

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL CARE, REV. LINDA SIDDALL

What is spiritual care?

Spirituality encompasses all of the human experience, regardless of whether individuals consider themselves religious, spiritual, or neither. As chaplains, or spiritual counselors, we assess and discern that which brings meaning and purpose to our patients – that which is important at this time in their lives, however they define that.

Our interdisciplinary team of chaplains offers a mix of traditions and approaches, allowing us to provide quality support for each patient and family.

Spiritual care has long been an essential part of hospice care, but many are unaware that it addresses suffering related to forgiveness, meaning, relationships, and hope. At the end of life, patients and their families generally have spiritual pain in at least one of these areas, if not all four.

Mission Hospice & Home Care compassionately serves the whole person – physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our four chaplains approach patients and families as equals. We don't judge; we don't proselytize. By being present, listening to fears, anxieties, regrets, and hopes, we can help ease their suffering to allow some measure of peace.



Our chaplain team: *Rev. Don Mulford*, ordained Presbyterian minister; *Rev. Linda Siddall*, ordained minister in the Church of Religious Science; *Rachel Lopez Rosenberg*, graduate of UCSF Clinical Pastoral Education program; Jewish; Spanish-speaking; *Nelson Lao*, graduate of CPMC Clinical Pastoral Education program; Roman Catholic; Cantonese-speaking.

We also serve the whole family, in person and by phone. For suffering families for whom communication is difficult, a chaplain can be a surrogate – the safe person for each family member to talk to.

Most commonly, we help those whose suffering stems from issues around relationships and forgiveness, usually by listening

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Just released: Our 2013 Community Report

We're pleased to release our latest annual report to the community. Thanks to the extraordinary contributions of Mission Hospice donors and volunteers, we served more patients and families than ever before.

If you'd like a copy of the report, give us a call at 650.554.1000 – or you can download a PDF at www.MissionHospice.org/annualreports.shtml.

2013 by the numbers

Hospice

No. patients served: **605**
Age range: **17 – 105**
Total visits made: **16,656**

Advanced Care

No. patients served: **321**
Age range: **26 – 101**
Total visits made: **4,315**

Transitions

No. patients served: **62**
Age range: **34 – 100**
Total visits made: **701**

*Better service,
better care*

Dwight Wilson, CEO



We are always looking for ways to better care for our family, friends and neighbors in San Mateo County, and I'm pleased to report a few changes here at Mission Hospice.

Embodying a principle of hospice care – that no one should die alone – we've now trained direct care volunteers to sit vigil with patients and families at the very end of life. It's hard to describe the amount of support that can come from having someone by your side, and we are so grateful to our dedicated direct volunteers who make that possible.

*Second, to support our patients, families, and community members, we just launched a completely updated website at **MissionHospice.org**. This project was more than a year in the making, and we hope you'll take the time to visit our new sections, including Frequently Asked Questions about hospice, patient stories, and resources for caregivers.*

And finally, I am thrilled to report that we are in the preliminary stages of planning for San Mateo County's first-ever hospice house. A hospice house is a quiet, peaceful facility specifically designed and staffed to provide round-the-clock hospice care to patients in the last weeks of life. The focus of a hospice house is allowing patients to spend their last days with their loved ones while professional hospice staff attend to the patients' physical needs.

Because of the cost of land and construction in our area, there is not yet a single hospice house between San Francisco and Monterey. With a generous \$1 million commitment from the Sequoia Healthcare District, we are preparing for an ambitious capital campaign to make this dream a reality.

Toward that end, the Mission Hospice Auxiliary is preparing for their big gala fundraiser on October 11 – an event that will benefit our hospice house campaign. Please "Rock Around the Clock" with us and celebrate our work to care for our community members. – DW

Volunteers sit vigil with patients

Some of Mission Hospice & Home Care's direct care volunteers are now trained to vigil with patients and families at end of life or when families may benefit from extra support.

After completing the 20-hour direct care volunteer training, volunteers may participate in additional training concentrating on special situations such as watching vigil.

To find out more about our vigil program, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Hank Nourse at 650-554-1000.

Upcoming events

Bereavement Support Groups

Tuesdays from 6-7:30pm, or 1st and 3rd **Saturdays**, 10-11:30am

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

Open to all members of the community on a drop-in basis. We also offer a Spanish speaking support group at St. Anthony's Church in Menlo Park from 6-7:30pm on Wednesdays. For more information, please call 650-554-1000.

New Volunteer Informational Meetings

Tuesday, September 16, noon-1pm or 5:30-6:30pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

Interested in volunteering? Find out more, and sign up for our fall training.

For more information, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Hank Nourse at 650-554-1000 or hnourse@missionhospice.org.

Volunteer Training Sessions

Saturdays (October 4, 11, 18, and 25) from 10am-3pm and **Thursdays**

(October 16 and 23) from 6-8pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

To sign up, contact our Volunteer Coordinator Hank Nourse at 650-554-1000 or hnourse@missionhospice.org.

"Coping with the Holidays" Support Group

Mondays, November 10, 2014–January 12, 2015, from 6-7:30pm

Mission Hospice & Home Care, 1670 South Amphlett, Suite 300, San Mateo

Meeting for a total of eight sessions, this group will help grieving people manage the holiday season. Attendance is free; registration is required.

For more information, please call 650-554-1000.

Our Auxiliary's Fall Gala: Rock Around the Clock!

Saturday, October 11, 6pm

Peninsula Golf & Country Club, 701 Madera Drive, San Mateo

The Mission Hospice Auxiliary's annual Fall Gala – dinner, dancing, and live and silent auctions, all to benefit our hospice house campaign. To buy a ticket, visit

***www.MissionHospice.org/fallgala** or call 650-554-1000.*

Spiritual care...continued from front

and providing spiritual counseling. Other comforting forms of support may include music, guided visualization, complementary therapies, and other techniques for spiritual care.

Most importantly, the patients choose what they want, based on their needs and desires. For all of us at Mission Hospice & Home Care, it's important to let the patients and families express what they feel is most important for them at this tender time in their lives to allow for a peaceful passing. After all, it's their journey. 🐾

Isabel Stenzel, MSW, MPH, Bereavement Social Worker

Isabel Stenzel has been helping people express their feelings about end of life since she was young. She and her twin sister Anabel were survivors of a life-threatening childhood illness, witnessing firsthand the impact of loss among parents of their ill peers. As an adult, her volunteer advocacy for organ donation also exposed her to bereaved family members who found comfort and meaning in giving the gift of life. She learned from many mentors how to be resilient through loss.

But when Anabel was diagnosed with cancer in 2011, Isabel says “It was the most difficult time of my life.” When Anabel was ready for hospice care, Isabel chose Mission Hospice. “The personal connection we had with every member of the staff was extraordinary,” she said.

“The miracle we were praying for came in the form of (Mission Hospice Medical Director) Dr. Gary Pasternak. He brought so much care and patience.”

Earlier this year, Isabel learned that Mission Hospice was hiring a bereavement counselor – and she jumped at the chance to be a part of the organization. “There are very few times in our life when we are doing exactly what we are meant to do,” Isabel said. “All the experiences in my life have led to this moment.”

Isabel specializes in working with children. Her cozy office is welcoming, and packed with children’s toys, books, and – importantly – art supplies of all kinds. “If children don’t have the

words to express themselves, they can show their feelings through art. Grief is really a form of energy that needs to come out.”



Isabel specializes in helping grieving children express their feelings through art and stories.

She also understands the great power of writing. Isabel started writing when she was about 10, published a memoir at 35, and credits the art form for helping her understand her own experiences.

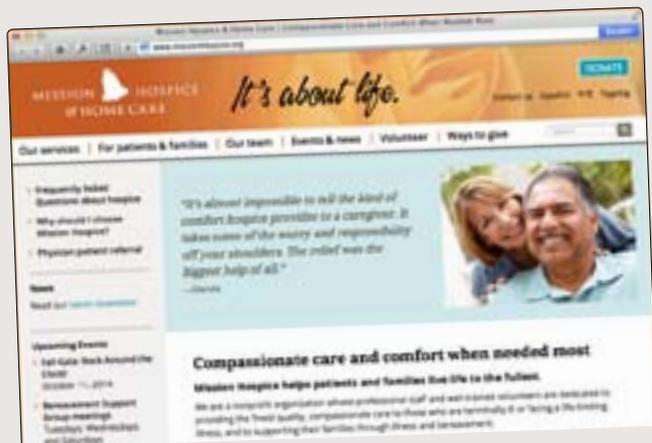
“Writing helped me reorganize and gain perspective on what I’d been through. That’s when I realized that writing about people who have died can be a difficult but transformative experience.” Having facilitated writing groups for four years, Isabel is eager to offer them to Mission Hospice family members.

Writing Through Loss is a new eight-week support group designed to help grieving adults express themselves. By limiting her workshops to 14 people, Isabel feels that she can help people both write and listen. “People of all backgrounds and all experiences come together with one thing in common: their emotional pain, and their willingness to face it and move through it, and to write and share.”

“My whole purpose as a bereavement counselor,” says Isabel, “is to let people know that love doesn’t end when the patient dies. As humans, we create and live out our stories. When someone

dies, that’s all we have left. If we keep sharing the stories, the loved one stays alive.” 🐦

Our fall “Writing through Loss” Support Group is full; the next two groups will begin January and April 2015. For more information, call 650-554-1000.

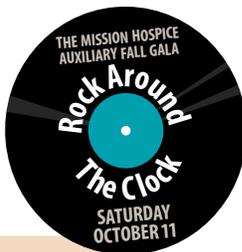


A brand new MissionHospice.org!

Over the past year, we’ve been busy building a brand new website to better serve our patients, donors, and physician partners in the community – and it’s now live.

You can find plenty of helpful information at www.MissionHospice.org, including Frequently Asked Questions about hospice, resources for caregivers, profiles of our patients, volunteers, and staff, and much, much more.

We invite you to visit us online, and would love to hear what you think about our new website.



Mission Hospice & Home Care serves patients and families in the San Mateo County area with quality care and compassionate end-of-life support. Founded in 1979, we are a local, independent nonprofit that has provided thousands of patients and their families with physical, emotional, and spiritual support throughout the journey from a life-threatening diagnosis through death and the process of bereavement. www.MissionHospice.org • 650.554.1000

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**INSIDE: Details about our fall gala on October 11!
What is spiritual care?
Meet Bereavement Social Worker Isabel Stenzel**



FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR, DR. GARY PASTERNAK

Why we need a hospice house in San Mateo County



Prior to working at Mission Hospice, I had the good fortune of spending a year practicing hospice medicine in a residential hospice home in San Diego. I immediately saw the benefits of providing end-of-life care in a dedicated hospice house when other settings were not adequate to achieve comfort for the patient and family.

When my mother was living her final days with lung cancer, she suffered a fall and needed to be hospitalized. It was clear that she could not safely return home. Fortunately, she was able to transfer to a beautiful hospice house in Kansas City, where she had her pain and other symptoms expertly managed with 24-hour medical care.

Her lovely room overlooked a garden, and the peace and serenity were palpable. I was able to spend every night with her until she passed away. I'm forever grateful for the presence of that hospice house and the staff who took care of all of us with skill and kindness.

My personal experiences with hospice houses, both as a palliative care physician and as a family member, have strengthened my commitment to opening a hospice house here in the San Mateo County area. While there are several hospice houses in the Bay Area, and many, many across the nation, there is not a single hospice house in our own county.

In my role as Medical Director for Mission Hospice, I've seen many patients who, like my mother, could not safely stay at home in their final weeks of life. Right now, options for these patients are generally limited to hospitals or nursing homes.

A hospice house is specifically designed for patients at the end of life, and offers

a peaceful, home-like environment that allows families to spend time with their loved ones while a trained professional staff handles round-the-clock nursing and palliative care.

I know firsthand the profound difference a hospice house can make for both the patient and the family. It's time that we made such care available to our patients and families right here in our own community. 🏡

Would you prefer an email newsletter?

Just call 650.554.1000, or email your name and mailing address to Frances at ffreyberg@MissionHospice.org, and we'll take care of it.

And you can always find past issues at www.MissionHospice.org.