and Palliative Care are provided through a collaborative commitment of Adams Memorial Hospital, Caylor-Nickel Foundation and Wells Community Health Services Foundation.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Bringing hope,
comfort and dignity
along life's final journey

Coming Soon... *Touching Lives* Magazine

Arriving soon will be our first edition of *Touching Lives* magazine. This new publication communicates how hospice and palliative services can assist you and your family through the journey of life. With this publication, we hope to create a better understanding and awareness about hospice and palliative services within our community. When receiving this publication, discover our journey and enjoy!

*"When
someone you
love becomes a
memory, the
memory becomes
a treasure."*

Tree of Hope

Family Hospice & Palliative Care is pleased to announce plans for our second annual commemorative Tree of Hope.

We invite you to join us on December 6, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. as we decorate and illuminate the beautiful evergreen tree located in front of our office at 265 W. Water Street, Berne, Indiana. Please take this time with us during this holiday season for reflecting and sharing some of your memories as we commemorate loved ones. Light refreshments will be served following the tree lighting.

Commemorative Ornaments may be purchased with a donation to Family Hospice & Palliative Care in the amount of your choice. We will personalize the ornament with your loved one's name and you may place it on the tree during our ceremony. Or, if you are unable to join us, we will place your ornament on the tree for you to stop by and see at your convenience. The Tree of Hope will remain illuminated throughout the holiday season.

We encourage you to purchase your ornaments in advance by completing the form below and returning it to us with your tax deductible donation. We will have the ornament ready for you the night of our tree lighting. To purchase ornaments the night of the event, please arrive at 4:30 p.m. so we will have time to personalize your commemorative ornament prior to the event. Ornaments will also be available for purchase at our office Monday thru Friday from 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. through December 23, 2008.

If you have questions about the Tree of Hope celebration or your donation, please contact our bereavement professionals at 800-355-2817. We hope to see you on December 6th!

Donor Name _____

Phone _____

Donor Address _____

Donation in Memory of _____

We will attend the tree lighting. # attending _____

Sorry we cannot attend but have enclosed our donation and would like an ornament placed on the tree with our loved one's name.

Please make checks payable to **Family Hospice and Palliative Care**
and return with this form to: 265 West Water St.
Berne, IN. 46711

Memorials

Family Hospice and Palliative Care would like to express their appreciation to the following individuals/organizations for their financial gifts. Donations to our organization are used to support our work beyond the reimbursement received through government, insurance and other sources. These gifts are crucial in meeting the daily needs of individuals and their families who have a life-limiting illness. Thank you for helping us fulfill our mission of 'bringing hope, comfort and dignity along life's final journey.'

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Lorene Andrews

Almdale Family
O'Laverty, Betty

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Bailey, Jacque
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and Family
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and Family

Hartzog, Phil & Barb
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& Stephen

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Rebbe, Wilma & Robert

Selma Baker

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Bryan, Rose & Tim and Randy
Fralk, Gordon & Annabelle
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Bargon, Jeff & Gabrielle
and Nora

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and Adelle

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Margaret Smith

Fuqua, Dave & Barbara
Gardner, Mr. & Mrs. Gene
McConaughy, Esther
Millspaugh, Max & Carol
Reed, Phil & Janet
Rogers, Nel
Schooley, Robert & Melba
Smith, Thomas & Norma
Willman, Bryce & Barbara
Willman, Joanne & Nolan

Mary Snyder

Stratton Place Community
Association

Loretta Stauffer

Robert & Mary Ann
Ellenberger

Velma Steury

Arnold, Homer & Edith
Lehman, LaDene
Reynolds, Bill & Sally
Steiner, Donald & Melody
Steiner, Ernest & Janice
Steiner, William & Jeanne
Steury, Audrey
Steury, Robert & Janet

Mark Stinson

Stinson, Richard & Carolyn
and Family
Bucher, Trent
Gilbert, Christina, Priscilla,
Bobby and Families
Gilbert, Jeanne
Longenberger, Roger
& Marilyn

McAfee, Clarence

Prible, Jeff and Family
Schumm, Mr. & Mrs. Ralph

Melvne Strode

Daugherty, Robert & Ann,
Earl & Ginny

Eda Sweeney

Greg Drake of State Farm
Insurance

Delmer Thieme

Thieme, Otto & Helen

Matt Till

Hayes, Michael & Crystal
Stonefield, Thomas & Gail

June Timmons

Timmons, James

Linda Tricker

Employees of News-Banner,
Bluffton, Indiana

Naomi Ulmer

DeMarco, John & Priscilla
Ellenberger, Robert
& Mary Ann
Holte, Julia

Jackson, Jim & Celia

Jackson, Tom & Priscilla
James Jackson Co., LLC
Legge, Dorothy & John
and Cindy and Claudia
Maloy, Julie & John
PSI IOTA XI Sorority
ALPHA ETA Chapter

Steuery, Rebecca

Sutton, Den & Joni
Ulmer, Chris & Terri
Warnock, Eileen

James Vandentop

Evans, Jual & Jo Ella

E. Lovetta Vanhorn

Pierr, Gerald & Linda

Martha VonGuten

Jones, Harvey & Ann
and Family

Carol Vore

Atlas Logistics Group Retail
Services Roano
Atrim, Andrew & Lisa
Bluffton Lodge No. 242
Boots, Ken & Patty
Calderon Brothers Vending
Culmann, Don & Tammi
Eastbrook High School
Frauhiger, Jeff & Dawn
Gerber, Mick & Brooke
Haecker, Mary
Higginbottom, A.J. & Jan
Leland, Mike & Maureen
Makowski, Stan & Phyllis
Mounsey, Gaylord & Crystal
Newnum, Annette
Redd, Patricia Family
Rosenbrock, Richard & Shirley
Van Winkle, James & Betty
Vore, Don

Eileen Walter

Roesener, Elaine c/o Nevada
Community Foundation

Cynthia Weldy

Brown, Neil & Meleta
Gable, Carl & Judy
Johnson, H.M.
McCarty, Bill and Family
Painter, Grady & Patricia
Schuller, Sue
Schwartz, Leonard & Linda
Smith, Donald & Wauneta
Suman, Ernie
Tschannen, Dolores
and Family
Weldy, Josephine
Weldy, Lloyd & Tami

William Weikel

Poole, Connie

Leonard Wayne**Welches**

Welches, Mary

Ruby Wentz

Bowen, Darlene & Tom
Garrett, Dwight & Bernie
Kevitt, Mark & Chris
King, Catherine,
BCSC Speech Pathologists
Reed, Paul & Margaret
Rush, Carol & Jesse
and Family
Wentz, Carol

Richard Whitman

Heyerly, Ken & Deb
Lock, Kim & Andy
and Family
Miller, Harry & Nina
Miller, Laura
Morse, Linda & Robbie
Mull, Bill
Reinking, Denny
Smith, Bobby
Springer, Jack and Family
Stockman, Don & Margaret

Alton Wayne**Wickliffe**

Humerickhouse, Patrick
& Noreen

Krockner, Brian & Judy
and Family

Parks, Marilyn

Mary Wiley

Fair, Joseph & Susan
Goodmiller, W. Leon & Marvel
McCoy, Natalie
Olivero Family
Parrett, Ken & Melba
Pientka, Marilyn & Ken
Rich, David
Wiley, Nancy
Wilson, Julie

Jack Wilson

Anderson, Doug & Kim
Anonymous
Arnold, William & Pauline
Betts, Jay & Nancy
Biberstine, Lloyd & Marcile
Billman, Norma
Bower, Kay
Bricker, Wilma & Roger
Bridgett, Paul & Jeanette
Burns, Denver
Clymer, Wilbur & Joan
George, Lillian & Kermit
Good, Terry
Habig, Stephanie
Heller, Debra
Hiday, Jerry & Diana
Leas, Mick & Shonna
Lewis, Hailey
Lindsay Hendrix,
Hendrix/Harrington PC
Longenberger, Tom & Becky
Melick, Christine and Family
Monce, Kent & Rosalyn
Monce, Marjorie
Naeve, Merle & Janet
Okey, Martha
Osborn, Naomi,

Lutheran Rehab Center

Pettibone, Mike & Carol

Roberty, Daniel & Becky

Shadl, Wilbur & Susie

Shaffer, Don & Judy

Shaffer, Mark & Karen

Taylor, Rod & Brenda

Walker, Paul & Geneva

Williams, Nancy

Willard "Bill"**Wulliman**

Fryback, Ron & Carolyn
Gregory, Robert & Denise
and Elliott
Kauffman, Leon Family
Lehman, LaDene
Minch, John & Jane
Moore, Dave & Rita
Morris, Beth
Myers, Lynn & Susie
Sell, Sandy
Smitley, Ethel Family % Karen
Hartman
Sprunger, Don & Family
Sprunger, Nathan
Strubhar, Ronda & Peter

Dorothy Wolfe

McMahon, Lois

Jim Zimmer Sr.

Honegger, Robert & Mary

Evelyn Zimmerman

Eller, Rosie & Dan
Hawkins, Joan
NcBarnes, Melvin & Theresa

All Shook Up at the Family Hospice Fundraiser!!

You guessed it... Elvis Presley is back... an impersonator that is. Join us at the Grey Goose Country Club in Decatur on Saturday, November 8, 2008 for our annual fundraiser. Mark your calendars for this exciting opportunity and win a trip to Graceland to experience Elvis Presley at his home. Also included in the evening festivities is an elegant dinner, raffle, and live/silent auction.

The annual fundraisers by Family Hospice and Palliative Care are conducted to establish an endowment fund to extend our services to community members who are under-insured or who have no insurance benefits, and to pay for advanced symptom management that is non-reimbursable by a third party payer. With the recent cuts to our Medicare reimbursement, this endowment fund is even more important in meeting the needs of our patients and their families.

To take part in this event, please feel free to call us at 800-355-2817 and learn how your participation can assist Family Hospice and Palliative Care in providing quality compassionate care to our community.



Help Us Save Our Journey...

— continued from page 1

there are more and more people needing and using this vital service.

CMS's reason for its decision to cut hospice rates – the need to save money – simply isn't true. Research has shown that hospice saves the Medicare system money, is highly rated by family members of hospice patients in their satisfaction of care, and enables the patient to die at home in most cases. According to an independent 2007 Duke University study, hospice saves Medicare an average of \$2,300 per patient. More than 1.3 million dying Americans received care from the nation's hospice providers last year, amounting to a total savings of about \$2 billion. This rule defies logic, and will have a direct, negative impact on care at the bedside.

How can these reimbursement cuts be stopped?

CMS's regulation to cut the Medicare Hospice Benefit represents the circumvention of Congressional will through the regulatory process. Congress can stop the implementation of these cuts! The National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization with sponsors from the Senate and House of Representatives will soon be introducing a bill to stop the regulatory cuts, BUT our legislators need a display of how important this issue is to their constituents!

Please help us save the Medicare Hospice Benefit. Send letters, e-mails, or call our legislators. On our website, www.fhpc-in.org, we have the letters already created and available for you to download, sign, and forward to your legislator. Many of our community members are calling us or stopping by requesting the letters to send to their legislators. We would love to have you included as one of our supporters and join us in this effort to preserve the Medicare Hospice Benefit and our journey.



Volunteer Reflections on our 11th Hour Companion Care Program

by Rita Setser, Volunteer

I've spent most of my adult years as a volunteer. In 2001, I enrolled in the training class to become a volunteer for Family Hospice and Palliative Care in Berne. Now in 2008, I can reflect on years of pleasurable experiences as a Hospice volunteer. A couple years ago an additional training was offered to current volunteers who would like to become a part of the 11th Hour Companion Care program, an extension of Family Hospice and Palliative Care. I took that training, also.

As an 11th Hour volunteer, I have had the privilege of interacting with patients, with care givers and families, and in some cases, hospice and nursing home staff. A number of times I've spent 3-5 hours with an imminently dying patient that I'm meeting for the first time. After a simple assessment, I assist the patient as needed or simply position myself near the bedside, touching their hand, reading, praying and sometimes even singing. God has gifted me with conversation and this is most helpful when family members are in the room and they would like for me to be in the room also. I've met some incredible people who are doing all they can to make the end of life journey meaningful for the patient as well as for themselves.

One of the most remarkable to me was an older gentleman named George

who lived in a county residential setting. He had been abandoned many years earlier by his family, but God gave him a family of people in his new home. When I met George he was no longer communicating, but items in his hospital room soon let me know that someone (or more than one someone) cared very much about him. I visited his room five times in three days and each time a staff member or employee from his home was with him. Each evening someone showed up with a blanket and pillow in tow and spent the night in his room so he would not be alone. All through the day another "someone" was with him; always talking to him, kissing his cheek, stroking his arm, patting his head.

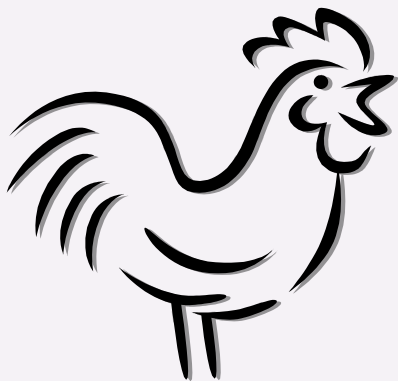
His new family never left him alone. I was with George when he took his last breath. I stayed in his room for two hours and witnessed the tears and hugs as the "someones" came to see him one last time. When I was first asked to make the 11th Hour visit, I thought I was going to be with someone who had no one and was totally alone. I knew that Hospice feels strongly that no one should die alone, so I went to visit. This experience has changed me. I try very hard to answer each request for an 11th Hour visit knowing that each patient and each family has an experience that is unique to them, and I count it a privilege to be with them at the journey's end.

This article was written by Rita Setser, Volunteer. If you feel called to fulfill the ministry of volunteerism with our organization, please call and ask for our Volunteer Coordinator. Learn how each experience with our patients and their families is unique.

Family Hospice and Palliative Care
265 West Water Street
Berne, IN 46711

Enriching Lives through Compassionate Care.

Chicken BBQ



Simply saying “thanks” does not seem enough for the overwhelming response we received from the community in supporting us in our Chicken BBQ fundraiser

held on June 22, 2008. Our supporters enjoyed 650 delicious BBQ Chicken dinners which netted \$1,382 towards Family Hospice and Palliative Care. These funds will go towards our volunteer services to assist in underwriting the costs associated with educational opportunities. Thank you again for your support.

EVENT CALENDAR

- **September 16-20, 2008** Visit our booth at the Bluffton Street Fair in the Industrial Tent.
- **September 27, 2008** Look for us at the Blackford Community Health Fair at Northside Elementary School in Hartford City.
- **October 20, 2008** Memorial Service at Wells County Library at 6:30 pm
- **October 22, 2008** Turn to PBS/Channel 39 at 7:30 pm to learn more about us.
- **November 1, 2008** Join us at the Wells County Health Fair at Bluffton Harrison Middle School.
- **November 13, 2008** ‘All Shook Up at the Family Hospice Fundraiser’ at Grey Goose Country Club
- **November 26, 2008** Turn to PBS/Channel 39 at 7:30 pm to learn more about us.
- **December 6, 2008** Tree of Hope Ceremony at 5:00 pm at Family Hospice and Palliative Care Office