

Home-based palliative care: extra support for patients with serious illness

"Palliative care is all about quality of life," explains Director of Palliative Care Bethany Berkowitz, RN, BSN, PHN. "We really want to get to know people and their personal goals and then help them reach those. We tailor our care to focus on what matters most to each person."



Bethany Berkowitz, RN, BSN, PHN, Director of Palliative Care and Transitions

Many people with serious illness such as cancer, heart disease, kidney disease, and neurological disorders are ineligible for hospice care

because they are continuing curative treatment. Others simply aren't emotionally ready for hospice.

Our home-based palliative care program offers these people an extra level of support aimed at helping them re-engage in the activities they enjoy.

Just as in hospice care, our palliative care team collaborates with each patient's primary care physician to support the entire family. Bethany says her team helps people explore and understand what treatment options mean so they can make informed decisions.

We offer help managing pain and symptoms, emotional and practical support, unbiased spiritual support for people

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Volunteer Carol DeGrazia stitches memories for families

San Mateo resident Carol DeGrazia has been sewing and crafting since she was a child. She's stitched clothing for herself and her children, gifts for friends and family members, quilts, and much more.

She's found some of her most meaningful sewing as a Mission Hospice volunteer, by creating memory bears and memory pillows for people who are grieving. Carol creates these special pieces using fabric or items of clothing from loved ones who have died – she says pajamas, t-shirts, and other soft fabrics work well.

"It takes an extraordinarily generous and kind person to know what a grieving person needs at the time of deep sorrow," says Bereavement Coordinator Isabel Stenzel. "The tactile experience of hugging can be so comforting; Carol's bears and pillows are a tremendous gift to our families." Hugging is paramount in Carol's designs. "Sometimes I will sew a pocket onto the heart or wrap sleeves



Carol DeGrazia creates personalized bears and pillows from special items of clothing or fabric, offering patients' loved ones tangible, huggable memories.

around as a tie. It's like someone giving you a hug."

Lisa, who recently lost her dad, shared, "The bear brought tears to my eyes. I love it so much and I will cherish it forever. It is such a beautiful gift, and

I cannot thank you enough. I have shown my friends and they wish they had thought of something like this to remember family that has passed away."

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Auxiliary's 2021 Virtual Fall Gala raises \$170,000 to support care

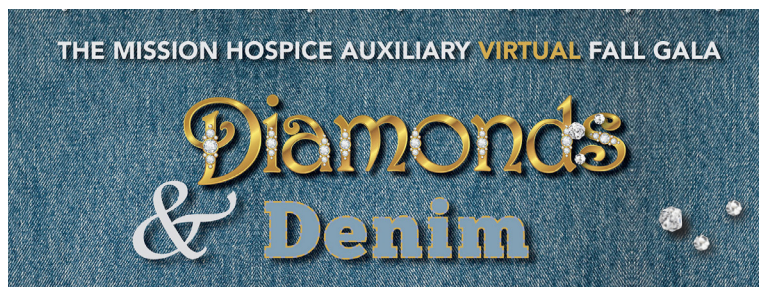
We send a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the Mission Hospice Auxiliary's 2021 Virtual Fall Gala, *Diamonds & Denim*, on October 9. The live online event included a number of touching stories from family members for whom we've cared.

By purchasing drawing tickets, bidding on auction items, and donating to the fund-a-need, participants raised more than \$170,000 to support our personalized, compassionate care that goes above and beyond Medicare reimbursements.

We'd like to thank the generous sponsors of the 2021 Gala for making this virtual event possible.

Thanks as well to Gala Co-Chairs Yolanda Crosby and Vibeke Gade and our wonderful Auxiliary volunteers, event hosts Mary Chigos and Jenny Rhodes, and our development team Marsha Eddleman and Cathy McDermott. 🍷

Watch the program (and more) on our YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/c/MissionHospiceHomeCare



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Longtime donor Robert McLean is the lucky winner of our Gala drawing



Our Fall Gala featured a number of stories from those who have benefited from our care over the years. When our CEO Dolores Miller drew the name of the person who won the beautiful bracelet donated by Kerns Jewelry, she unknowingly added another story to the Gala.

Winner Robert McLean of Menlo Park stopped by our office after the Gala to pick up the bracelet – and to thank our team.

As it turns out, we cared for Robert's first wife, Lorraine, nearly 15 years ago. In 2009, he spoke at our community memorial service about the incredible support they both received from Mission Hospice, and he has been a loyal supporter throughout.

In the years since, Robert found love again...so when he won the diamond and gold bracelet in the drawing, he was very excited to surprise his wife Lucinda with it for her birthday.

Connections like the one with Robert are at the core of what we do. Congratulations to Robert for winning the bracelet – and happy birthday, Lucinda! 🍷

Lucinda Kelly shows off the beautiful bracelet donated by Kerns Fine Jewelry in Burlingame. When Robert won the piece in our Gala drawing, he was thrilled to present it to her for her birthday.

New San Jose satellite office supports patients and families in the South Bay

Since our founding in San Mateo in 1979, Mission Hospice has cared for patients throughout San Mateo County and the surrounding areas. As more families become aware of the value of hospice, our teams have been called to travel further afield.

Last November, we opened our new San Jose satellite office. Easily accessible, the office provides our staff with a place to pick up supplies, work between visits, hold meetings, and offer community events and support groups. This enhances our teams' ability to serve patients and families throughout the Peninsula and South Bay.

If you have questions about our care or would like to arrange a complimentary informational phone call or visit from one of our Clinical Outreach nurses, call 650.554.1000 or 408.554.2434. 🌵



Our administrative team – including Alex Ignacio, Priya Prakash, and Carol Daly, above – was key in setting up the new satellite office in San Jose.



Palliative care... continued from front

of all faith backgrounds, and volunteer companionship and respite. Each person's care plan is individualized to focus on their goals.

They can continue to visit their own physicians, specialists, and hospitals. Our team collaborates with all these providers to help patients have what Bethany describes as "the best possible life for as long as possible."

And our palliative care team makes home visits for patients who cannot – or don't want to – go into their doctor's office or go into the hospital. Nursing support is also available 24/7 by phone.

"Palliative care is all about quality of life. We tailor our care to focus on what matters most to each person."

– Bethany Berkowitz, RN, BSN, PHN,
Director of Palliative Care
and Transitions

Insurance coverage, copays and deductibles vary by plan; donations from the community help us to serve people regardless of their medical coverage or ability to pay.

Bethany stresses that this program is not just for homebound patients. With a physician's referral, she says, "palliative care is available to anyone with a life-limiting illness or chronic disease who is struggling to achieve the quality of life they want."

"We are here for you." 🌵

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Mission Hospice & Home Care serves patients and families in the San Francisco Peninsula and South Bay with personalized, compassionate end-of-life care and education. Founded in 1979, our local, independent nonprofit has supported thousands of patients and their families through illness and bereavement. Donations from the community support our exceptional care and educational programs, and help us serve people regardless of their medical coverage or ability to pay.

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Volunteer Carol DeGrazia stitches memories
New San Jose satellite office supports the South Bay



Volunteer Carol DeGrazia... *continued from front*

Carol's connection to hospice is personal. Her mom worked for a hospice in Lake County for many years. When the time came, both of Carol's parents, as well as her mother-in-law, were cared for by hospice programs. Carol says this is her way of giving back.



With her three children now grown, Carol has more time for her sewing and crafts, something she is also sharing with her grandchildren, who live across the street.

Gracious and generous, Carol is quiet about what her volunteer work means to her. "My mom never talks about herself - she's humble," says her daughter Vanessa. "But she really loves doing this for people. She is happy when what she's doing can help a family who's lost a special person. She does it from her heart." 🐻

When she's not crafting with her grandchildren, Carol loves creating personalized bears and pillows for our patients' families.

