Leading a Cultural Revolution in End-of-Life Care

Dawn Gross, M.D., Ph.D., FAAHPM, will present: “Dying to Talk: Making Wishes Come True,” at this year’s Hospice of the Western Reserve Hospice Institute Annual Conference on Sept. 14. In this interview, Dr. Gross shares a few of the insights she has gained in her dual roles as a Board Certified Physician in Hospice and Palliative Medicine and an educator in end-of-life care.

Q: You have written about your desire to lead a cultural revolution in end-of-life care. Can you elaborate?

A: As a writer, radio host, educator or physician, transforming the taboo around talking about death is at the core of the work I do. By practicing Hospice and Palliative Medicine at an academic institution, I teach medical students, residents, fellows and my colleagues - as well as patients and families - how to be curious and how to ask questions that are ultimately the deepest expression of love and respect.

Q: What can physicians learn through conversations with patients?

A: For people to die in a manner consistent with their values and preferences, it is essential that healthcare providers know what matters the most to them. When we limit conversations to what procedures patients want or don’t want without understanding the “why” behind those choices, we fail to provide the best support for someone living a life that matters to them. If I say: “I want to avoid dying on machines,” there is no context as to why I feel that way. If instead, I say: “I love the sound and feel of a purring cat on my chest and the warmth of the sun on my skin,” then medical care can focus on making these things accessible.

Q: Do you believe doctors sometimes struggle with knowing when to transition patients from cure-directed to comfort-directed treatments?

A: Yes, medical training has positioned doctors to frame our work such that saving life is the measure of success, that anything less is failure. However, this is inherently flawed. You cannot possibly care for a whole person, for their whole life, if you leave out the detail of mortality. The patients and families I get to care for continue to reinforce this truth: that I have no idea what someone wants unless I ask.
OBSERVING ITS 5TH ANNIVERSARY, the Medina Hospice Care Center has 16 private suites. Features include a patient spa room, family kitchenette and dining area and comfort coves (large bay windows with cozy seating adjacent to patient rooms.) Outdoor gathering areas are plentiful. The site is contiguous to a 102-acre park, providing a serene setting.

A History of Compassionate Care

HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE (HWR) OWNS, OPERATES AND STAFFS three conveniently located, licensed inpatient hospice units. David Simpson Hospice House, the Medina Hospice Inpatient Care Center and Ames Family Hospice House. The units provide three hospice levels of care to patients with terminal diagnoses served by HWR and HMC Hospice of Medina County. Each unit provides a home-like environment to ensure the comfort of patients and their family members. Amenities include accommodations for visiting 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, staying overnight, laundry rooms, on-site meals, Meditation Rooms, outdoor areas and gardens for eating, relaxing, reflecting and praying.

The hospice units are staffed by Hospice and Palliative Care Certified Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Licensed Nurses, Social Workers, Hospice Nursing Assistants, Pharmacist, Bereavement Counselors, Spiritual Care Coordinators, Dietitians and Chefs. Volunteer staff assist patients and families in a variety of ways, including group activities and events.

A Moments to Remember program fulfills special patient/family requests ranging from birthday and anniversary parties, seasonal or cultural events to weddings and baby showers. Art, music and pet therapies are also available.

Ames Family Hospice House

David Simpson Hospice House

Medina Inpatient Hospice Care Unit

OBSERVING ITS 5TH ANNIVERSARY this year, the state-of-the-art Ames Family Hospice House in Westlake has 32 private suites in a picturesque wooded setting. Features include dedicated art and music therapy studios, children and teen playrooms and the therapeutic Hershey Play Garden for visiting children and pediatric patients.

DAVID SIMPSON HOSPICE HOUSE, the region’s venerable flagship IPU, features 40 private patient suites and has been serving terminally ill patients in the community for more than 20 years. Its location on Cleveland’s Lake Erie shore is a distinguishing feature, as are the lovingly maintained tribute gardens.

OBSERVING ITS 5TH ANNIVERSARY, the Medina Hospice Care Center has 16 private suites. Features include a patient spa room, family kitchenette and dining area and comfort coves (large bay windows with cozy seating adjacent to patient rooms.) Outdoor gathering areas are plentiful. The site is contiguous to a 102-acre park, providing a serene setting.
Hospice Care Units

Uniquely Equipped for Specialized Roles

Hospice of the Western Reserve's three Inpatient Care Units incorporate an array of services tailored to meet the needs of patients while supporting their families and loved ones.

Hospice of the Western Reserve owns and operates three Hospice Inpatient Care Units, each with a number of distinct features. These uniquely designed, peaceful environments provide caring and compassionate hospice level services and support to patients and families 24/7.

While they are not intended for long-term care, they deliver a comprehensive and highly focused spectrum of medical, social and spiritual care geared to the optimal management of pain and symptoms. The hospice inpatient care units have comfortable, private suites, soothing surroundings and a high staff-to-patient ratio. The units are equipped to provide complex care, monitor labs and perform portable x-rays. Medications are readily available on site for optimal symptom management.

Both of my grandparents were in the care of Hospice of the Western Reserve, and at the end, both were at David Simpson Hospice House. The employees became an extension of my family. They were genuinely invested in the wellbeing of our grandparents and treated them accordingly. Even though we knew the end of life was near, we couldn’t help but be at peace in such a loving and caring facility.”

- HOLLY CRAIDER, FORMER FAMILY CAREGIVER

Understanding the Levels of Care

Three levels of care are provided:

1 | General Inpatient/Pain and Symptom Management (GIP) A patient’s terminal illness may cause a number of distressing symptoms, including pain, that cannot be managed in their current residence or other location. An admission to the hospice inpatient unit can be arranged 24/7 to optimally manage these symptoms. Once the symptoms are managed, the goal is to return the patient to his or her home, nursing facility or assisted living community.

2 | Respite A patient may be admitted for respite care if his or her caregiver needs a short interval (up to five days) of rest or relief from caregiving duties. The caregiver must intend to resume caregiving after the respite admission. Extended respite stays (an additional five days) may be approved for unique situations. Room and board charges only apply to the additional five days.

3 | Residential (Routine Home Care) Hospice of the Western Reserve is committed to providing residential care on a limited basis based on bed availability. Residential care assists patients who are unable to care for themselves, have a limited capacity or no family caregiving resources. Room and board charges apply to this level of care.

Home Away from Home

This short-term care is for the very end of life (prognosis of one to 14 days), when there may be a need for eligible patients to move from a hospital or home setting to one of our hospice care units. This unique short-term hospice residential program provides a peaceful and safe home away from home for both patients and families during the final days. Additionally, caregiver limitations or availability may be critical factors impacting post-acute discharging or the ability for a patient to be cared for in their own residence during this time. This program is designed to assist patients and families during this often stressful and emotional time. Room and board charges apply to this level of care.
HOSPICE OF THE WESTERN RESERVE HAS AN ONGOING commitment to supporting the certification of clinical staff, and currently has among the largest number of hospice and palliative care professionals certified in their disciplines in the region. Taking a leadership role in professional education upholds the agency’s mission to strive for excellence and innovation, and to deliver the best quality of care to patients and their families.

Certification is one of the benchmarks of knowledge and expertise in the specialized field of Hospice and Palliative Care. It should be a key focus area for all hospice organizations. Certification is not mandated; it is voluntarily sought and earned by healthcare professionals. It is widely recognized by the government, healthcare systems, insurers and patients themselves as an objective, evidence-based benchmark denoting the highest level of proficiency.

Because it is voluntary, supporting staff in this endeavor is essential. At Hospice of the Western Reserve, we encourage staff by offering increased incentives, providing ongoing guidance from the education team and making study guides available to assist during the certification process.

The certification process, while demanding, is also enriching and rewarding for clinical professionals. During preparation and testing, they engage with and learn from other colleagues in review courses or study groups, skills and knowledge are sharpened and enhanced and the process fosters a renewed commitment to excellence and expertise in the delivery of hospice and palliative care. Most of all, it increases competence and confidence in practice.

Six Certified Hospice Nursing Assistants (CHNAs) from Hospice of the Western Reserve recently received Stars Awards for the exemplary care they provide from LeadingAge Ohio, a nonprofit trade association representing 500 long-term care organizations and hospices in Ohio. Leslie Gattarello, Lisa Runo, Teresa Kidney, Jeff White, Nicole Stephens and Anesa Estrada-Gamino were honored at a ceremony this spring.

The service excellence of the six award recipients goes “above and beyond,” according to the clinical team members who nominated them. Gattarello frequently volunteers to assist patients who have a special wish or request. Runo likes to sing softly to her patients to ease their anxiety. Kidney has exceptional listening skills; patients and families feel soothed and supported by the encouragement she provides. White frequently receives compliments for the passion and commitment he brings to his role; families describe his care as a “blessing.” Stephens uncovers remarkable ways to make patients feel special from reading them novels to building a snowman outside the window. Estrada-Gamino is not only an exceptional caregiver; her skillful communication helps create a meaningful and peaceful end-of-life experience. She also uses her bilingual skills to provide outreach to the Spanish speaking community, sharing information about end-of-life care.

Certified Hospice Nursing Assistants Earn Stars Awards

While every discipline on the hospice transdisciplinary team plays an essential role in providing exceptional patient care, Hospice Nursing Assistants are frequently the “unsung heroes,” working diligently to assist with the tasks of daily living. It is they who are responsible for the some of the most intimate tasks. Their patient care responsibilities include personal grooming, bathing, feeding, and turning the bedbound, changing linens and ensuring a clean and comfortable living space. However, they also provide a compassionate presence and are trusted listeners and nonjudgmental confidantes in times of need. Their work is a true calling; the families they support frequently call them “angels” for the unique ways they find to honor the dignity of their loved ones.
Certified Hospice Clinicians Achieve Top National Honors

The National Board for Certification of Hospice and Palliative Nurses has named Hospice of the Western Reserve’s Denise DiMare Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse of the Year and Bob Phillips-Plona Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Administrator of the Year. Mary Kay Tyler, Vice President of Quality, was named a Fellow in Palliative Care Nursing. The three honors were announced at the 2017 American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine and Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association Annual Assembly in Phoenix.

DiMare oversees 60 members on the Referral, Assessment and Liaison teams. She joined Hospice of the Western Reserve 18 years ago as an Assessment Nurse, serving as the first face of hospice to new patients and their families. She played a key role in launching a program using volunteers to call on patients with advanced cardiopulmonary disease over weekends to ensure their symptoms were well managed. The program has proven effective in preventing re-hospitalizations. DiMare is a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse.

Phillips-Plona, Director of Residential Services, oversees Ames Family Hospice House in Westlake, David Simpson Hospice House in Cleveland and the Medina Hospice Care Center. He manages clinical care, regulatory and quality compliance, budgetary management and dietary services. Over the past 20 years, more than 30,000 terminally ill patients and their families have received care at the nonprofit agency’s three hospice Inpatient Care Units. Phillips-Plona is a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Nurse and a Certified Hospice and Palliative Care Administrator.

Tyler, along with Hospice of the Western Reserve Chief Clinical Officer Judy Bartel, is one of only 68 Fellows in Palliative Care Nursing in the United States. The honor is given to those who “provide evidence of progressive leadership in the field of palliative nursing” and “show significant commitment to the advancement of the art and science in the field of palliative nursing,” according to the organization’s website. Tyler oversees corporate quality, compliance and HIPAA privacy and guides the Quality, Education and Centralized Medical Records teams. Prior to assuming the role of Vice President of Quality in 2016, she was Director of Pediatrics and Clinical Support Teams for 10 years. She is a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and is Board Certified in Palliative Care Management/Administration.

Certified Staff (December 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Number Certified</th>
<th>of Eligible Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HNA</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPN</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRN</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Management</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatrics RN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>312</strong></td>
<td><strong>565</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WITH NEARLY 40 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE in Hospice and Palliative Medicine, Hospice of the Western Reserve shares your commitment to delivering the highest quality of care to your patients. Explore our professional caregiver online resources at hospicewr.org/resources. While there, you can:


Watch inspiring and informative stories about the benefits Hospice and Palliative care provides to patients and families.

BY THE NUMBERS:

NORTHERN OHIO’S HOSPICE OF CHOICE

REFERRALS: 800.707.8921
A Well-Planned Life

By Dr. Wayne H. Grant, PharmD, MBA
Director of the Hospice Institute and Pharmacy Services
Hospice of the Western Reserve

As I begin my new dual role, which includes serving as the new Director of the Hospice Institute, I am particularly enthusiastic about the theme of our 21st Annual Conference: "A Well-Planned Life: Preparing for the Transitions Ahead." In today's rapidly evolving healthcare climate, transitions are a constant. Toward the end of life, when time is condensed, life planning takes on a greater sense of urgency and significance. Managing critical transitions wisely during this vulnerable time is essential to maintaining dignity and quality of life. Our Hospice Institute team has worked hard to bring you top experts in their fields presenting on topics that will allow you to enlighten your practice and enhance the care you provide. I am looking forward to meeting you at our Annual Conference on Thursday, September 14.

Conference Objectives:
- Discuss the importance of supporting the physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being when making care transitions with seriously ill patients.
- Demonstrate how to help patients and caregivers prepare and coordinate care transitions that they encounter due to chronic illness.
- Identify how to assist patients in addressing and overcoming barriers they encounter due to changes in their health status at end of life.
- Explain how to achieve continuity of care when making care transitions with seriously ill patients.

Plenary sessions:
- 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Dawn Gross, M.D., Ph.D., FAAHPM
  “Dying to Talk: Making Wishes Come True” This presentation discusses new approaches to goals of care conversations in making transitions. True stories from life experiences with patients and families making transitions will be shared along with using the “magic wand” question and GoWish.
- 11 a.m. - Noon Lizzy Miles, MA, MSW, LSW
  “We Don’t Know Death: 7 Assumptions We Make About Dying” Prior experiences with death and dying can lead us to believe that we know what to expect the next time we encounter a dying individual. However, this “knowing” can lead to inappropriate conclusions. This presentation will explore the assumptions professionals often make regarding the dying process. We will review the types of situations in which we may romanticize dying. The presenter will share how dying individuals can surprise us and act in ways that we might not have anticipated.
- 2:15 - 3:15 p.m. Kenneth Rosenfeld, M.D.
  “Transitions in Healthcare” This discussion will focus on how communities and institutions can provide individuals with enhanced options for meaningful and symptom-free final years of life while navigating the complex healthcare system.

SAVE THE DATE!

HOSPICE INSTITUTE’S 21ST ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE

A Well-Planned Life: Preparing for the Transitions Ahead

Thursday, September 14, 2017
Corporate College East, 4400 Richmond Road, Warrensville Hts.
7:30 a.m. Registration
8 a.m. Welcome and Introduction

FOR FULL DESCRIPTIONS AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION, VISIT hospicewr.org/conference

Clinical Connections is published by the Marketing Communications Team at Hospice of the Western Reserve. Contact the team at communication@hospicewr.org. For previous issues of Clinical Connections, visit hospicewr.org/clinical-connections.

© Copyright 2017 All Rights Reserved