



CONTINUUM OF CARE COMES FULL CIRCLE

The continuum of care in Denver has come full circle with the partnership of a Catholic multi-institutional healthcare organization and a Catholic charities-sponsored hospice. In November 1993 Hospice of Peace, a home hospice program, was reorganized under a new joint sponsorship of Provenant Health Partners and Catholic Charities and Community Services. The collaboration enables the two organizations to better carry out their mission of community service and to prevent duplication of services.

"Partnerships like this will help sustain a Catholic healthcare presence in communities across our nation as we move further down the path of integrated delivery," said Sr. Celestia Koebel, SC, president, Sisters of Charity Health Care Systems, Cincinnati, of which Provenant is a member. "It only makes sense that Catholic healthcare providers look to one another to steward collective resources."

Catholic Charities and Community Services is a multiservice agency, providing emergency assistance for basic needs. In addition to Hospice of Peace, the agency operates three homeless shelters in Denver.

Provenant Health Partners includes three hospitals, a Level I trauma center, a continuum of

*Adding
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senior care services, outreach clinics, and home health services. Its network of outpatient senior healthcare centers, residential communities, senior day care, education, insurance counseling, rehabilitation, long-term care, and home care places an emphasis on helping seniors remain independent as long as possible, with the support of family care givers. Home hospice completes Provenant's continuum of healthcare.

Bringing hospice care to patients' homes is a wise use of dwindling healthcare resources. Not only is home hospice care more supportive for patients and their families, it is less costly than institutional care.

Summary In November 1993 Hospice of Peace, a home hospice program in Denver, was reorganized under a new joint sponsorship of Provenant Health Partners and Catholic Charities and Community Services. Home hospice completes Provenant's continuum of healthcare.

Based on the campus of Provenant Senior Life Center, Hospice of Peace employs multidisciplinary professionals who care for patients and their family care givers in their homes. Each hospice team works with a patient's physician and comes from a pool of primary care nurses, certified nurse assistants, social workers, counselors, pastoral care counselors, and specially trained volunteers and bereavement counselors.

Respect for human life at all stages is the ethic behind the organizations' hospice efforts. Even at life's end, when aggressive medical treatment is no longer appropriate, healthcare professionals can enhance patients' quality of life and provide bereavement support to their loved ones. Just as Catholic healthcare addresses the spiritual component of healing, so it addresses the spiritual component of dying.



Mr. Rockers is president and chief executive officer, and Ms. Hoagland is publications editor, Provenant Health Partners, Denver.



COMPLETING THE CONTINUUM

The reorganization of Hospice of Peace in November 1993 constitutes a collaborative effort between a Catholic social services organization and a Catholic hospital system.

Catholic Charities and Community Services had been guiding the hospice for more than nine years, but understood that affiliation with a hospital system was necessary to bring the hospice to a higher level of operation. Provenant Health Partners offered a continuum of healthcare services, but needed a hospice to complete that circle of care. The two organizations came together because they understood that only through collaboration could they meet their respective needs.

Representatives from both organizations participated in planning the home hospice program and serve on its board of directors. Both groups have equal responsibility for financial, organizational, and operational issues.

Hospice of Peace is now part of a large healthcare provider system with access to vast financial and managerial resources, an extensive regional healthcare network, and growing managed care relationships. Those resources are helping to strengthen Hospice of Peace's financial stability. Before the merger, Hospice of Peace average patient census per month was 20; in May 1994 the average was 35 to 40. Seventy-five percent of referrals come from within the Provenant organization.

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or fewer months to live are admitted when they have decided with their physician to discontinue aggressive medical treatment aimed at prolonging life. They have agreed instead to seek palliative care, which promotes comfort by controlling pain and symptoms. Hospice teams attempt to meet patients' and family care givers' holistic needs.

"If you want to meet the full range of community needs, you must include hospice care," said Silas Wier, vice president, Provenant Senior Care Division. "Provenant has long wanted to offer high-quality hospice care that reflects the values of the Catholic faith." By joining with Hospice of Peace, he said, Provenant is able to meet those needs by augmenting an existing system rather than launching a new program.

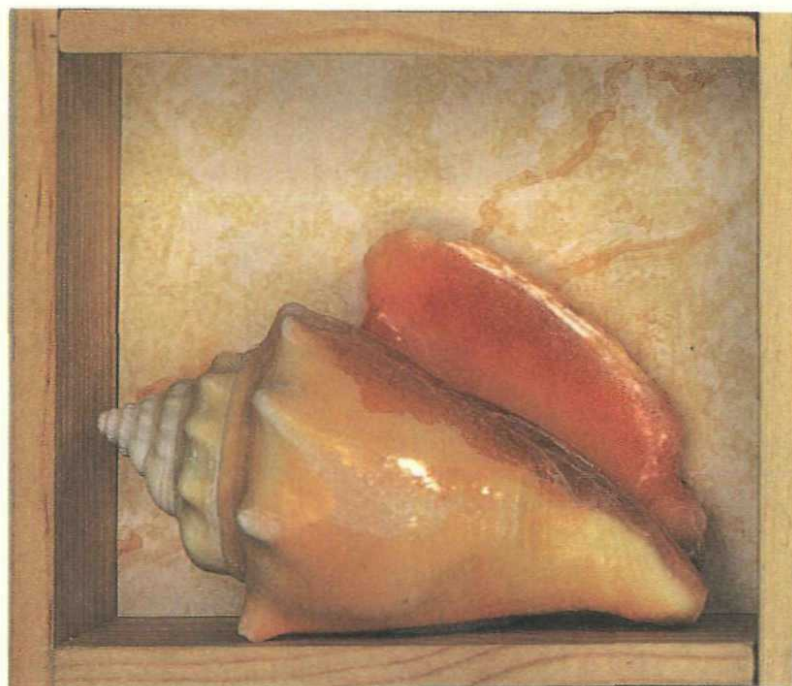
CATHOLIC VALUES INHERENT

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According to Jim Mauck, president and chief executive officer of Catholic Charities and Community Services, the significance of the collaboration with Provenant is that two organizations clearly share the same values. "The fact the we're Catholic based gives us a whole level of dialogue and trust by which we can begin to explore ways to serve the community better."

With a mission to serve the community, Hospice of Peace cares for all persons, regardless of faith. Hospice of Peace provides services on the basis of need rather than ability to pay. Patients not cov-

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FULL CIRCLE

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gram because it contains patient profiles that can be categorized to provide statistical information on each individual or group. It is also useful for calculating volume projections and service utilization. In addition, comparing enrollment data with research studies can assist with predictions for program and facility planning and resource consumption. These components are essential to the budgeting processes.

FUTURE APPLICATIONS

Programs like the Senior Advantage application will be useful for hospital-based case managers, as well as for others who provide services to older adults: community outreach case managers, home stabilization nurses, and parish nurses. In the future, it is possible that baby boomers—or the generation that succeeds them—will carry their own medical records around on a disk, or have them encrypted into credit card-like devices or even stored under their skin. Programs like Senior Advantage can facilitate this evolution by providing information links between the established patient-centered care plan and the patients' self-reporting and monitoring of their own self-care practices. As computers become household appliances, the patient will be able to enter changes in the profile information; to make journal entries; and to give the healthcare provider progress reports on body functions, health concerns, and adherence to healthy practices. Those who do not own home computers will be able to access terminals or assistance at public locations.

Although it is impossible to predict how all this will take shape, the experience of the healthcare providers in the Toledo area proves that, through networking and efficient use of computer technology, healthcare providers can offer better services to seniors and share, shape, and use information in more ways than ever thought possible. □

For more information, call Sally McNichols at 419-698-7272 or Debi Sampsel at 314-427-2500.

Hospice of Peace provides services on the basis of need.

ered by Medicare, Medicaid, or third-party insurance pay on a sliding-fee scale. In 1993 more than \$52,000 of hospice services were directed to charity care.

Its Catholic foundation drives Provenant to offer a continuum of care, devoting resources to the end stages of life, as well as the beginning stages. Although caring for persons in

their homes seems to be the antithesis of a healthcare institution's market strategy, home hospice care exemplifies Provenant's goal of breaking down the barriers that have in the past separated healthcare providers from the communities they serve. □

For additional information, contact Ann Luke, executive director, Hospice of Peace, 303-575-8393.

PHILOSOPHY OF HOSPICE

In a time when terminally ill patients and their families feel disenfranchised by a society uncomfortable with death, it is extraordinary for the dying process to be a spiritual journey. Yet families whose loved ones have been cared for at home through Hospice of Peace, Denver, describe the experience as such.

Hospice of Peace nurses are on call around-the-clock to monitor patients' vital signs and help family care givers. Because patients and their families are at home, the environment is one of love and comfort rather than fear and strangeness. Family care givers administer patients' medications and bathe and nourish patients.

"We try to help the patient and family focus on relationships that give life meaning," said Ann Luke, executive director of Hospice of Peace. Team members foster relationships by helping families and patients clarify the needs and challenges they face—interpersonal needs, feelings of abandonment, goals for the time remaining, understanding the myriad feelings that surface, and myths about how things should be.

Such an environment nourishes dialogue about spiritual matters as well. Pastoral care counselors help patients and families voice their beliefs about life and death. Some persons have strong religious beliefs; others have many questions. When appropriate, Hospice of Peace works with a patient's religious institution to facilitate this dialogue.

Hospice care is not just effective in the last moments of life. According to Luke, the sooner the team begins working with a patient and family, the more it can diminish the wear and tear on family care givers. "Knowing that we're there to help enables the family to relax a bit and focus on the quality time that is left."

Hospice care does not stop when the patient dies. The team offers bereavement support for a family throughout the year after a loved one has died. "So many people think they have done all the grieving before the death," commented Luke, "but there is still much more at the time of death and afterward."