



HOSPICE
MEANS
MORE CARE,
NOT LESS

Volunteer

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2023

Volunteers are the Heart of Hospice

With the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency ending on May 11th we have been focused on growing our volunteer department to meet Medicare standards. Did you know that volunteers are required members of our interdisciplinary team? The Medicare standard is that 5% of hospice care hours with patients are matched by volunteer service. This regulation was waived during the pandemic. However, as restrictions have been eased, our volunteers have fully reintegrated back into our care. Now with the waiver ending, we are striving to exceed the Medicare standard. This means we need hundreds of service hours each month. We are so grateful for our loyal volunteers who started with us before the restrictions and faithfully served through the pandemic: Tracy, Sue, Todd, Tom, Rich, Carolyn, Stacey, Joyce, and Wayne! We're also grateful for the new volunteers who have joined our team since then. We've had over 30 volunteers join so far since the start of this year! With their help we are close to meeting our goals, but we are still in need of more growth.

Why does Medicare require us to include volunteers? At the heart of hospice are ideals that volunteers exemplify: compassion, commitment, and community. The modern hospice model began as a volunteer-led movement. It started with volunteer medical professionals and community members who wanted to provide specialized services for the needs of end-of-life patients. Our volunteers today carry forward that same spirit! Volunteers serve not to receive a pay-check or fulfill professional requirements, but out of a heart that cares for others in need. When a patient receives visits from a hospice volunteer they often notice this difference and open up in special ways. Sometimes patients struggling with disease progression can be difficult with staff, and yet when a volunteer visits their face lights up with a smile. Recently I heard a story of a patient whose favorite team member was our volunteer

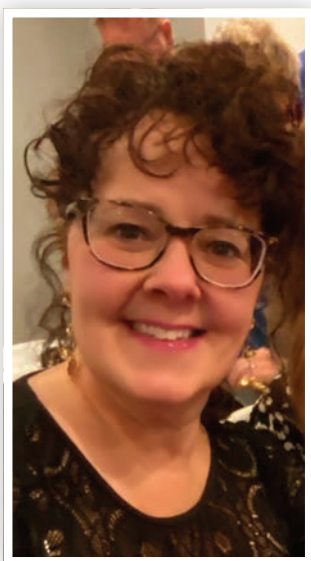
Nancy. Nancy visits each week and the patient knows her schedule. On days when there is a volunteer visit, the patient requests that her hair and make-up be done special because "she wants to look her best for Nancy!" Their visits together give our patient something to look forward to and the friendship they've formed is a source of encouragement, joy, and strength in the midst of life-limiting illness.

The majority of our volunteers, like Nancy, are "companionship volunteers" who offer social support to patients. Hospice patients are often lonely and sometimes feel isolated in their disease; the companionship offered by volunteers can be as important as any other discipline. Volunteers give extra time to patients that our busy staff can't always afford; time to simply sit and be still, to offer conversation about everyday life, to hold a hand or offer a hug. Our employees are truly amazing and care for their patients, but there is something special about a volunteer who "doesn't have to be there" showing up to let a patient know that someone cares for them. Companionship volunteers do not assist with medical treatments or personal care, they focus on building trusting relationships with patients and sometimes their families. Volunteers have conversation, help with crafts or hobbies, read to patients whose eyesight is failing, socialize while watching TV or playing a game, walk wheelchair-bound patients around the facility or outside, pray and read scripture to religious patients, play comforting music, reminisce on old photos or memories, assist patients in writing notes, celebrate birthdays and other special days, take patients to facility activities, and more. All these activities bring value and comfort to patients in their final days or months of life. Companionship volunteers contribute so much to our team as we Celebrate Life and honor each of our patients' unique stories.



Craft Night

On March 9th the Ashtabula office hosted its first ever craft night for volunteers! This activity was a chance for our team to get together and do something fun. Our volunteers don't often have time to get to know each other well; since hospice volunteering is usually about one-on-one interactions with patients and families. This was an opportunity to encourage each other and just enjoy one another's company. We had 4 volunteers come to the office to join Volunteer Coordinator Nichole: Joyce, Jennifer, Amanda, and Stacey (whose mom also joined the group as she is considering volunteering). The event was a success! Everyone had a good time making cast iron candles and family tree shadow boxes. Nichole enjoyed the chance to put her crafting skills to use. Nichole often utilizes her crafting hobby to make items for volunteer appreciation or even patients. Crafting is also a way that volunteers can connect with patients: either by helping patients to do their hobbies, creating something for patients to enjoy, or simply sharing and reminiscing on past projects. We were excited this year to offer Craft Night as a way to appreciate volunteers! It was a little time we gave to celebrate all the time they give generously to serve our patients.



Beth Trice



Amanda Parker

Welcoming New Volunteers

Volunteering for hospice can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience, but it can also be challenging. There are many requirements and a high commitment asked even to just sign up to volunteer with hospice. These requirements are in place to protect our patients and maintain our high standards of service. This is why when someone decides to join our team and makes it through the onboarding process we are incredibly grateful and inspired. Our Ashtabula office wants to welcome its newest volunteers: Amanda, Jennifer, Beth, and Linda. We are so thankful that you have decided to serve with us! You all are a blessing to our patients and we are fortunate to have you.

Appreciating the Music



Some of our Cincinnati volunteer team recently took an opportunity to get together and support one of their own. Our musician volunteer, Lydia, enjoys playing at open mic nights around Cincinnati and is currently working on an album of her own music! As part of volunteer appreciation week our Volunteer Coordinator Karen invited her team out to hear Lydia and to offer their support for this incredibly talented volunteer. A great time was had by those who were able to come out. It was a chance to do something fun together and continue to build a sense of teamwork amongst the volunteers who each offer their unique talents and skills to help bring comfort to our patients.



Helping Hands in the Office

For the last year, the Cincinnati office has been blessed by the presence of volunteer Debbie Dennis. While a majority of our volunteers serve by visiting patients, they can also offer support by coming to the office and assisting with administrative tasks. As an admin volunteer, Debbie enjoyed coming to the office to help with everything from filing and faxing, to organizing the office and packing materials for the office's upcoming move. Debbie is from the UK and was in the States for her husband's work. She has worked her whole life and is not one to stay idle, but since she could not be employed while staying in the US, she chose to use her time to volunteer and give back. Debbie is a passionate volunteer and has given time to help charity organizations in England as well. We are grateful that she made Bella Care part of her extended American family! Debbie's organizational skills and dedicated service have been a huge help during a time when the Cincinnati branch was growing and staying busy. Beyond that, Debbie is delightful to be around and natural to have conversation with. She brought light and energy to the office that was encouraging to everyone. Unfortunately, Debbie and her husband had to move back to England in April. We are so sad to see her go and to have to say goodbye prematurely, but we are incredibly grateful for all that she brought to our volunteer team and the chance to get to know her. You will be missed Debbie, thank you for your service!



Helping to Celebrate Life



We are excited to welcome Cleveland's newest volunteer Hannah Keener! Hannah is a Reiki specialist and yoga instructor working on opening her own practice in the Akron area. This is her first volunteer experience in healthcare. She is eager to visit patients, and is also willing to help out wherever she can. Her first volunteer service was coming in to the office to help Volunteer Coordinator Melissa with our Celebrate Life program. Each month our volunteer department prepares small birthday gifts and cards for all our patients, we also frequently put together various care packages. Hannah helped Melissa put together balloons, flowers, cards, and bags of special personal care items to pamper some of the ladies on our service! It was a delight to have a volunteer in the office helping with some of the extra things we do to give dignity and to honor our patients. Volunteers contribute so much to our care and we appreciate the variety of ways they help us achieve our mission. *Thanks Hannah!*

Volunteer of the Quarter Carolyn Hubbard

Carolyn Hubbard started volunteering with us in June of 2019, visiting patients on the west side of Cleveland. Carolyn is one of our loyal volunteers who stayed with us through the pandemic. When Covid19 restrictions prohibited her from visiting patients, Carolyn continued to write cards and encouraging notes to patients each month. Once she felt it was safe to do so, she returned to her passion of making in-person visits to nursing homes. For the last 2 years Carolyn has volunteered nearly every week, sometimes multiple days a week making regular visits. Carolyn frequently volunteers extra to sit bedside vigil with patients who are actively dying, holding their hand, praying for them, speaking encouraging words, and bringing comfort in their final moments in this life. She also sometimes gets involved in our Celebrate Life program bringing patients gifts or assisting with events and celebrations. Carolyn is the kind of volunteer who regularly inspires paid staff members by reminding us what a privilege it is to work in hospice. Her real passion is building relationships with patients, forming a connection through conversation and presence. Her patients love her and look forward to her visits. We appreciate all that she does and are grateful for her years of dedicated service. *Thanks Carolyn!*

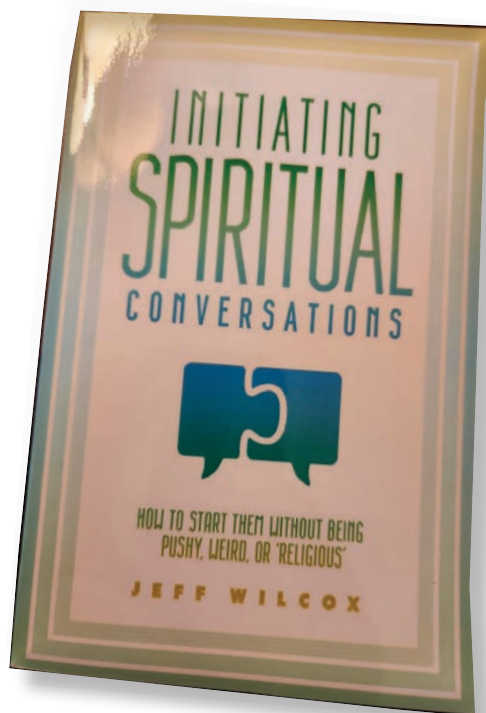


Spiritual Conversations for Hospice Volunteers

On Thursday, May 25 the Columbus office will be having a training entitled, "Spiritual Conversations for Hospice Volunteers." One of our spiritual care volunteers, Jeff Wilcox, has served as a hospice volunteer for more than 15 years with 3 different hospice organizations in the Central Ohio area. Jeff is offering a lecture on a book that he has written. The book is entitled, "Initiating Spiritual Conversations - How to start them without being Pushy, Weird, or Religious." He has served as a Spiritual Care Volunteer with Bella Care Hospice for the past 14 months. Jeff's vocation is a dentist so he brings a lot of experience as a healthcare professional. He has also been involved in local church ministries for many years. Jeff shares, "I know that bringing up spiritual things or sharing the gospel in ordinary, everyday conversations is hard for most of us. What I hope to accomplish is giving your folks some comfortable, creative ways to do that without sounding awkward."

Jeff has a heart to share the gospel with anyone he meets and he is intentional in building and developing a friendship with the patients he meets. Knowing how to ask good questions about a person's journey helps Jeff to gain a better understanding of their history with the church and if they had a religious upbringing. There is no opportunity to share the good news of what a faith relationship with God can offer, without the bond of trust and respect that comes in getting to know a patient. We are excited to have Jeff share with our Spiritual Care Volunteers and offer them some helpful insights on being equipped to initiate spiritual conversations.

The Columbus branch has 20 Spiritual Care Volunteers within its volunteer program. The Spiritual Care Volunteers offer companionship and support to our patients, and have a heart to share and hear about a patient's faith journey. These volunteers can offer prayer, read scripture from the Bible, offer bedside presence, and some are gifted to sing or play gospel/Christian/hymns of the church. We are grateful for all the volunteers who chose to serve with us, for Jeff, and for the opportunity to get them together and encourage one another.



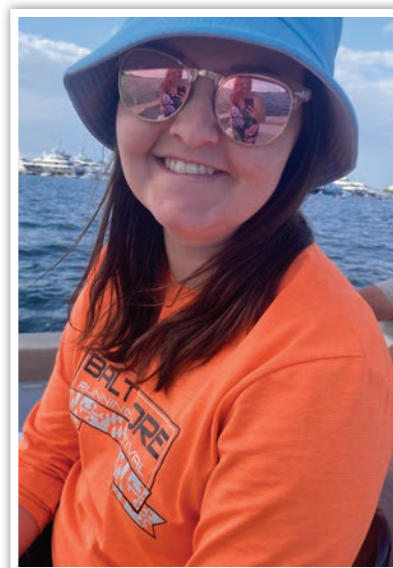


Dayton

Home Visits

Bella Care Hospice is dedicated to providing the highest quality service to patients, wherever they may be. Many of our patients want to spend their final days at home with family, surrounded by the people and things that they love most. These families invite our staff into their homes to receive the care and support that sets Bella Care Hospice apart. Volunteers are an essential part of our caregiving team and can offer comfort and companionship in various ways, even in the home. For example, volunteers may provide caregiver respite, companionship, or do small chores around the house to help out.

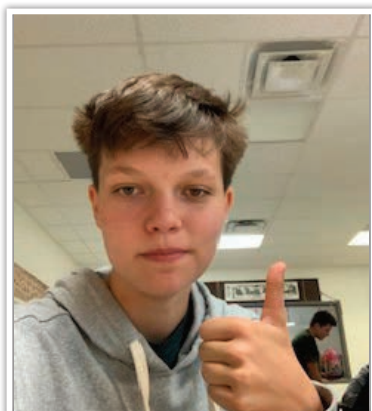
At our Dayton office, Caitlin Weible prefers to meet in homes to bring joy to patients and peace of mind to caregivers. Caitlin previously volunteered in Maryland to provide caregiver respite to home hospice patients and is excited to continue with Bella Care Hospice. When asked about her volunteer experiences, Caitlin shares: "Volunteering for home hospice patients is important to me because it provides extra comfort and support to individuals who have often spent their lives caring for others. I believe that the added presence of a volunteer can make a difference in someone's quality of life, even in the smallest ways. Most of all, I enjoy the companionship and offering emotional support to patients and families. Volunteering for home hospice patients feels close and personal and allows the patients to stay where they are most comfortable. Volunteering brings me a sense of purpose and fulfillment, and, most importantly, it allows me to have a meaningful impact on the lives of those in need."



Bella Care Hospice appreciates the commitment volunteers demonstrate to their patients. Extraordinary individuals offer time, energy, and peace to hospice patients. *Thank you, Caitlin!*

Student Support

We love it when the community rallies around our patients and joins us in Celebrating Life! This winter the Dayton Regional STEM School Key Club members took the time to make welcome blankets for new hospice patients. Tie blankets are warm and comforting, but are very time-consuming to put together. This group of kind students contacted us intending to make 25 blankets for our patients. The students also invited Volunteer Coordinator Abby to speak with the group about why volunteering and supporting hospice patients makes a difference. The students reached their goal, and the volunteer department gained a new student volunteer: Gwen Broderick! We are so grateful for the generosity of these students and are glad to welcome Gwen to the team.





Join Bella Care Hospice in celebrating those volunteers with anniversaries throughout the months of January 2023 – June 2023.

Ashtabula Branch

Anniversaries

February 3rd Joyce Misinec – 3 years
March 3rd Carol Flinn – 1 year
March 20th David Derk – 2 years
April 11th Tracy Miller – 10 years

Cincinnati Branch

Anniversaries

March 17th Jennie Rulli – 1 year
March 30th Erika Cayabyab – 1 year
April 21st Cindy Prunty – 1 year
April 26th Jan Rulli – 1 year
May 20th Judi Stoker – 1 year
May 23rd Jodie Jordan – 1 year
June 29th Lydia Crone – 1 year

Cleveland Branch

Anniversaries

June 10th Carolyn Hubbard – 4 years

Columbus Branch

Anniversaries

January 7th Michael Adomako – 1 year
February 1st Karen Budd – 1 year
February 13th Wayne Belford – 3 years
February 23rd Sue Nagy – 8 years
March 4th Jeff Wilcox – 1 year
March 11th Beverly Kubat – 1 year
March 15th Tara Vorst – 1 year
April 15th Lexus Lunguy – 1 year
April 28th Tom Fought – 1 year
May 20th Lori Schiefer – 1 year
June 15th Todd Bollenbacher – 7 years
June 28th Kenneth Kowis – 1 year

Dayton Branch

Anniversaries

June 6th Tina Wilcher – 1 year



Bella Care Hospice
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Welcome to all the new volunteers joining our extraordinary team!

Ashtabula:

*Amanda Parker
Jennifer Fulcher
Linda Phillips
Beth Trice*

Cincinnati Branch

*Sarah Schuh
Carol Hanselman
Melissa Eng*

Cleveland Branch

*Katelyn Craft
Chris Tuttle
Hannah Keener*

Columbus Branch

*Grace Hong
Vidhi Bar
Jane Hablitzel
Caleb Cummings
Claire Hong*

*Georgina
Antwi-Boasiako
McKenna Freund
Heather Rose
Rina Pilli*

*Lisa Weston
Brandon Ardinger
Josephine Lao*

Dayton Branch

*Peter Grassan
Nate Frederick
Gwen Broderick
Mary Grace Antalovich
Deborah Chestnut
Caitlin Weible
Rachel Hess
Megan Dickinson*

INTERESTED IN JOINING OUR VOLUNTEER TEAM?

We are always looking for compassionate and committed individuals who want to give of their time to help our team. Hospice volunteers bring their unique personalities and talents to bless our patients. There are many different ways you can help and there are opportunities at each of our branches. Volunteering not only improves the care we provide, but also brings a sense of fulfillment to those who serve. Perhaps you or someone you know could be our next volunteer?! We would love to get to know you and talk about the process for joining the team.

Inquire at <https://www.bellacarehospice.net/information-for-volunteers>

