



# HORIZONS

## Community Newsletter

Comfort, dignity and compassionate care

SPRING 2023

### SERVING OUR COMMUNITY WITH EXPERIENCE & COMPASSION

It has been a privilege to serve patients and families for 45 years, providing compassionate care and support. We are committed to delivering the highest standard of care while continuing to expand our services with innovative programs to meet the evolving needs of our community. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, the kindness of volunteers and the generosity of donors, we are enhancing quality of life for families across the Valley.



▲ Artino always looks forward to visits from his supportive care team, nurse Lisa Schultz (left) and social worker Mica Dalley.

▼ Avinell treasures her hospice care team, including (from left) chaplain Ken Collins, social worker Susan DaBreo and nurse Cheryl Adams.





## 45 YEARS OF FULFILLING OUR MISSION

Hospice of the Valley Executive Director Debbie Shumway and Board President Rita Meiser reflect on recent milestones and how our mission continues to grow in 2023 through innovation, education, collaboration and community generosity.



Debbie Shumway



Rita Meiser

**QUESTION:** What guides Hospice of the Valley as it celebrates 45 years of caring for the community?

**ANSWER:** Providing exceptional patient care is what guides us each day. Our agency culture is stronger than ever and one of our favorite cultural beliefs is to “Think Yes and Deliver Wow.” That belief is our “North Star” as we care for our patients and their families, our staff and our community. It is truly a privilege to support all who come to us in need, regardless of insurance or financial resources.

**Q:** Why create programs to serve those with serious illness, even before hospice care is needed?

**A:** Over the years, we found that people with serious chronic illnesses such as cancer, heart disease, lung disease and neurological disease often fall through the cracks of our fragmented healthcare system. These individuals may not desire or qualify for hospice yet and often find themselves using the emergency room for care. To help close this gap, Hospice of the Valley has created several chronic care programs to better serve our community’s evolving needs. We offer a comprehensive continuum of care for adults and children, supporting them from the early stages of serious illness through end of life. When families lose a loved one, our bereavement counselors help them in their grief journey every step of the way.

**Q:** All clinical programs provide 24/7 care. Why is that critical?

**A:** Our 1,500 skilled staff serve almost 6,000 patients throughout all of our programs each day. Our providers, nurses, social workers, nursing aides and chaplains visit patients wherever they live. Providing home visits and phone support at any time of the day or night has been an important part of supporting those we serve. Hospice of the Valley is committed to being a safety net for our whole community, so families have peace of mind.

**Q:** What are some ways that volunteers are serving patients and families?

**A:** Hospice of the Valley began with a few volunteers who wore many hats. We remain grateful today for our 1,600 volunteers who continue to enrich the lives of our patients and families. College students are supporting veterans and dementia caregivers through Legacy Corps and College Partners — two new volunteer programs that are inspiring careers in dementia care. Other volunteers provide companionship to patients, pet therapy visits and military tributes, and the list goes on and on. We are grateful for all of our volunteers and welcome others who would like to join our family.

**Q:** What does the future look like?

**A:** As our community grows, we know the need for home-based care will also grow. Hospice of the Valley will continue to expand our teams to meet current and future needs. We are committed to creating new programs to support patients and families before they need hospice care, like our Supportive Care for Dementia program highlighted on Page 5. We are focused on providing a compassionate and supportive experience for every patient and family. And we are excited to share our knowledge and expertise with healthcare professionals, first responders, caregivers and the community at large.

**Q:** Any final thoughts?

**A:** This past year, we cared for over 23,000 patients and their families. We are humbled to be part of this important time in their lives. Together, our staff, volunteers and community make a difference in the lives of so many each day. Throughout this publication, you will learn more about our many innovative programs and our plans for the future. One thing is certain: *We could not provide this beautiful care without each one of you.* Thank you for supporting our nonprofit mission these 45 years!



## Our *Programs*

### Hospice care



*Robin is grateful to her father's hospice team for raising his spirits and inspiring him to build LEGO kits again.*

We focus on the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of our patients while also supporting their families. Our interdisciplinary teams provide customized care in the comfort of home. If 24/7 short-term acute care is needed, patients stay in one of our nine inpatient care homes across the Valley.

### Arizona Supportive Care



*Robert and his Arizona Supportive Care nurse, Martha Cocoros.*

This unique program serves people with serious illness by managing symptoms, providing round-the-clock clinical support, and working with their physicians to create an individualized care plan. We are able to improve patients' quality of life and support their caregivers with education and community resources.

### Pediatric and Adult Outreach

This program is for children and adults living with chronic illness. Our social workers make in-home visits to provide much-needed support and connect families with community resources.

### Supportive Care for Dementia



*Families like the Goldmans receive in-home education, support and an array of resources about each stage of dementia.*

This innovative program provides home visits to educate and support people with all types and stages of dementia who are not eligible for hospice. Skilled dementia educators help family caregivers understand disease progression, learn communication techniques and better cope with challenging behaviors.

### Geriatric Solutions Primary Care



*Our team brings primary care to home-limited patients.*

Our physicians and nurse practitioners provide comprehensive, personalized, home-based primary care to patients with advanced illness who find it difficult to get to their doctor. We coordinate care with specialists and provide after-hours clinical support when needed.

*For all our programs, on-duty clinical teams are available day and night for urgent issues. Call (602) 530-6900.*



## INSPIRING A NEW GENERATION OF HEALTH PROVIDERS

This academic year, our clinical staff are mentoring, guiding and supporting more than 400 learners, including residents, fellows and students in medical, nursing and social work programs.

We proudly partner with **Arizona State University, University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, Creighton University, Grand Canyon University and University of Phoenix**, as well as **Mayo Clinic, Phoenix Children's, HonorHealth, Banner Health, Abrazo Health and Dignity Health.**

"A growing number of medical education programs are realizing the importance of giving students an understanding of hospice and palliative care," says Dr. Ned Stolzberg, Hospice of the Valley's executive medical director.

Our **College Partners Program**, funded by a Community Care Corps grant, connects patients with student volunteers to provide companionship. Students receive invaluable training that deepens their understanding of hospice and supportive care.

These volunteers come from **Maricopa Community Colleges, Midwestern University and ASU.**



*James (left), who is enrolled in our Supportive Care Program, visited the Martin Auto Museum with Pranav Jutla, a College Partners volunteer student.*

### What students are learning

Across the board, the exceptional care provided by our field and inpatient staff is leaving an indelible mark as they mentor students and future healthcare professionals.



*Moriah Colon, RN*

*"My nurse practitioner preceptor is very knowledgeable and treats her patients, colleagues and students with so much respect and love. Every single patient and staff interaction is pleasant and supportive. This is such a great organization. I hope to join the team one day."*

— NP student

*"The field nurses were some of the most intelligent, wise, insightful, kind and compassionate people I have ever met. They taught me so much."*

— Nursing student

*"The medical director at Ryan House Adults provides such kind and compassionate care and connects with her patients' families during one of their most vulnerable times. I haven't seen the same level of trust that I saw in this physician/patient/family relationship elsewhere in medicine."*

— Medical student

*"With all the nurses and staff at Hospice of the Valley, I was continuously blown away by the hearts they have for the work they do daily and the people they care for. They epitomize the type of nurse I hope to be."*

— Nursing student



## SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS AND OUR MEDICAL COMMUNITY

Hospice of the Valley's Dementia Team helps families navigate the challenges of the dementia journey and shares its expertise with health professionals.

### Modeling best practices

The **Dementia Care and Education Campus** has launched an unprecedented project aimed at training more than 3,000 health providers in Maricopa County. Our goal is to enhance care for those living with early-onset to moderate stages of dementia.

“There is a critical need to help doctors provide skillful and compassionate dementia care,” says Dementia Program Director Maribeth Gallagher.

Our presentations include: assessing and diagnosing Alzheimer's and other types of dementia; understanding which medications help or harm dementia patients; decoding behaviors that express unmet needs; and teaching how to respond compassionately and appropriately.

This extensive campaign continues through 2023 with funding from the **Maricopa County Department of Public Health**.



*Diagnosed with early-onset dementia, 51-year-old Rodney enjoys personalized activities provided by Adult Day Club coordinator Rose Campbell.*

*To learn more, call (602) 767-8300 or email [education@dementiacampus.org](mailto:education@dementiacampus.org).*

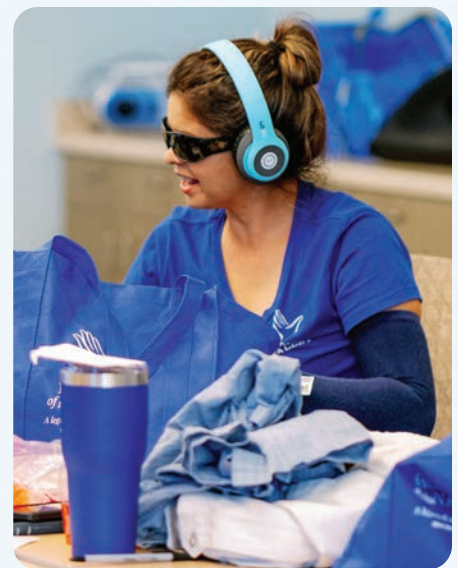
### Raising the standards of care

Dementia patients who are unable to perform activities of daily living by themselves increasingly rely on nursing aides as their disease progresses. The personal care they provide with warmth and grace builds trust with their patients.

“Approach is everything,” says nurse practitioner Belinda Ordoñez, one of our dementia experts who teaches our CNAs unique ways to validate patients' needs and connect with them emotionally.

CNA instructors statewide also gathered at our Dementia Care and Education Campus to integrate dementia-specific care into nursing assistant programs across Arizona.

“It's important to share this knowledge with nursing assistants,” Dementia Team nurse Sarah Crance says, “so they understand the complexities of dementia and how they can have a positive impact on patients and their families.”



*Esther Camargo is among Hospice of the Valley's 280 CNAs who experienced “Dementia Moments.” This exercise fosters empathy and understanding by mimicking the challenges of living with diminished cognition.*

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#### Horizons Editor

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## NOVEL APPROACHES TO PATIENT AND CAREGIVER SUPPORT

We provide specialized programs and individualized care to meet each patient’s needs and goals in the comfort of home, supporting their families and helping avoid unnecessary hospitalization. Here are just a few of the innovations that are unique to Hospice of the Valley.

### Pulmonary Resource Program

A skilled pulmonary team helps our patients who are experiencing breathing difficulties due to conditions like lung cancer, COPD, pulmonary fibrosis, emphysema and ALS. Respiratory therapist Gretchen Stanton and pulmonary nurse Barbara Taylor make visits across the Valley to assist our care teams. They provide support and educate patients and caregivers about special respiratory devices and therapies. They go above and beyond, always taking the time to answer every question to ensure physical and emotional comfort.



*Gretchen Stanton (left) and Barbara Taylor are respiratory specialists.*

### Advancements in comfort care

Over the last three years, we have performed more than 130 PleurX drainage procedures in our inpatient care homes, bringing much comfort to cancer and heart disease patients struggling with excess fluid around their lungs or abdomen. This provides great relief and patients don’t have to go to a hospital for the procedure.

### Meaningful connections

It has been truly rewarding to see our Dementia Care and Education Campus enhancing quality of life for so many in our community.

Family members are overjoyed to see their loved ones socializing at the **Memory Café** or the **Adult Day Club**, enjoying art, music and other stimulating activities. The adjoining **Child Center** offers intergenerational enrichment that benefits both the seniors and the youngsters.

The **Education Center** empowers caregivers with eye-opening workshops and weekly support groups that cultivate resilience and prepare them for the progression of dementia. They discover new ways to connect with their loved one as communication becomes more challenging, and find comfort in knowing they’re not alone.

“Even though everyone’s stories are unique, we are all going through the same thing and it’s wonderful to have this support and be open to other possibilities,” a workshop participant said. “These sessions have been my go-to resource for education. I’ve been able to share what I’m learning with family members out of state who don’t have this incredible resource.”



*Enrichment activities between Adult Day members and preschoolers at the Child Center bring joy to both generations.*



## TOUCHING STORIES OF COMPASSION AND DEDICATION

On a daily basis, our caring staff go the extra mile to bring peace and smiles to patients and families.

### Adopt-a-Family

Every holiday season, teams across our agency adopt patients and families in need and shop for presents on their wish lists. The funding comes from community foundations, generous donors, Hospice of the Valley and private donations from our compassionate staff. One of our employees adopted a family as a tribute to his late grandfather, Martin, who received our beautiful care in early 2022. “He was the type of person who would give the shirt off his back to help someone else. I found myself in the position financially to be able to pay it forward and thought this would be a great way to honor him.”



*The Ruiz family was adopted by a staff member in honor of his grandfather, who received Hospice of the Valley's care last year.*



*Social worker Samantha Teddi Deetz (center, behind Earl) helped plan his trip to Hunkapi Farms.*

### Joyous memories

Nurse Maureen Miller and social worker Lisa Maddock were elated to help their 82-year-old patient, Marlene, relive her homecoming queen days and enjoy a family reunion. They organized transportation from Marlene's group home to her daughter's house and treated her to a lovely party — complete with karaoke, a sparkly tiara and a homecoming sash!

### Fulfilling wishes

As a hospital chaplain and teacher, 83-year old Earl was known for his compassion for those in greatest need. “His second love was horses,” said social worker Samantha Teddi Deetz.

Earl competed in roping for many years and later volunteered at Hunkapi Farms, a nonprofit that provides equine therapy. He dreamed of feeding horses again and perhaps even riding in the horse buggy in the farm's arena. Working with the DreamCatchers Foundation, his care team planned a beautiful morning at the farm, where Earl's dream came true.

“His smile was bright and wide as he took several laps around the arena with everyone cheering him on,” Samantha said. “You could see the sparkle and joy in his eyes!”



*Marlene loved reliving fond memories of her days as a high school homecoming queen.*





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## Special *Events*

**aaha**  
art • food • wine

Our signature fundraiser returned to the JW Marriott Scottsdale Camelback Inn Resort & Spa on March 11. The evening featured a seated dinner, dancing, and silent and live auctions of fine art, wines, dining packages, exciting trips and unique experiences. Thank you for helping us celebrate 45 years of caring and supporting our wonderful patients and families!

## *Light Up a Life*

Every year, we look forward to a special community remembrance event on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. The 2022 program aired on Nov. 20 on AZTV-Channel 7 and can be viewed and shared at [aztv.com/lightupalife](http://aztv.com/lightupalife).



### **Hospice of the Valley Pro-Am Golf Tournament**

Presented by Cigna Healthcare of Arizona, the 25th anniversary tournament will be held at Grayhawk Golf Club in Scottsdale on Thursday, **April 6**. The event showcases top players from the Southwest Section of the PGA and benefits our charity care programs.

More info at [hov.org/events](http://hov.org/events)