



November is National Hospice Month – Are You in the Know?

White Plains, NY – (October 21, 2010) – According to the National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), hospice care was provided to 1.56 million individuals with a life-limiting illness in 2009. Those individuals represent nearly 42 percent of individuals who died in the U.S, up from 38.8 percent in 2008 and 35 percent in 2007. Half a million volunteers give 25 million hours of service each year to individuals under hospice care.

November is National Hospice Month, a time to recognize that all individuals in hospice care have their own unique lives, experiences, relationships and knowledge to share at the end of their lives. It is also a time to understand the philosophy of hospice and its benefit to those under its care.

Hospice, at its core, is about living. A comprehensive approach to end-of-life care that typically begins when a patient is given a terminal prognosis of less than six months to live, hospice focuses on patients' quality of life while keeping them as pain- and symptom-free as possible. The core components of hospice care -- pain management, psychosocial support and spiritual comfort -- can offer peace of mind to patients and their families through personal attention, family involvement and patient care.

"We are deeply committed to providing dignified comfort, care and compassion to individuals and families who are facing a life-threatening illness. We are deeply committed to helping people make informed and appropriate healthcare decisions. And we are deeply committed to combining the highest quality medical care with emotional and spiritual support to enhance feelings of well-being, decrease stress and improve quality of life for our patients and their loved ones," said Kate Colburn, M.A., Executive Director of Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester.

Research shows that Americans are increasingly opting to receive end of life care in the comfort of their own homes. According to NHPCO, 68.8 percent of those receiving hospice care received it "in the home, whether the patient's home is a private residence, nursing home, or residential facility."

Hospice professionals recommend that family members have open discussions with each other and their medical providers about their end-of-life wishes and explore all options for end-of-life care.

Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester is located at 311 North Street, Suite 204, White Plains, NY. For additional information, visit www.hospiceofwestchester.com or call 914.682.1484.

About Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester: Hospice & Palliative Care of Westchester is a private, not-for-profit healthcare agency that provides skilled, compassionate and comprehensive end-of-life home care to patients with any diagnosis and gives support to their families and loved ones.

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