



# HOUSTON HOSPICE

*Life Matters*

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## **Hospice Helps Patients and Families Focus on Quality of Life**

### **Houston Hospice Makes More Meaningful Moments Possible**

November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month and hospices across the country are reaching out to raise awareness about the highest quality care for all people coping with life-limiting illness.

“Every year, nearly 1.6 million people living with a life-limiting illness receive care from hospice and palliative care providers in this country,” said J. Donald Schumacher, president and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. “These highly-trained professionals ensure that patients and families find dignity, respect, and love during life’s most difficult journey.”

In 2014, Houston Hospice cared for 2,261 patients and their families throughout Houston and ten surrounding counties. Approximately five percent of patients received charity care. Although hospice medical care, medical supplies and medications are 100 percent covered by Medicare and Medicaid, there are patients who are not covered by these programs or private health insurance plans. Thanks to community support, they are not turned away. Additionally, Houston Hospice is a funded partner of Susan G. Komen® Houston which provides care for unfunded breast cancer patients.

Houston Hospice CEO, James Faucett noted, “Many families are surprised to learn hospice is not a place. Hospice provides pain management, symptom control, psychosocial support, and spiritual care to patients and their families when a cure is not possible. The vast majority of our patients receive care wherever they call home, be it a house, assisted living facility or nursing home.”

Hospice and palliative care combines the highest level of quality medical care with the emotional and spiritual support that families need most when facing the end of life. Through this specialized quality care, we see many patients and their families experience more meaningful moments together. Hospice helps them focus on living despite a terminal diagnoses.

As Debbie Hoelscher, an eleven-year volunteer at Houston Hospice said, “Someone asked why I spend time volunteering for hospice. Because hospice was there for my family at a difficult time in our lives. The families truly appreciate the smallest gift of your time and doing this type of work gives me a great sense of gratefulness.”

Throughout the month of November, Houston Hospice will be joining organizations across the nation hosting activities that will help the community understand how important hospice and palliative care can be. More information about hospice, palliative care, and advance care planning is available from [www.houstonhospice.org](http://www.houstonhospice.org).

Stories showing the many ways hospice makes more special moments possible can be found at [www.momentsoflife.org](http://www.momentsoflife.org).

Houston Hospice was founded in 1980 and is the largest community-supported, independent, nonprofit hospice serving Houston and ten surrounding counties. Care teams of doctors, nurses, hospice aides, social workers, chaplains, counselors and trained volunteers provide medical, emotional and spiritual support to patients and their families. To learn more about Houston Hospice, visit [www.houstonhospice.org](http://www.houstonhospice.org) or call 713-467-7423 (713-HOSPICE).

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