

What is the CHC Difference? Ten Things You Should Know

Mark M Murray, President & CEO

There are at least 32 different hospice programs operating within our eight-county service area. Why refer to Center for Hospice Care (CHC)? Here are ten important reasons:

* **By far the most experience of any other hospice program in the region.**

With over 37 years and more than 34,000 patients served, no other hospice provider comes even close to the level of experience and proficiency as CHC.

* **Freestanding Medicare Certified hospice inpatient units.**

There are only seven freestanding hospice inpatient units in Indiana. Two of them are owned and operated by CHC. Conveniently located in South Bend and Elkhart, last year more than 660 patients had their uncontrolled acute pain and other symptoms managed at our units. In the spring of next year, we expect to break ground at our expanding Mishawaka Campus on a new, state-of-the-art inpatient unit with 12 private patient rooms all facing the beautiful St. Joseph River.

* **The most qualified medical staff.**

While it's common for many hospice programs to have just one part-time doctor, CHC has three board certified hospice and palliative medicine physicians and a fourth certified hospice medical director on staff. Added to this are three nurse practitioners who are all certified in hospice and palliative medicine. Nowhere else in this region will you find a medical team with this level of clinical expertise in hospice and palliative medicine. In fact, CHC's clinical bench is so deep we train Fellows who are becoming board certified in hospice and palliative medicine for both the Mayo Clinic and the Indiana University School of Medicine.

* **Center for Palliative Care Outpatient Clinic**

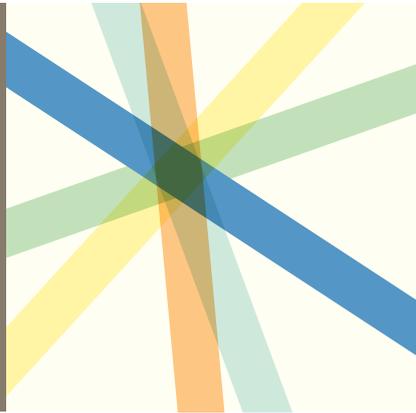
CHC operates a freestanding, independent palliative care outpatient clinic at its Mishawaka Campus. The Center for Palliative Care accepts appointments via physician referrals for palliative care consultations. The consultation program is specifically developed to address the complex symptom management needs of patients with advanced serious illnesses. The palliative care consultation program is structured to enhance the care provided by area primary care and specialists to offer expert evaluation along with suggestions to assist referring physicians in managing those needs. Following a consultation, we report back to the referring physician with observations and recommendations. Consultations are by physician referral and appointment only.

continued on page 3



choices to make the most of life™

hospice & physician
team
newsletter



newsletter



Mark M Murray
President & CEO

When it comes to experience, quality, caring, compassion, and having the programming in place to meet the diverse clinical and social needs of patients and families, there is only one clear choice: **Center for Hospice Care.**

Hospice Care Benefits Patients and their Families

by Craig Harrell, Director of Marketing & Access

Recently I was told a story by a local practicing physician who had a patient that was struggling with breathing issues due to his illness. The patient was adamant about not returning to the hospital, which unfortunately had become the all too frequent scenario over recent months. The physician ultimately had 'The Conversation' with the patient and his wife about how he isn't going to recover from his illness and that he could be helped by hospice. The physician was familiar with our *BreatheEasy* program and the success Center for Hospice Care (CHC) has had in keeping patients out of the hospital (96.2% in 2016) and felt his patient could greatly benefit from our services. Once the patient came into our program we were able to address his issues which resulted in a 40 lb. loss of excess fluid in one week, which markedly improved his quality of life.



It was also interesting to hear some of the struggles the patient's wife had in dealing with the situation. Her first reaction was to lash out at the physician for abandonment of the patient (although the physician chose to continue following the patient in our program), along with many of the myths that now follow hospice such as 'giving up' and a 'hastened death'. Even after her husband's marked improvement one week into our program, she was ready to have him discharged because he was 'better'. Through the physician's explanation (and patience), she was ultimately convinced that hospice care was where he needed to be.

We at CHC understand that having conversations with patients about end-of-life choices has become increasingly difficult due to a host of reasons. CHC staff is always available to partner with the physician and present hospice as an option. CHC has served over 34,000 patients throughout North Central Indiana in its 37 year history. We've experienced the many changes in healthcare over the years and we have great expertise in talking with patients and their families about life-limiting illness. We can meet with patients anywhere, anytime, to discuss their health needs, learn their personal feelings and desires, and introduce the concept of hospice care. These conversations usually go more smoothly than families imagined possible and are often welcomed by the patient. When area residents were surveyed, +82% responded that doctors should discuss hospice options with the family so the family and patient can make an informed decision.

Although hospice is a *minimum* six month service (patients can be recertified indefinitely if still appropriate), we increasingly see both patients and physicians wait until weeks or days before death to suggest hospice services. Consistently, the number one comment on our Family Satisfaction Surveys is, "We wished we would have known about hospice sooner!" Once they begin our care, a burden is lifted from their shoulders. A former law enforcement officer turned CHC volunteer recently said, "For families, when hospice arrives, it's similar to when the police show up during a crisis. There's a tremendous sense of relief."

We also realize that the organization to which you refer your patients will ultimately have an effect on you. They will base an opinion, good or bad, on the experience that they have while in hospice. In 2016, 97% of families responding to our surveys said they had a positive experience with CHC, while 98% said they would recommend our services to others. You can be confident knowing that your patients will continue to receive outstanding care, but *CHC must be specified in your orders.*

What are some signs that your patient may be ready for hospice care?

- An increase in pain, nausea, breathing distress or other symptoms;
- Repeated hospitalizations or trips to the ER;
- Failure to "bounce back" after medical set-backs occur;
- Increasing assistance needed for walking, eating, bathing, dressing and/or going to the toilet;
- Decreasing alertness – patient is emotionally withdrawn, sleeping more or having increased difficulty with comprehension.

What are some signs that the family could benefit from hospice care?

- They are physically and/or emotionally exhausted from caring for their loved one;
- The family is feeling isolated because of care-giving demands or the uncertainties they feel about their loved one's future;
- The patient or members of the family appear to need emotional support to cope with the impending death;
- They are overwhelmed by the myriad of physical, financial, emotional and spiritual concerns arising because of the illness.

Our Service Promises to You

- As the area's first and most experienced hospice program, we will provide your patients and families with the most comprehensive range of end-of-life care solutions.
- To provide the best care and expertise for your patients, our three board certified Hospice and Palliative Medicine physicians will work with you to the extent you desire.
- A CHC staff member will directly answer your call 24/7 whenever you call 1-800-HOSPICE*. There is no answering service.
- Your patients will have access to the area's only free-standing inpatient hospice facilities for symptom management, crisis care, and/or respite care.
- Dedicated CHC interdisciplinary staff is standing by 24/7 to provide emergency nursing, psychosocial, spiritual and emotional support to your patients and families.

*1-800-HOSPICE from within our service area. Outside of our service area, please call 1-800-413-9083

What is the CHC Difference? Ten Things You Should Know (cont.)

* A CHC staff nurse answers the phone after hours. No answering service.

CHC is proud to say we don't believe in answering services or anything that would delay emergency care for a terminally ill patient. That's why after-hours calls to 1-800-HOSPICE are answered directly and triaged by a CHC staff nurse seven days a week.

* Specialty programming to prevent hospital readmissions for CHF and COPD.

CHC clinical staff receive additional education and training to continue the ongoing implementation of our specialty programs for CHF and COPD. Our HeartWize and *BreatheEasy* programs have been remarkably successful in keeping CHC patients from seeking care in the emergency rooms. Last year 317 patients participated in HeartWize which had a 99% success rate of keeping patients from visiting the ER. Likewise, *BreatheEasy* had 213 participants and a 98% effectiveness rate of patients not seeking care at the ER. Moreover, this was not just during a 30-day window following their admission to CHC, but rather during their entire length of stay as a CHC patient.



* All four, core hospice professional disciplines are available 24/7.

Hospice care is an interdisciplinary team-based model of care. CHC takes this concept seriously. While every hospice should have at least a nurse on call after hours for emergency visits, CHC takes this several steps further. Because pain and comfort isn't always physical, CHC has social workers and spiritual care counselors on call and available around the clock to counsel and address existential and spiritual pain and discomfort. Members of our medical staff, including staff physicians and nurse practitioners are also available 24/7.

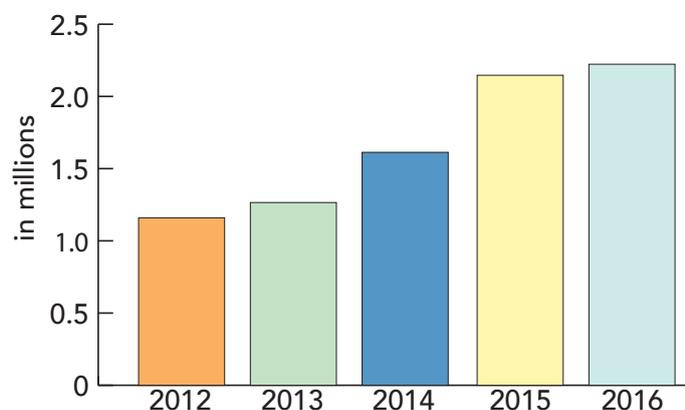
* Quality care and patient / family satisfaction.

Family / caregiver satisfaction surveys continue to remain extraordinarily high, which provides evidence of not only high quality care, but also the delivery of a holistic suite of caring services to meet a wide variety of individual patient and family needs. On Press Ganey surveys during 2016 the question, "Generally speaking, did you have a positive experience with Center for Hospice Care" generated a "Yes" response 97% of the time. "Would you recommend Center for Hospice Care to others," generated a "Yes" response 98% of the time. There were 1,064 responses to these two questions.

* CHC gives back.

In 1980, CHC made a promise to this community that nobody who was eligible for hospice care would be turned away due to lack of insurance, underinsurance, or an ability to pay for their care. Last year, the value of write off's, adjustments, discounts, and charity care totaled \$2,222,810, the largest ever in a single year and 4% higher than the previous year.

Total Charity Care Last 5 Years



* CHC is there for your complex patients and wherever their "home" is located.

Unlike some hospice programs, CHC routinely accepts patients with complex treatment issues and works collaboratively with the attending physician, and when necessary, ancillary healthcare providers. CHC also cares for patients wherever they call home. CHC is contracted to provide hospice services to more than 90 nursing homes, group homes, assisted living centers and most all local hospitals. We have also provided care to patients in jail and at a homeless shelter. However, most of our care, about two-thirds, continues to be delivered in the residential home setting.

We admit it. We believe the evidence is clear. When it comes to experience, quality, caring, compassion, and having the programming in place to meet the diverse clinical and social needs of patients and families, there is only one clear choice: Center for Hospice Care. To insure CHC cares for your patients, please don't simply say or write the word "Hospice." Specifically write, and have your staff write, "Center for Hospice Care" on the referral and / or the order.

Not all hospice programs are alike. To paraphrase Mr. Gump, "Saying 'call hospice' or simply writing the word 'hospice' is like a box of chocolates – you never know which one your patients are going to get." If you desire your patients to get CHC please be specific and insist on Center for Hospice Care.



choices to make the most of life™

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Avoid Hospital Readmissions with CHC's Exclusive Programs

Center for Hospice Care has developed innovative programs to help meet the needs of our patients, including HeartWize for advanced heart disease and BreatheEasy for COPD. Each program addresses the unique needs of patients affected by these diseases.

Diseases of the heart and lungs now comprise 38% of the diagnoses for the more than 2,000 patients seen by CHC each year. Our specialty programs take an interdisciplinary approach and include the use of emotional and spiritual support for the patient and family.

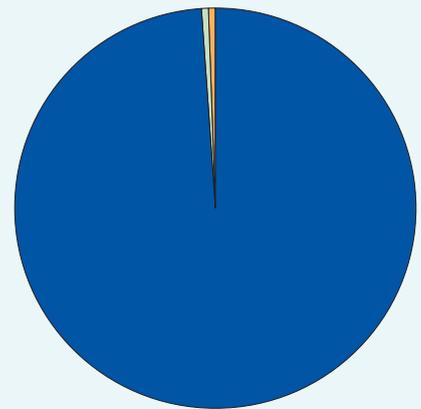
CHC has seen great success with both programs, particularly in the area of reducing hospital readmissions. Now, we have a year's worth data to prove it and we're pleased to present it here.

- Patients that didn't go to the hospital
- ER Visits
- Hospital Admissions

2016 STATISTICS



213 Total Patients



HeartWize
A specialized treatment program of Center for Hospice Care

317 Total Patients

