

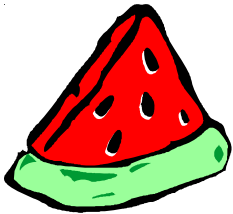
VNA Hospice Volunteer Newsletter

July, August, September, October 2009



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Message from Suzanne



Happy summer!!!! Many of you have been busy juggling summer activities and helping us. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the hospice patients and families. We have been busy juggling as well. As you know, Christie has been off and Trish has been doing a great job filling her shoes. We expect Christie back by the end of July. She has been spending time with her beautiful son, Avery, who was quite anxious to join us on April 20, 2009 at 9:18 PM. He was early and arrived very quickly. Avery weighed in at 6 lb. 3 ozs., and was 20 1/2 inches long. I am sure Christie will have many new Mommy stories to share with you upon her return.

To keep you up to date on inpatient building activities, Pat Birckbichler, Hospice Inpatient Project Manager, has written a small piece as well as provided pictures for you to view.

We are planning our second annual butterfly release **September 13, 2009**. Watch your mail for a flyer about the release. We are in need of some volunteer help that day. Should you be interested please give me a call at (724) 431-3502.

Mark your calendars ... **October 8, 2009** is the annual volunteer recognition/awards luncheon. Invitation to follow. I have included in this newsletter a flyer used to help recruit volunteers. I would appreciate your help distributing these flyers in the area where you live. You can put them in churches, social halls, grocery or drug stores etc. We are always looking for great volunteers.

As always, thank you for all you do for our patients and our Hospice program.

IDT Schedule

July 1, 7, 15, 29
August 4, 12, 18, 26
September 1, 9, 15, 23, 29
October 7, 13, 21, 27

If you would like to attend please call Hospice,
724-431-3504, for time and location

Payday

Year to date

Visits = 1133
Cost saving average 11%
Miles driven 6904

Thank You!

A Hospice Vision

VNA Hospice provides unsurpassed expert, compassionate care for patients and families during the final phase of life by optimizing their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being; maintaining dignity, respect and choice; and providing meaningful bereavement support and services

SPOTLIGHT

As you have read and maybe heard, we are very excited about the VNA Inpatient Hospice. An important aspect of the inpatient facility will be volunteer activity. Even though we have not yet defined all the volunteer duties, we do know we need more volunteers who are capable of wearing multiple hats and who feel comfortable spending time in the inpatient setting. If you know anyone who may be interested please have them contact us.

Areas of interest:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------|
| ★ gardening | ★ laundry | ★ pets | ★ sewing |
| ★ sitting with patients | ★ greeter | ★ story writing | ★ baking |
| ★ reading | ★ flower arranging | ★ music | |

MESSAGE FROM TRISH CAMPBELL

To meet the needs of hospice patients in facilities requires creativity to offer appropriate support in addressing their special and unique challenges. Although many of our patients may be very compromised and debilitated, they benefit from our presence and genuine efforts to care for them. The following list outlines suggestions of ways volunteers can utilize their special gifts and talents to reach out to patients who may be non-verbal, disoriented, visually impaired, or have other limitations that inhibit their independence and quality of life.

1. Reading poetry, novels, newspapers, or inspirational readings may elicit a positive response in our patients even if we have no feedback from them otherwise.

2. Music has an amazing calming effect on our patients, particularly if they exhibit anxiety, pain, or restlessness. A variety of music can be played, and some patients are stimulated by being sung to in a soft voice if the volunteer is comfortable with this gesture. It is helpful to check with the facility staff to determine if a CD player is available.



3. Sharing photographs that may be visible in the patient's room can bring a smile to their face. You can ask about the person in the picture or offer a comment such as, "Is this your beautiful daughter?"

4. Accompanying a patient on a walk through the facility or outdoors, when weather permits, enables them to be stimulated by a change in their surroundings.



5. Touch - The gentle stroking of a patient's arm, holding their hand, or rubbing their shoulders can be a welcome comfort for many patients, particularly those with many limitations.

6. Offering small gifts of candy, flowers, a stuffed animal, or any small personalized token is a special gesture offered to a patient who may be forgotten.

It is understandable that when patients cannot communicate with us we are at a loss as to how to support them. Please remember that the uniqueness and special talents you offer as you support a patient make a difference in their journey as they approach the end of their life. Your supportive presence is a very special gift.

EDUCATION ... EDUCATION ... EDUCATION ...

Grounding Techniques To Help in the Hard Times

Shared by Jolene Formaini, RN, MA, CT, Bereavement Coordinator

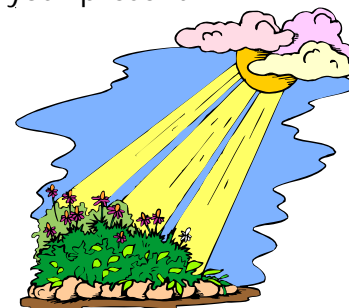
As I was preparing this information for an upcoming program, I realized how relevant it is to our own hard-working staff and volunteers here at the VNA so I decided to share it with you.

Grounding Techniques:

- help you stay safe and free from injury;
- help to re-orient/re-connect you to the present;
- help to identify practical ways you can reduce the effect of triggers;
- can help you to feel less traumatized;
- can give you things to do which are nurturing and affirming.

Here are some examples of grounding techniques that have helped others:

- Keep your eyes open, look around the room, notice your surroundings, notice details.
- Hold a pillow, stuffed animal or a ball.
- Place a cool cloth on your face or hold something cool, such as a can of soda.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Place your feet firmly on the ground.
- Breathe slowly and deeply, like blowing up a balloon.
- Remove your shoes and rub your feet on the ground.
- Peel an orange or a lemon. Notice the smell. Take a bite. Focus on the taste.
- Touch the fur of a pet animal.
- Repeat the phrase, "That was then, this is now".
- Go for a walk and "experience" the sunshine, rain or wind.
- Keep a rubber band on your wrist; pluck it and feel the "sting" to stop recurrent troubling thoughts.
- Touch things around you.
- Visualize a bright STOP sign to help you stop a memory, negative thought or flashback.
- Write in your journal.
- Imagine yourself in a safe place. Feel the safety and KNOW it.
- Tear up paper.
- Notice "choices" versus "dilemmas".
- Lose the "should-must-have to" words.
- CHOOSE your way of thinking. Resist following old thinking patterns.
- Carry tokens to remind you of peaceful, comfortable things/people.
- Pull weeds or plant flowers.
- "I'm aware of. . ." Repeat 5 things you see, smell, hear, touch and taste in your present surroundings.
- Take a break from mental processing and have FUN!!!
- Play hop scotch!
- Hug a tree!
- Watch clouds!
- Dance!
- Color!
- Swing!



Pat Birckbichler, RN
Inpatient Hospice Project Manager

Update on inpatient building activities

Hello VNA Hospice volunteers! I wanted to update you on our Inpatient Hospice Facility which will be built on Technology Drive in Butler Township. We are still hoping to open our facility in winter of 2009. We are waiting on the final permit and the real ground breaking should occur by the end of July. Our staff ceremonial groundbreaking took place at the awards banquet in April with the digging of "dirt" for dessert. Our community ceremonial ground breaking was held on May 14. The community event was held to announce our new inpatient hospice plans as well as our \$2 Million Capital Campaign. Eighty-five guests attended, including County and Township commissioners, representatives from local businesses and healthcare facilities, our architect and builder and prospective major donors. Senator Jane Orie presented us with a PA State Senate Proclamation recognizing the event. The response of all the attendees was quite enthusiastic and comments from our guest speakers indicated overwhelming support of this project. This is truly a very exciting endeavor for our organization. It is something that our community and our hospice has needed for quite some time.



VNA Inpatient Hospice
Opening Winter 2009/10

VNA Inpatient Hospice
Patient/Family Veranda

