

MISSION HOSPICE

A HISTORY OF CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Since 1979, thousands of volunteers and donors have supported Mission Hospice and its goal of providing compassionate end-of-life care and education.

Here are some highlights of our history, through January 2019.

September 1978: **A seed is planted**

Rev. Warren Dale, Chaplain at Mills Peninsula Hospital, introduces two women interested in end-of-life care, Mac Nash and Helen Lagen. They immediately join forces and recruit others to help further such care on the San Francisco Peninsula.

September 1978: **The group grows**

Mac Nash, Helen Lagen, Rev. Dale, Edith Morris, Karolina Soley, Marilyn Stone, Betty Obert, Helen Campbell, Ruth Teel, Emily Brown, and Evelyn Grant meet at Helen Lagen's home. They form an organization with Helen Lagen and Mac Nash as co-chairs. The group raises funds to send two representatives, Stone and Dale, to the National Hospice Organization meeting in Washington D.C., and the International Seminar on Terminal Care in Montreal.

March 1979: **Mission Hospice is incorporated**

A group of dedicated volunteers incorporates Mission Hospice as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with officers President Helen Lagen, Vice President Marguerite Nash, Secretary Helen Campbell, and Treasurer F.M. Donahoe.

The name is taken from the Mission Dolores Hospice built by the Spanish Padres. Located at the southwest corner of Baywood and El Camino Real in San Mateo, the original Mission Hospice served as a waystation for pilgrims that travelled El Camino.

March 1979: **Pierre Salmon volunteers as first Medical Director**

Dr. Pierre Salmon volunteers as Mission Hospice's first Medical Director. He organizes a Medical Advisory Committee of 25 physicians who develop criteria and educate the medical community about hospice care.

May 1979: **Support for startup mode**

The group receives grants from the Atkinson Foundation and The San Mateo Foundation to support community education efforts and hire Public Health Nurse Marilyn Stone as a part-time Patient Care Coordinator. The Burlingame Chapter of the American Red Cross donates office space, equipment, and telephone service.

August 1979: **Volunteers recruited and trained**

The Board of Directors puts out a call for volunteers to help with patient care, organizational leadership, and administrative tasks. All are asked to make a one-year commitment. Mission Hospice holds its first volunteer training session in September for a diverse group that includes a number of professional nurses.

October 1979: **First patient in hospice care**

The group begins caring for patients and families referred by physicians on the Medical Advisory Committee. Co-founder Mac Nash becomes Mission Hospice's first patient.

March 1980: **Focus on community education**

Mission Hospice continues its focus on education, both in the medical community and through a regular public forum series on topics relating to end of life.

March 1981: **Volunteers form "Friends of the Hospice"**

A group forms to raise community support for Mission Hospice, led by President Doncha Jegge, Vice President Becky Witter, Secretary Mary Ann Helmholtz, and Treasurer Mary Gullixon.

December 1981: **Dozens of physicians refer patients**

In just two years, 77 local physicians have referred a total of 300 patients to Mission Hospice for end-of-life care. All of this care was provided by trained volunteers.

February 1982: **Friends of the Hospice**

The Friends group holds its first gala fundraiser, with a "Showboat" theme. The black tie event, at the Galleria in San Francisco, featured dancing to Turk Murphy's jazz band. Tickets are \$50, and the event raises \$25,000 to support patient care.

April 1982: **Weller chairs Medical Advisory Committee**

Stephen Weller, M.D. becomes chairman of the medical advisory committee, which links the San Mateo County medical community to the volunteers who provide assistance and patient care.

June 1982: **Office moves near clinic and hospital**

The organization signs a lease for new, larger office space at 17 Baldwin Avenue in San Mateo – across from the San Mateo Clinic and Mills Hospital. The space is large enough for team meetings, volunteer orientations, and board meetings.

January 1984: **Volunteers form Mission Hospice Auxiliary**

Community volunteers come together to form the Mission Hospice Auxiliary to raise funds for patient care. June Lockwood is elected the first President.

July 1984: **Mission Hospice wins award**

Peninsula Community Foundation awards Mission Hospice the \$10,000 Theodore Lilienthal Award, recognizing it as “the area’s outstanding community agency.”

September 1984: **Educational forums expand**

Mission Hospice expands the community educational forums to include a series on death and dying in other cultures.

December 1984: **Loved ones remembered at “Light Up A Life”**

Mission Hospice organizes its first annual remembrance celebration, which will become a long-time tradition for those remembering and honoring loved ones.

February 1987: **Hospice care provided for 1000th patient**

In just seven years, Mission Hospice reaches a milestone: the group’s volunteers have provided end-of-life care for 1000 patients.

December 1988: **Carol Gray hired as Executive Director**

Mission Hospice hires Carol Gray, who had been serving as Patient Care Coordinator, as Executive Director – a position she holds until December 31, 2003.

February 1989: **Dr. Pierre Salmon retires as Medical Director**

Dr. Salmon had also served as the first president of the Northern California Hospice Association, which establishes the annual Pierre Salmon Award of Excellence to recognize individuals who have made a significant contribution to hospice or palliative care.

May 1989: **Mission Hospice celebrates 10 years**

The group now includes 45 volunteer caretakers and 4.5 paid staff members, and has cared for more than 1,300 terminally ill patients and their families throughout San Mateo County.

April 1990: **Bereavement support group forms**

To help grieving community members, Mission Hospice forms a free, regular support group led by social workers.

November 1990: **State regulates hospice programs**

Governor Deukmejian signs CA bill SB2622 (supported by Mission Hospice), which provides a clear definition of hospice care and establishes standards of care statewide.

November 1994: **2000th patient served**

In 15 years of service to the community, Mission Hospice has cared for 2000 hospice patients and families.

October 1995: **Mission Hospice becomes Medicare-certified**

By adding professional care staff to its group of trained volunteer caretakers, Mission Hospice becomes Medicare-certified, allowing it to be reimbursed (for the first time) for the hospice care it provides to Medicare patients.

January 1998: **First annual Bridge Day and Luncheon**

The Mission Hospice Auxiliary holds its first-ever Bridge Day and Luncheon, which becomes a popular annual tradition that supports patient services.

January 2002: **Education for physicians continues**

Mission Hospice continues its Education for Physicians on End-of-Life Care (EPEC) series with a seminar on pain management. Participating physicians earn Continuing Medical Education credits.

April 2002: **Mission Hospice volunteers honored**

San Mateo Mayor Sue Lempert presents Mission Hospice with a proclamation honoring its volunteers, who have given hundreds of thousands of hours of time to the community.

May 2002: **Program expands into new office**

Having outgrown its space at Trousdale Avenue, Mission Hospice moves into a new office at 20th Avenue in San Mateo.

July 2003: **“Last Tango in Paris” supports patients**

Mission Hospice Auxiliary volunteers organize their first formal fundraiser, “Last Tango in Paris.” Some 300 guests danced, ate, and bid on auction items, including a piano bench signed by Elton John, and a barbeque by Redwood City firefighters. The fun event raises almost \$70,000 to support hospice patients.

May 2004: **Outreach to minority communities**

Mission Hospice creates a program to reach out to underserved communities, involving the African American Community Health Advisory Committee and outreach to the Latino community.

January 2005: **Co-founder honored as she retires from Board**

At the organization’s annual meeting and community reception, the Board honors retiring Director Helen Lagen for her 25 years of board service.

March 2005: **Community demand for end-of-life planning grows**

The highly-publicized Terry Schiavo case raises awareness of the importance of end-of-life planning. Mission Hospice receives an overwhelming response to an offer of free Advance Health Care Directive forms.

January 2006: **First Lotus Award presented**

Mission Hospice creates the Lotus Award, recognizing individuals who have shown outstanding support of the organization. At the organization's annual meeting, the first annual award is presented to long-time volunteer Adella Harris.

January 2006: **Transitions program launches**

Mission Hospice increases its service with a free program that provides volunteer support and practical assistance for patients with a life-limiting illness who are not ready for hospice.

October 2007: **Dr. Ken Barnes named Medical Director**

After working as a primary care physician for 33 years, Dr. Ken Barnes is appointed the new Medical Director for Mission Hospice.

March 2008: **Dwight Wilson hired as CEO**

A long-time registered nurse with experience supervising care programs at the Veterans' Administration, Wilson joins Mission Hospice as CEO.

March 2008: **First "Night of Fun" fundraiser**

Volunteers from the Peninsula Italian American Social Club organize the "Night of Fun" dinner-dance, which will go on to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to support Mission Hospice.

May 2009: **Underserved communities reached through communities of faith**

Mission Hospice reaches out to traditionally underserved African-American and Hispanic families with a new program that provides information about end-of-life care through communities of faith.

October 2009: **Volunteers keep vigil with patients**

Together with Mills-Peninsula Health Services, Mission Hospice sponsors the No One Dies Alone (NODA) program. Volunteers in the program sit vigil with hospice patients whose family and friends can't be with them.

November 2009: **Advanced Care Program added**

A third program is added to the organization's services. The Advanced Care program provides interdisciplinary palliative care in the home for patients with serious illness. The program becomes state-certified in June 2010.

August 2010: **New name reflects new services**

The organization rebrands itself as Mission Hospice & Home Care, reflecting its expanded service offering.

September 2010: **Growing organization moves to expandable office**

The growth of Mission Hospice brings a move to an office on South Amphlett Blvd. in San Mateo, a space that will accommodate more staff and services, and also allow continued growth.

July 2011: **Milestone reached**

Since its founding, Mission Hospice has served 6,000 patients and families.

December 2012: **Leadership Circles grow to a record number**

A record 154 families and organizations have joined Mission Hospice Leadership Circles by making annual gifts of \$1000 or more. These gifts help fill the gap between what Medicare reimburses for care, and the actual costs of providing quality care.

July 2013: **Legacy Society established**

Mission Hospice establishes a Legacy Society to recognize the generosity and foresight of those who have included the organization in their estate plans.

January 2014: **Growth continues**

Mission Hospice continues to serve a growing number of people with individualized, compassionate care. In 2013, the group cares for nearly 1000 patients, four times as many as it served five years prior.

July 2014: **Hospice house campaign begins**

Mission Hospice launches a \$6 million dollar capital campaign to support the opening of San Mateo County's first hospice house, designed specifically to support patients who cannot remain in their homes at the end of life.

August 2014: **Bereavement counselors begin specialized support groups**

Adding to the organization's free drop-in support groups, Mission Hospice bereavement counselors create specialized support groups for specific audiences, including those who have lost a child, a partner, or a parent.

August 2014: **Mission Hospice co-founder Helen Lagen dies**

Mission Hospice co-founder and first Board President, Helen Lagen, dies at age 101. Her Mission Hospice care team, including Dr. Gary Pasternak, Nurses Susan Freyberg and Heidi Keng, Social Worker Roby Newman, and Volunteer Craig Schroeder, often took Helen outside to her garden, where she could enjoy the sunshine and nature she so loved. Fittingly, Mission Hospice teams cared for both of the organization's co-founders.

February 2015: **Agency reaches 10,000-patient milestone**

In the years since its founding in 1979, Mission Hospice has provided end-of-life care for more than 10,000 patients and families.

June 2015: **Movies@Mission Hospice series launches**

As part of a growing effort to engage community members in conversations about end of life, the agency launches an annual film and discussion series.

October 2015: Mission House San Mateo opens

The first patients are admitted to the organization's hospice house in San Mateo. In the first year, the interdisciplinary team at Mission House will care for more than a hundred people ages 26-105, while also supporting their families.

November 2015: Auxiliary receives honors for success

The Mission Hospice Auxiliary is recognized as the "Outstanding Philanthropic Organization" of the year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Silicon Valley Chapter, and honored at the 28th annual Silicon Valley Philanthropy Day. Auxiliary volunteers raise hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to support Mission Hospice patients.

June 2016: State passes End of Life Option Act

Governor Brown signs the End of Life Option Act, which allows terminally ill adults with the capacity to make medical decisions to request prescriptions for aid-in-dying medication. Mission Hospice trains staff to support patients who make this decision.

March 2017: Take Charge coalition forms

Working with a community-based coalition, Mission Hospice launches tools and programs to help people talk about and plan for their end-of-life care long before it is needed.

August 2017: Joint Commission recognizes Mission Hospice

After an independent survey by The Joint Commission, Mission Hospice earns Community-Based Palliative Care Certification, adding to its existing Gold Seal of Approval for Home Care Accreditation – national symbols of quality health care.

January 2018: Donors complete Hospice House campaign

More than a thousand donors complete the ambitious \$6 Hospice House Campaign, to support the opening of Mission House San Mateo. Leadership donors include Sequoia Healthcare District, Mission Hospice Auxiliary, Mission Hospice Board of Directors, Peninsula Health Care District, and Mills-Peninsula Health Services.

May 2018: Campaign started for second hospice house

To support patients and clinicians in southern San Mateo County and Santa Clara County, Mission Hospice launches a capital campaign to open a second hospice house in Redwood City. Sequoia Healthcare District and Stanford Health Care make lead gifts.

July 2018: Agency honored as Top Workplace

Mission Hospice & Home Care is honored as one of the Bay Area's Top Workplaces, a recognition of the special culture at the organization, which now employs more than 200 people.

September 2018: **Volunteer corps reaches new high**

The agency has a total of 165 Direct Care volunteers from throughout the community, each of whom has completed a 26-hour training program. Ten of these volunteers are trained in pet therapy.

October 2018: **Mission House Woodside opens**

San Mateo County's second hospice house, just off Woodside Road in Redwood City, opens its doors to support patients and families in a peaceful, homelike setting.

November 2018: **"Night of Fun" fundraising committee honored**

The Peninsula Italian American Social Club "Night of Fun" Committee is honored as "Distinguished Volunteer Fundraisers" at Silicon Valley Philanthropy Day. Over the past 10 years, their popular dinner-dance has raised more than \$382,000 to support Mission Hospice patients.

January 2019: **Mission Hospice celebrates 40th anniversary**

When the founders of Mission Hospice started this nonprofit in 1979, they had no way of knowing that the small all-volunteer organization would grow to serve more than a thousand patients and families each year. Forty years later, we celebrate the volunteers, staff, donors, and partners who bring compassionate end-of-life care and education to people in the San Mateo and Santa Clara County area.

Mission Hospice Board Presidents	Mission Hospice Auxilliary Presidents	Lotus Award winners
<p>Helen Lagen, 1979-1981 Marjorie Bolton, 1982-1984 Thelma Kromhout, 1985-1986 Daphne Copenhagen, 1987-1988 Ellen Sawyer, 1989-1990 Joseph Galligan, 1991-1992 John Siebel, 1993 Marilyn Tinderholt, 1994-1995 Mervyn Blas, 1996-1997 Anne Colby, 1998-1999 Joseph McKane, 2000 Karen Leonardini, 2001 Stuart Coxhead, 2002-2003 Elaine Cohen, 2004 Kathryn Breaux, 2005 Michael Teutschel, 2006 Mary Chigos, 2007-2009 Sheila Young, 2010-2011 Maryann Raab, 2012-2013 Judy DiPaolo, 2014-2016 Dr. Stephen Weller, 2016-</p>	<p>June Lockwood, 1984-1985 Cathy LaPorte, 1985-1986 Sue Schmidt, 1986-1987 Dianne DelGrande, 1987-1988 Carol Tanzi, 1988-1989 Beatrice Swanson, 1989-1991 Audrey Knowles, 1991-1993 Joan Norcross, 1993-1995 Pat Avanesian, 1995-1997 Joyce Molinelli, 1997-1998 June Field, 1998-2000 Marilyn Hagberg, 2000-2002 Alice Flynn, 2002-2004 Sally Chambers, 2004-2005 June Field, 2005-2006 Glenda Carney & Mary Lehmkuhl, 2006-2010 June Field, 2010-2011 Marilyn Porto, 2011-2013 Yolanda Crosby, 2013-2015 Ann Nolan and Marilyn Porto, 2015-2017 Vibeke Gade, 2017-</p>	<p>Adella Harris, 2005 John Nash, 2006 Rev. Stuart Coxhead, 2007 Marian Soss, 2009 Robert Sawyer, 2010 Karen Leonardini, 2011 Dr. Stephen Weller, 2012 Juanita Andersen, 2013 June Field and Alice Flynn, 2014 Rev. Walter E. Johnson, M. Div., 2015 Kathryn Breaux, 2016 Michael Teutschel, 2017 Mary Chigos, 2018</p>