



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Raising Awareness of the Benefits of Hospice and Palliative Care

*Harbor Hospice & Harbor Palliative Care Celebrate
November's National Hospice and Palliative Care Month*

[Muskegon, Michigan] – Throughout the month of November, Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care will be joining organizations across the nation hosting community activities in recognition of National Hospice & Palliative Care Month.

For more than 40 years, hospice has helped provide comfort and dignity to millions of people, allowing them to spend their final months wherever they call home, surrounded by their loved ones. Hospices ensure that pain management, therapies, and treatments all support a plan of care that is centered on the person's goals. Hospice care also provides emotional support and advice to help family members become confident caregivers and adjust to the future with grief support for up to a year.

“It is essential that people understand that hospice and palliative care is not giving up, it is not the abandonment of care, and it is not reserved for the imminently dying,” said Edo Banach, president and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. “Hospice is a successful model of person-centered care that brings hope, dignity and compassion when they are most needed.”

In 2018, 1.61 million Medicare beneficiaries received care from hospices in this country, reports NHPCO. Hospice is unique in that it offers an interdisciplinary team approach to treatment. Caring for the whole person allows the team to address each patient's unique needs and challenges.

“Until you are confronted with a life limiting illness many people are unaware how Palliative and Hospice services can help support conversations with loved ones about what is really important to you,” notes Pamela Wingard, social work & counseling services manager for Harbor Hospice. “Palliative and Hospice care teams offer resources, education, and support to explore how your illness impacts your life and your loved ones. With this information you can make plans and decisions that suit you and what you want, allowing you to get back to focusing on what makes every day count.”

As John Smith, a hospice volunteer at Main Street hospice noted, “Someone asked why I spend time volunteering for hospice. It's because hospice was there for my family at a difficult time in our lives, and because hospice staff provide the best care possible when you need it most. And I want to help other families get that same level of care.”

Hospices are also some of the best providers of community-based palliative care. Palliative care delivers expertise to improve quality of life and relief from pain. It can be provided at any time during an illness – during and after treatment, from diagnosis on.

More information about hospice, palliative care, and advance care planning is available from Harbor Hospice & Harbor Palliative Care by visiting HarborHospiceMI.org or from NHPCO's CaringInfo.org.

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