

Pillar *for* Hospice

News from Spartanburg Regional Hospice



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Bereavement Support is Key for Grieving Loved Ones



The grieving process is vital for families. From handling the flood of emotions immediately after the death of a loved one to adjusting to day-to-day life, Spartanburg Regional Hospice works to help those in need.

When people hear the term hospice, they most likely think about end-of-life care. While that is the primary focus of Spartanburg Regional Hospice, our services don't stop there. For 13 months following a patient's death, Spartanburg Regional Hospice provides bereavement services for the patient's family.

We view this support as an essential part of our mission and it is our privilege to work with family members who are grieving.

Losing a loved one is a life-changing experience. It is impossible to be fully prepared for this experience. The grieving process is vital for families. From handling the flood of emotions immediately after the death of a loved one to adjusting to day-to-day life, Spartanburg Regional Hospice works to help those in need.

Following a patient's death, we reach out to family members to let them know about the services we offer. Our bereavement support team includes social workers and chaplains who offer emotional support through one-on-one counseling, group counseling, phone calls and informational mailings on coping with loss.

We find that people who have recently lost a loved one frequently struggle during the holiday season. At an event called Coping with the Holidays, staff members discuss with family and friends what they can expect to experience and feel during the holiday season. Participants are given strategies to help them get through this difficult time and have an opportunity to share their fears, experiences and successes.

In this issue of Pillar, you'll read about some of the ways we encourage people to cope with the holidays and hear about one family's experiences last year following the death of their close friend. We hope you will find these and other articles informative and helpful.

If you or someone you know might benefit from any of our services, please call **864-560-CARE**.

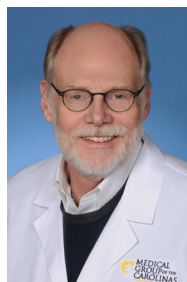
Thank you for reading, and we are grateful for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christi Foster, MSW".

Christi Foster
Director of Quality and Compliance
Spartanburg Regional Hospice

Hospice also holds several events throughout the year to support family members in their journey.

- Christopher's Camp
- Light Up A Life
- Services of Remembrance
- Memorial Day and Veteran's Day Celebrations
- Coping with the Holidays



What Do People Need at End of Life?

By Garrett Snipes, MD

Working as a full-time hospice physician for the last 20 years, I have provided care to many patients (and families/caregivers) through their final phase of life. As the world and the concerns of the patient inevitably become more constricted, needs and wants become quite simple. When facing the end of our journey, simplicity becomes the rule.

But what do most people want? There is some research on this question to guide us. In one of the most highly regarded studies, Peter Singer, MD, and associate at the University of Toronto found that in interviews with patients with serious, life-limiting illness, there were five main areas of concern:

- Receiving adequate pain and symptom management
- Avoiding inappropriate drawing out of dying
- Achieving a sense of control
- Relieving the burden on loved ones
- Strengthening relationships with others

As a clinician, I see and hear all of these concerns from patients. It's evidenced in my experience at the bedside of people approaching end of life.


In my work with patients at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home in particular, most of whom are close to death, I have come to the conclusion that for most people it really boils down

to two major desires: to not suffer and to have at least some of the people they know and love walk this path with them.

Avoiding misery seems almost too obvious to mention, but without a proper assessment, it is easy to miss unexpected aspects of suffering that patients may experience. The prime directive of both hospice and non-hospice palliative care is "managing misery" and relieving the various symptoms human beings can experience at end of life. And this is how I and the hospice staff spend the better part of our days.

Having companions to walk the final path is the other important need. Dying is sometimes difficult and frightening. It is troubling to see that a surprising number of patients in our inpatient facility have no loved ones with them. Our staff members do their best, but it is a poor substitute for having another person with a bond of love and familiarity with you at the end of life.

It can be a helpless feeling, sitting at the bedside of a dying person. We are an action-oriented culture and we want to fix things. But if it is really time for a person's life to come to an end, there is no fixing it. So our presence is mostly what our loved ones need from us in the end – it's a lot, but they really need little more.



Hospice and the Holidays:

Coping and Finding Comfort

Holidays are meant to be a time for families to enjoy each other. For many, big meals and special traditions are part of what make the holiday season special.

For some, traditions can be a reminder of loss and hosting visitors from out of town might be stressful. Grieving family members may simply not feel like celebrating.

For patients, the holidays can also be difficult. They may feel sad or fearful. Some are not physically up to traveling or enjoying company. Their family members might feel a sense of urgency to make what might be a last holiday together special.

Spartanburg Regional Hospice social workers and chaplains encourage patients and families to consider how they want to approach the holidays.

"We encourage people to have a plan – to think about what they'll be doing and who they'll be doing it with. That can make things a little easier," said Christi Foster, a licensed social worker and Director of Quality and Compliance with Spartanburg Regional Hospice.

Foster emphasized that it's important to be honest with yourself and with loved ones. If you can't handle a group of visitors, say so. If you need help with plans and arrangements, don't be afraid to ask.

"Be honest with family and friends so they know how they can help you," Foster said. "We don't always want to admit it, but we all need help, and there's no shame in it."

The holidays, of course, are a time of important traditions for many families. Foster said some grieving families find comfort in those traditions, but others may benefit from making changes.

"Maybe it was the husband's job every year to put the angel on top of the Christmas tree, and now he's gone," Foster said. "The family might decide not to decorate a tree that first year after his passing."

While families are grappling with such decisions, hospice works to provide support. Each year before Thanksgiving, team members who work in bereavement support host a program called "Coping with the Holidays." They talk about issues that can arise during the holidays and offer suggestions on how to handle them. Participants have the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings with one another.

Spartanburg Regional Foundation's Hospice Special Needs Fund provides prepared meals at Thanksgiving and Easter for those with a family member in hospice care or whose loved one has recently passed away. Spartanburg Regional Hospice staff and volunteers pick up the meals, which are prepared at Wade's Restaurant in Spartanburg and deliver them to families' homes. The meals feed up to 12 and give families the chance to have a nice gathering without the stress involved in planning and cooking a large meal.

Some hospice patients have little or no family in the area and face the prospect of being alone during the holidays. Spartanburg Regional Hospice caregivers go the extra mile for these patients. They decorate nursing home rooms,

Tips on Coping with Grief During the Holidays

- **Take care of yourself physically.**
- **Be prepared for emotional ups and downs.**
- **Don't pressure yourself to please everyone or have a "big" holiday.**
- **Share your feelings with friends and loved ones or a professional counselor.**
- **Ask a friend or family member to help with cooking or decorating.**
- **Find a meaningful activity to memorialize a loved one.**
- **Set aside holiday traditions if doing so eases sadness.**
- **Come up with new holiday traditions.**

bring treats and even use the Hospice Special Needs Fund to purchase gifts for patients without family.

Staff members at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home decorate the lobby and common areas and light trees outside patient patios. Caregivers work with family members to decorate and personalize patient rooms. CDs are available for those who want to listen to holiday music.

Katie Harbin, a chaplain at the hospice home, said the hope is to achieve an appropriate balance – creating a seasonal atmosphere while "affirming what you're going through."

"It's a season of hope and excitement, but we acknowledge that people are grieving," she said.

She noted that families are grieving for their terminally ill loved one, but also for the fact that future holidays will never be the same.

Still, it's important for Spartanburg Regional Hospice caregivers to enable families to celebrate and create memories. As Foster put it, "We try to make the holidays enjoyable even in difficult times."

*To learn more about Spartanburg Regional Hospice bereavement services, please contact Christi Foster at **864-560-3856**.*



Embracing Change

One Family's First Holiday Season After the Passing of a Loved One

Faye Howell said the holidays last year were difficult for her great-granddaughter Lily after her “Papa” died in early November.

Howell, who is raising 13-year-old Lily, had a close friend, James. They became good friends after their spouses died in the late 1990s.

“We all went to church together,” Howell said.

The two never married and were not romantic, Howell said, but they became very close friends. He helped her with her lawn and other chores at her home in Inman, and she helped him with meals and cleaning. When he was in poor health, Howell was his primary caregiver.

Along the way, they began to treat one another as family, and James became a grandfather figure to Lily.

“James never had any children – he just had Lily,” Howell said. “And he was the only grandpa she ever had.”

James was part of the holiday season each year. At Christmas, he bought Lily a present and they would all celebrate together.

Howell recognized that Lily’s first year without their friend would be tough, so she decided to change the routine. Lily went to her mother’s house for Christmas day, even though for Howell, “It was so lonely.”

Still, she continued some traditions. They waited until later than usual, but she and Lily put up a tree. And Howell made sure Lily took part in Christmas programs at their church.

Meanwhile, Spartanburg Regional Hospice helped lift their spirits by bringing a meal for Howell and family members. The meal, provided through Spartanburg Regional Foundation’s Hospice Special Needs Fund, was enough to feed 12 people. Howell prepared additional turkey and stuffing herself and invited her family and numerous members of James’ family to dinner.

She said it was great way for everyone to celebrate his life.

“It was very special for Lily. She was able to let go,” she said. “And she played her violin for everybody. I’m grateful that we had that enjoyment.”

Spartanburg Regional Hospice continues to help in other ways. Lily takes part in its bereavement counseling program, and Howell believes Lily’s relationship with hospice social worker Beth Cutshall is making a valuable difference.

As for the upcoming holidays, Howell isn’t sure that things will be much easier this year. But she is determined to handle the emotional ups-and-downs and be flexible for Lily’s sake.



Thank You FOR YOUR Thanksgiving Gift

Because of you, we were able to deliver
more than 110 meals this Thanksgiving to our
hospice patients and their families.

If you would like to make a donation or would like
more information on our holiday meal program,
contact Shelly Sinclair at 864-560-6467 or visit
RegionalFoundation.com.



Spartanburg Regional
Foundation

PO Box 2624, Spartanburg, SC 29304
RegionalFoundation.com

Devoted Caregiver Grateful for Hospice Support



It would be difficult to find a more devoted husband than Tommy Willard. His wife, Marcia, has been in decline with Alzheimer's disease for more than six years, and he has committed his life to her wellbeing.

Tommy keeps a weekly routine. On Sunday mornings he goes to church. A family member visits on Wednesdays, so Tommy has the chance to run errands. Otherwise, he is nearly always at their home near Lake Blalock, providing Marcia with round-the-clock support.

He says Spartanburg Regional Hospice has made it possible for him to keep Marcia comfortable at home.

"I can't praise them enough," he said. "I don't know what I would have done without Spartanburg Regional Hospice."

Tommy looks forward to seeing Marcia's caregivers, commenting that they provide her with excellent support and bring him comfort and friendship.

On a Friday afternoon in early September, Spartanburg Regional Hospice chaplain Marie Graeper came to the Willards' home on one of her regular visits. Sometimes she will pray or read scripture by Marcia's bedside, but mostly she spends time with Tommy.

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spends time with Tommy.

"I want to allow him time to talk about his feelings," she said.

Sometimes he will reflect on his life with Marcia. Their church was a big part of their life, and they raised a daughter and a son together. Two of their granddaughters were basketball players at Dorman High School and later played at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Marcia loved going to their games.

"That was her life," said Tommy. "She wouldn't miss a game."

Graeper encourages Tommy to think about the future, too. But he said that at this point, "Right now is what matters."

Tommy said Marcia's mother suffered from Alzheimer's. Marcia took care of her in the same house where the Willards now live. Tears came to Tommy's eyes as he recalled Marcia's initial decline. He said she knew she was losing memory and cognitive function and she understood what could lie ahead.

A friend suggested to Tommy that he contact Spartanburg Regional Hospice. He wasn't sure he needed the support but agreed to meet with the hospice team.

"They came out, and I've never looked back," he said. "They've become like family."

If you or someone you know may benefit from a Hospice referral, call 864-560-CARE.

Bird Feeders Lift Spirits at Hospice Home



A sight as simple as a bird hopping and pecking for food can lift the spirits of those going through their most difficult times, says Spartanburg Regional Hospice volunteer Mike Smith.

"It is simple," he said. "But it's more of a blessing than many of us realize."

So as part of his volunteer efforts at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home, Smith pays special attention to the bird feeders outside each patient suite.

He and his wife, Sybil, decided to become hospice volunteers following the 2015 death of her father, who had been a Spartanburg Regional Hospice patient.

"We had been blessed by the hospice support we received and believed it was time to give back," Sybil said.

On the Smiths' first visit to the hospice home as volunteers, they were walking around the property and noticed that some of the bird feeders might need replacing. Mike approached hospice staff to see what could be done, and director Kim Ross suggested he visit the Wild Birds Unlimited store to see what was available. He reported back, and Ross gave the OK for the purchase of new bird feeders.

During his and Sybil's Sunday visits to the hospice home, Mike makes sure all the feeders are full. He said the birds eat as much as 60 pounds of bird seed each week.

"I joke that I'm just waiting for them to eat so much they can't fly," he said.

Mike said he hears from families that they appreciate the sights and sounds of visiting birds.

"Some even push their loved one's bed to the double-doors so they can enjoy it, too," he said.

Though he's become known at the hospice home as the keeper of the bird feeders, it's not his only contribution. Mike and Sybil visit patient rooms and visit with families. They get snacks or soft drinks for visitors. Sometimes they serve as greeters in the lobby.

Mike, who is a retired pastor, said volunteering at the hospice home is a unique opportunity to minister to those in need. Every situation is different, and they encounter people in a wide variety of emotional states.

"Whatever is needed, we try to do," he said.

And when it's time for them to head back to their home in Lyman, the Smiths feel grateful for the experience.

"We always leave feeling blessed," he said.



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with Spartanburg Regional Hospice, contact Kelly Hall at 864- 560-5636.

Board Leader Passionate About Raising Awareness



Mary Hope Rhodes became familiar with Spartanburg Regional Hospice while her husband's law partner was a patient.

"They were so good to him," she said. "The care and support and love were just incredible!"

When a friend approached her about serving on the Spartanburg Regional Foundation Hospice Division Board, she was pleased by the invitation.

"Spartanburg Regional Hospice is such an extraordinary gift to our community," she said.

Rhodes now chairs the hospice board, a group providing guidance and fundraising support for the Foundation's Hospice Special Needs Fund. This fund provides a wide range of support for Spartanburg Regional Hospice patients and their families, including medications, hospital beds, basic household supplies, and payment of utility bills for those with a qualifying financial need.

Notably, the fund also pays for prepared meals at Thanksgiving and Easter for hospice patients and their families. Rhodes enjoys delivering these meals and has seen the impact the program has on patients and their loved ones first hand.

"There's a feeling of appreciation and gratitude," she said. "It offers hope and support."

Rhodes is in her sixth year as a hospice division board member. One of the most valuable aspects of the experience, she said, has been the opportunity to learn more about Spartanburg Regional Hospice – the dedication of its staff members and the range of services it offers.

"When our board members understand the vision of the Spartanburg Regional Hospice program, it helps us to be effective ambassadors," she said.

The Foundation's Hospice Division puts on a fundraising luncheon each spring called Hope Blooms for Hospice. Rhodes gave opening remarks at the 2017 event. She was inspired by the turnout and the show of support for Spartanburg Regional Hospice.

"Hope Blooms allows the hospice division to pay tribute to staff, volunteers and donors, and it educates the community on the many ways that hospice serves individuals and families during this most difficult time in their lives," she said.

Rhodes is a wonderful ambassador for Spartanburg Regional Hospice, said Shelly Sinclair, Director of Philanthropy with Spartanburg Regional Foundation and liaison to the Hospice Division Board.

"Mary Hope is passionate about the work of our hospice program, and she does a great job helping to raise awareness," Sinclair said. "We are fortunate to have her support and leadership."

If you are interested in serving as a Spartanburg Regional Foundation Hospice Division Board member, please contact Shelly Sinclair at 864-560-6467.

Dinner Honors Volunteers

On Oct. 19, Spartanburg Regional Hospice honored volunteers with a dinner at the Piedmont Club. About 50 volunteers and their guests were on hand along with Spartanburg Regional Hospice staff and Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System leaders.

Those who give their time were recognized for milestone hours of service. Several awards were presented, including the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home Volunteer of the Year, the At-Home Hospice Volunteer of the Year and the William Rhodes Cantrell Award.



Volunteers do so much to support the Spartanburg Regional Hospice program. They visit with patients in their homes, greet families at the Hospice Home, help with remembrance events and more. We are grateful to our volunteers.



Pictured are: (left) Wayne Casasanta, recipient of the William Rhodes Cantrell Volunteer of the Year Award, with Kim Ross, Director of Spartanburg Regional Hospice and Palliative Care; (right) Hospice Chaplain Katie Harbin with Sharon Robinson, who was recognized as Home Hospice Volunteer of the Year.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer with Spartanburg Regional Hospice, call Kelly Hall at 864- 560-5636.

LIGHT UP A LIFE – A Time to Celebrate and Remember



For 37 years, Spartanburg Regional Hospice has walked with thousands of patients and family members through their most fragile moments. The annual **Light Up A Life** celebration allows for a time at the end of each year to pause and remember loved ones and friends.

Thousands of sparkling lights illuminate beautiful trees, each light in memory of someone special. The event includes music, a time for reflection, a ceremonial balloon release and light refreshments.

Participants who make a donation receive a special ornament. Donations, which benefit the Foundation's Hospice Special Needs Fund, can be made online at **RegionalFoundation.com/events/light-up-a-life/** or by mailing a check, made payable to Spartanburg Regional Foundation, to PO Box 2624, Spartanburg, SC 29304.

Light Up A Life will take place in front of Beaumont Mill, 700 N. Pine St., Dec. 7. There will be two services, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Each will last about 30 minutes. For more information, please contact Shelly Sinclair at 864-560-6467.

Hospice Ride has Special Significance for Club Member

The rumble of motorcycle engines flowed through Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties on the morning of Aug. 26. It was the Southern Legends Motorcycle Club's twelfth annual Spartanburg Regional Hospice Ride.

More than 170 club members, friends and fellow motorcycle enthusiasts set out from the Shrine Club on the eastside of Spartanburg for a two-hour ride. They rode to raise money

for Spartanburg Regional Foundation's Hospice Special Needs Fund.



Southern Legends member Tommy Branton has always enjoyed the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Ride – being on his bike and catching up with friends he doesn't see often. But this year's ride was especially

significant for him. His father was a Spartanburg Regional Hospice patient and passed away just weeks before the ride.

Tommy's father was diabetic who underwent amputation of both legs. Infection set in and was too much to overcome. He said caregivers at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home go above and beyond what you'd expect for patients and their loved ones.

"I couldn't have asked for better treatment," he said.

Tommy is proud that 100 percent of money raised from the ride supports the Hospice Special Needs Fund. The Southern Legends sell tickets (they pay for their own tickets, Tommy pointed out), T-shirts and sponsorships for the event, which also includes a live auction.

The Hospice Special Needs Fund supports Spartanburg Regional Hospice patients and their families in a variety of ways. Patients who qualify may receive financial assistance for basic needs such as groceries and power bills. Funds are also used to create special memories for patients and families, and the special needs fund helps provide Thanksgiving and Easter meals for hospice patients and their families.

"We are so grateful to the Southern Legends and to everyone who participates in the annual ride," said Shelly Sinclair, director of philanthropy with Spartanburg Regional Foundation. "They are a great group of folks and have been a wonderful partner to us over the past 12 years. Their efforts to support our Hospice Special Needs Fund really make a difference for people in our community."



DAISY Award Recipient

Honored By Grateful Family

Spartanburg Regional Hospice nurse Maurice Hood was recently honored with the DAISY Award for Extraordinary Nurses. This award is part of the DAISY Foundation's program to recognize the super-human efforts nurses perform every day. The Post-acute care division gives out this award quarterly, and nurses can be nominated by patients, families and colleagues.

Hood was nominated by a man whose father was in hospice care. The affection and appreciation this man had for Maurice was truly genuine. Losing his father was not easy, but the care and support his father and the family received through Spartanburg Regional Hospice made it a positive experience. This gentleman used the word "love" when he described his father's feelings toward Maurice.



DAISY Award recipients at Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System compete for the annual Jo Ann McMillan Award for nursing excellence. McMillan was the first Executive Director of Spartanburg Regional Foundation.



Every moment matters

Hospice care for a loved one is never an easy decision. That is why Spartanburg Regional Hospice is dedicated to providing individualized excellent care, wherever a person calls home. Because we are part of Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, patients have seamless access to medical services including our hospice home and special needs fund. This give you peace of mind so you can spend less time on planning and more time cherishing those special moments.

Spartanburg Regional Hospice, recipient of a caregiver satisfaction award, serves families in Spartanburg, Greenville, Cherokee and Union counties.

To learn more, call us at 864-560-CARE or visit us at SpartanburgRegional.com.



Dates to Remember - 2017/2018

Light Up A Life

Beaumont Mill – 700 N. Pine St.

Dec. 7: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Each service will last about 30 minutes.

Grief Support

Groups meet for four weeks at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home beginning:

Jan. 11: 6 – 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays

March 7 – 10: 11:30 a.m. on Wednesdays

We offer support groups that meet once a month on the following days at the Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home:

Dec. 14: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Jan. 17: 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Feb. 22: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

March 22: 6 – 7:30 p.m.

Grief support groups provide a safe and supportive environment to talk about thoughts and feelings, and to find support.

Service of Remembrance

A time to remember our loved ones

Jan. 23: 6 p.m.

March 27: 6 p.m.

Hospice Office – 1530 Drayton Rd, Spartanburg

Call Christi Foster at **864-560-3856** for information on these programs.

Myths About Hospice

Myth: Hospice is only for the last days of life.

Hospice patients can receive care for six months or longer depending on the course of their illness.

Hospice care is most beneficial when there is sufficient time to manage pain and symptoms, establish a trusting relationship and accomplish end-of-life goals are important to the patient.

Myth: Once a patient accepts hospice care, there is no turning back.

Patients can stop hospice care at any time and return to a curative-based approach to treatment.

Myth: Hospice care is all the same.

There are over 40 agencies providing hospice care in our area.

Not all agencies provide the same level of care. Ask specifically for Spartanburg Regional Hospice.

Myth: Hospice care is only for cancer patients.

More than 40 percent of Spartanburg Regional Hospice patients have a diagnosis other than cancer.

Myth: Hospice is where you go when there is nothing more a doctor can do.

Hospice is not a place but a philosophy of care providing medical, emotional and spiritual care focusing on comfort, quality of life and living life to the fullest.

Myth: Choosing hospice means giving up hope.

Hospice provides comfort and quality of life when the hope for cure is no longer possible. The hope for living each day to the fullest becomes the focus.

Myth: Hospice is just for the elderly.

Hospice is for anyone facing a life-limiting illness, regardless of age.

After the patient's death, hospice care ends.

Hospice provides counseling services for families at no cost that deal specifically with grief and coping after the loss of a loved one. Spartanburg Regional Hospice provides grief support for the community, whether the associated loss is a hospice death or not.

For more information about Hospice care or to make a referral, call 864-560-CARE (2273).



Spartanburg Regional Hospice Home during the holiday season.

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For hospice referral information, please call 864-560-CARE

Contact info for Foundation:

PO Box 2624
Spartanburg, SC 29304
RegionalFoundation.com
864-560-6727

