Hospice Aides: Help for Your Patient, Help for Your Team

By Hudson Valley Hospice Staff

One way for hospice and palliative care professionals to develop specialty skills and expertise is by becoming certified by the Hospice and Palliative Credentialing Center (HPCC). HPCC offers specialty certification to nurses and other members of the interdisciplinary team including Home Health Aides (HHAs).

At Hudson Valley Hospice, we are fortunate to have a dedicated team of HHAs who have become certified as Hospice & Palliative Nursing Assistants (CHPNA). Through the certification process, our team ensures that our HHAs are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources to assist our patients efficiently and effectively at home or in nursing homes.

Hospice HHAs provide hands-on care, support, and comfort to patients at the final stage of life. Aides receive training in palliative care techniques, pain and symptom management, communicating with patients and families, and care at the time of dying. In the nursing home, HHAs perform personal hygiene duties, including bathing, dressing, feeding, incontinence care, and oral care for patients. They ensure that patients are comfortable and spend time talking and listening during bedside visits.

The individualized care plan for hospice patients defines the patient’s needs and role of the HHA in the nursing home setting. The number of HHA hours is also defined in the care plan, which is developed by our Nurse Case Manager in conjunction with the hospice interdisciplinary team and nursing home team. HHAs document in the patient’s red hospice binder and provide feedback to the interdisciplinary team after each patient visit.

The effective collaboration between the Hospice Nurse Case Manager, HHA and the nursing home team is vital in ensuring the patient’s needs are met. Fostering healthy working relationships with nursing home staff benefits the patient and helps to provide much needed support during a time of overwhelming changes to the lives of patients and their families. It is incumbent on all of us to work together to provide authentic, compassionate and consistent care for all patients.

Have a Question? Call Us!

Referral Center
7 Days a Week
845-240-7555

Hospice Care
Call Us 24/7
845-240-7510

Palliative Care
845-240-7557

General Inquiries
845-485-2273

Bereavement Center
845-240-7579
**Hudson Valley Hospice House to Open in Early 2023!**

In case you haven’t heard, we have exciting news! Not only are we growing, caring for more than 600 patients wherever they call home, including your nursing home, but we are also building a Hospice House, which will be dedicated and admitting its first patients in early 2023!

Located in Hyde Park, our spacious home-like Hospice House will have 14 private suites that will serve our Dutchess and Ulster County patients with all the levels of hospice care that are needed at the end of life, including inpatient care, for patients who have pain management and symptoms relief needs that would otherwise require a hospital admission. Each private suite will be approximately 400 square feet and have a large private bathroom, individual control of the room temperature, and convertible chairs and sofas allowing loved ones to stay overnight. The suites will be tastefully decorated and encourage the display of personal items, photos, art, books, and other life-enriching mementos to add to the homelike environment, while doors in each room will open onto a Meditative Garden, offering patients and their loved ones the opportunity to enjoy a peaceful and tranquil outdoor environment. Two suites will be convertible to pediatric care to meet the extraordinary needs of our youngest patients and their loved ones.

Spacious dining, family and patient lounges and gathering rooms will offer places for small and large groups to come together in an elegant and sophisticated, yet warm and friendly atmosphere. The dining room kitchen will provide meals for patients and their loved ones, in addition to coffee stations with microwaves and refrigerators available for family use. Follow us on Facebook and Social Media to watch the progress and learn more.

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**When to Call Hospice**

- A patient was recently given a diagnosis of six months or less to live.
- If the patient experiences a change in status physically, emotionally, mentally or socially.
- If there is an increase or change in symptoms requiring a change to the plan of care.
- If the patient is transferred to the hospital setting. Hospice staff will assume care for the patient upon arriving to the ER. ER staff must be informed of Hospice status as we work very closely with hospitalists to ensure patients wishes are carried out.
- If the patient is transitioning or actively dying. Our goal is to send our team members to be at the bedside.
- When the patient dies.

**Breaking Down the Myths**

**MYTH:**

Hospice is a place, so you must leave home to receive hospice care.

**FACT:**

Hospice is a philosophy of care provided in the patient’s home or wherever the patient calls home, including residential, skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. Homeless people, as well as people who live alone, can qualify for hospice.

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**Quote of the Month**

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

-Mahatma Gandhi