

# HT: The Heart of Hospice

Ann Seckinger, MM, BCC, CHTP  
Gentiva Hospice, Spiritual Care Coordinator

# What is Hospice?

- Palliative care
  - soothing symptoms without effecting a cure
- End of life stage
- Paid for by Medicare/Medical
- 5 person interdisciplinary team

# The Interdisciplinary Team

- Patient's Physician
- Patient Care Manager
- Registered Nurses
- Certified Health Aides
- Medical Social Worker
- Chaplain
- Specially Trained Volunteers
- Medical Director
- Others, e.g. dietician

# Population Statistics

- More than 40 million Americans are seniors
- This number will more than double in the next 30 years

# Hospice Philosophy

- Provided when medicine cannot provide a cure
- Offers comfort, care, and assistance to maintain a better quality of life
- Focus is on “care *not* cure”

# Beginning the Hospice Process

- Doctor recommends a patient via a written order
- Physicians concur patient has an estimated life expectancy  $\leq$  6 months, if the illness runs its normal course
- Plan of care is developed between attending doctor and hospice doctor
- Approved for certain illnesses only

# Hospice allowable illnesses

- Pulmonary Diseases
- Metastatic Cancer
- Cardiac Diseases
- Renal (Kidney Diseases)
- Neurological Diseases
- Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, ALS
- AIDS

# Benefits of Hospice

- Management of pain and associated symptoms
- 24 hour availability, 7 days a week
- Pays for medical equipment
  - wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, etc.
- Holistic patient care including the family



# Benefits of Hospice (cont.)

- Multidisciplinary team to alleviate spiritual, emotional and physical pain
- Bereavement assistance for 13 months
- Adds life to days when days can no longer be added to life

# A Hospice Experience

The Go Wish Game: [www.codaalliance.org](http://www.codaalliance.org)

- Distribute 4 cards each
- Prioritize what is important to you in the dying experience
- Share in groups of 3
- Hospice families work with all 48 cards

# Hospice Financial Arrangements

- 100% coverage for Medicare/Medi-Cal with no patient co-payments for related services
- Includes all professional visits, services, drugs, equipment and supplies in the patient's plan of care
- Some patients are non-funded...meaning Hospice pays

# HT & Hospice Research

- Use of HT energy therapy to improve quality of life among the dying
- 55 subjects assigned to either an HT group or standard care group

## *Results:*

Improvement in HT group with decreased physical symptoms and less change in physical functioning compared to control group

# Research: Healing Touch in the Hospice Environment

- 18 Hospice patients and one caregiver
- HT sessions from 15 min to 1 hour administered, for a total of 305 sessions

## *Results:*

Practitioner found initially erratic and unstable energy fields opened up and stabilized rapidly as the number of therapy sessions mounted and remained stable until the patient approached the period of actively dying.

# Research: Healing Touch in a Hospital Unit

- Pilot study in Hampton Veteran Hospice
- 4 patients requested therapy

## *Results:*

Patients cited:

- Relief of constipation
- Reduced leg swelling and pain
- Decline in use of pain medications

# Storytelling

- Anecdotal testimonies—from more than 10 years of Hospice experience
  - Chakra Spread
  - Magnetic Clearing
  - Mind Clearing

# Benefits of HT & Hospice

- Balance the body, mind and spirit
- Brings presence and peacefulness
- Physically reduces tension
- Promotes sleep
- Helps with depression
- Gives a boost of energy
- Reduces pain medication and constipation
- Gives family members a task to help



# Requirements of Gentiva Hospice

- Present credentials of certification
- Ask permission
- Document using pain scale or change in appearance
- Record what the patient says
- Keep interdisciplinary team informed

# Break

Any questions?

Let's take a 1-minute stretch break before I continue with another effective, healing technique I use with hospice patients.

# HT & Therapeutic Essential Oils

## Essential Oils for Cancer Care Support

- Lavender
  - relaxation
  - helps with insomnia
  - relieves tension, discomfort
- Peppermint
  - helps with nausea, aids in digestion during chemotherapy
  - relaxes and eases muscle discomfort, energizing

# Therapeutic Essential Oils (cont.)

- Lemon
  - used to alkaline the system and clear toxins, helps nausea
- Frankincense
  - universal oil, used for inflammation
  - reduces pain

# Healing Touch in Hospice

- More examples of using HT
  - “Pain Free Breakfast”
  - ALS patient

# Experiential

- Demonstration of Hands in Motion/Hands Still using essential oil
- Attendees practice techniques on one another
- Center, ground and attune
  - Use lavender, lemon, peppermint
  - Hand Scan
  - Hands in Motion and Hands Still
  - Magnetic Clearing

# Heart of HT & Hospice

- Healing Touch can be part of every Hospice organization
- The Dali Lama said America is the only country that thinks '*death is optional*'
- Everyone experiences death

# In Conclusion

Through an understanding of Hospice, the work of Healing Touch, and the use of essential oils, death can be a comfortable, peaceful and beautiful experience.