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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, 1.55 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.

As Karen Panozzo, director of clinical services noted, “The opportunity to serve our patients and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic is a true representation of the stewardship and integrity demonstrated each day by the Harbor team, leadership and the Board of Directors. COVID-19 fatigue is plaguing our families, patients, staff and the entire community of which we serve. However, we have stepped up, filling roles beyond their normal positions, forging forward to ensure patients and families are cared for and supported at the end of life, while keeping everyone they come into contact with protected and safe.”

“**Caring for others, no matter how difficult the circumstances, is what we do.**” And we do this because “how people die remains in the memory of those who live on” – Cicely Saunders (1918-2005) nurse, physician, writer, founder of the hospice movement.

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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