



IN TOUCH

Physician Newsletter

Comfort and dignity as life nears its end

SUMMER 2020

A WIN FOR PATIENTS: MEDICARE EXTENDS HOSPICE OF THE VALLEY'S MEDICARING® PROGRAM

An innovative kind of care combining curative treatment with hospice care

Ted Gushee and his wife Kitty lead a full and active life. When the 92-year-old was diagnosed with lymphoma and bladder cancer, he vowed to fight back. Ted and his physician created a treatment plan that included infusion and radiation, along with an innovative program, called *MediCaring*®, that provides 24/7 support from a specialized care team.

“It’s like an angel on our shoulder,” Kitty exclaims. “I don’t know what we’d do without it.”

MediCaring® is a unique model of care that allows those with life-limiting illnesses to receive hospice care while continuing their treatments. This program is designed to evaluate the benefits of receiving curative and comfort care simultaneously.

Hospice of the Valley is the only provider in Arizona chosen to participate in the program. It was slated to end in December 2020, but has just been extended through December 2021.

Since *MediCaring*® began over two years ago, Hospice of the Valley has admitted more than 800 patients. Patient feedback shows that quality of life has been vastly improved.

Ted’s *MediCaring*® team provides round-the-clock support. Kitty recalls many panicked calls for help in the middle of the night during the coronavirus pandemic, when Ted was in pain and unable to sleep.

“The nurse came out and worked her magic and before long, Ted was emptying the dishwasher!” she laughs. “It’s a wonderful bridge of support for us. With this terrible virus out there, taking Ted to the ER is just not an option.”

Kitty also appreciates how the *MediCaring*® team takes care of her and makes sure she feels supported. “They always ask how I am doing. That means a lot. I’m not a nurse, so I don’t always know what to do. *MediCaring*® is very reassuring. It’s wonderful!”

Ted agrees. He is back to living life to the fullest — playing bridge online and directing mini melodramas for his friends.



Ted and Kitty Gushee say *MediCaring*®’s round-the-clock support provides peace of mind.

Working together to improve care

Patients like Ted Gushee are helping Medicare determine the benefits of collaborating with community physicians to provide a combination of curative and comfort care.

The data has shown that *MediCaring*® has:

- Enhanced support at home.
- Improved symptom management.
- Lengthened patients’ lives.
- Reduced expense by eliminating unnecessary ER visits and hospitalizations.

MediCaring® is 100% covered by Medicare with no out-of-pocket expense for the patient. Patients must meet the criteria outlined on the back page.

MediCaring® is for people who:

- Have advanced cancer, congestive heart failure, COPD or HIV/AIDS.
- Have been covered by Medicare Part A and Part B for the past 12 months.
- Are certified for hospice care by a physician and wish to continue their treatments of choice.
- Have had at least one hospital or ER visit and three office visits with any Medicare-certified provider in the past year.
- Live in a traditional home setting.

MediCaring® services include:

- Home visits from a nurse, social worker, nurse's aide, volunteer, chaplain and grief counselor.
- Care coordination and case management.
- 24/7/365 access to clinical support.
- Assistance with goals of care and advance care planning.
- Symptom management.
- Covered by Medicare with no out-of-pocket patient fees.

To make a referral or for more information on MediCaring®, visit hov.org/our-care/medicaring or call Hospice of the Valley at (602) 530-6920. A nurse will visit your patient's home to discuss the program.

MediCaring® is a registered trademark of Joanne Lynn, MD, and is being used under the permission of Joanne Lynn and Altarum Institute.

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION ON YOUR SCHEDULE

During this time of restricted movement and canceled professional conferences, Hospice of the Valley is offering up to 6.5 hours of Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits through interactive, online modules from the comfort and safety of your office or home.

- Hospice in a Nutshell (1.0 CME credit hour)
- Health Care Decisions (1.0 CME credit hour)
- Basic Pain Management (1.0 CME credit hour)
- Advanced Pain Management (1.5 CME credit hour)
- Dyspnea Management (1.0 CME credit hour)
- Managing Agitation in Dementia (1.0 CME credit hour)

For class descriptions, call (602) 636-5300. To register for these free modules, send your full name, credentials, email address and title(s) of your courses to education@hov.org. If peers join the sessions, each provider will receive CME credit.



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