LOVE + LEGACY
Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care Update

81% to Goal of $1 Million

We are nearing our goal! Help us make it the rest of the way.

Park Nicollet Foundation
HealthPartners
Dear friends,

We will all face the end of our life, and the quality of care, empathy and dignity provided during that time will have a profound impact on the lives of our loved ones and our final days with them. As hospice care providers, we have devoted our careers to caring for patients and families facing end of life. We understand the emotional, physical and financial stress that often come with end of life. We have also witnessed challenges faced by patients and families during these precious last days caused by gaps in the health care system.

Our **Love & Legacy Campaign** to support Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care is an opportunity to honor life and the human experience by helping to fill in these gaps and give the gift of care to those in our community who need it most. With your help, we can transform our love into a lasting legacy that will give peace and dignity to patients and families as they face their final farewell.

Every one of us has something to give to make the end of life comfortable for the most vulnerable in our community. We are proud to be a part of the **Love & Legacy Campaign** for Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care, and we are honored and grateful to have so many of you join us on this journey.

Please consider a gift to support these much needed programs.

Together we can transform hospice and palliative care.

Sincerely,

Nancy Gelle, RN  
Steve Duane, MD

Co-Chairs, Love & Legacy Campaign  
Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice and Palliative Care
Discover Your Love & Legacy

Every palliative and hospice care team across the country struggles with gaps in the health care system that can lead to fragmentation of care, communication barriers and multiple transitions across care settings. The stress on patients and their families impacts wellbeing and can increase risk of additional complications.

With the help of philanthropy, we plan to take on the challenges in the health care system with two new innovative solutions that have the potential to influence change - the Transition Guide Role and the Comfort Care Bed Program.

Transition Guide Role

A significant challenge for many patients and families who deal with complex health issues is navigating health care settings. As health care needs change, patients may need to make multiple care setting transitions. Often transitions occur from the hospital to a rehabilitation facility and then to care at home, assisted living or nursing home. Patients and families are often overwhelmed navigating each transition as they are confronted with new surroundings and unfamiliar care teams. As a result these transitions are not always successful in meeting the family or patient’s goals for care and create significant stress and anxiety. Adding a Transition Guide - a three year pilot - will assist our palliative care and hospice teams and patients and families as they navigate these transitions. We will measure the impact of this new role and share our results.

Our Transition Guide will work closely with patients and families to identify their goals of care. They will be a point of contact for patients and families in outpatient and inpatient settings to help care transitions go smoothly, attend care conferences and regularly communicate with the patient, family and medical teams.

Comfort Care Bed Program

Not all patients at the end of life qualify for hospice care in the hospital. According to Medicare guidelines once a patient’s symptoms have stabilized and their care can be given elsewhere they must be discharged. For a patient who is dying as well as for their grieving family, this disruption in care can be a traumatic way to spend their final days.

With our Comfort Care Bed Program, fragile patients are able to stay in the hospital, with no disruption in care. For patients with very limited time, they will be able to spend their final days in comfort and dignity, surrounded by caring staff and a loving family. Family will be able to focus on their loved one’s final days without worrying about transition distractions.

“I was so appreciative that we did not have to move my mother from the hospital. She was able to pass away peacefully.”
~ Daughter of Comfort Care Bed Program’s first patient
Debbie and Rick O’Gara and their family are no strangers to hospice. Over the past 11 years, they have become keenly aware of the importance of dignity and grace on the journey to a final goodbye.

Eleven years ago, Debbie’s father entered Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice program. The benefits of the program meant the world to her and her family. “He had access to a special hospice nurse, music therapy, a volunteer visitor and extra care,” said Debbie. “My father loved the hospice team members. The care and support had a tremendous impact on his quality of life to the end.”

When Rick’s mother entered in-home hospice years later, the family continued to see the benefits of hospice involvement.

Both of these experiences reinforced Debbie and Rick’s interest and faith in hospice. But, it wasn’t until they witnessed dear friends having difficulties accessing appropriate hospice care that Debbie and Rick saw where they could make a difference.

In speaking to family and friends, it became clear to Debbie and Rick, that the option of staying in the hospital was almost never available. “I just can’t imagine it,” said Debbie. “You are trying to do the best thing for your family and your loved one, and the option you need just is not there. This really inspired my husband and me to do what we can in our community to help provide that missing piece in hospice care.”

As part of the Love & Legacy Campaign, Debbie and Rick O’Gara donated to support the Comfort Care Bed Program. A family lounge and a patient room designed to support the hospice Comfort Care Bed Program on the fifth floor of Methodist Hospital have been named in honor of their generosity. These rooms will give patients, visitors, family members and loved ones a place of quiet and refuge, privacy for conversations about care and comfort for the emotions that accompany end-of-life. Debbie and Rick hope these spaces will give many families the support they need to say a graceful and dignified goodbye.
The Impact of a Legacy of Love

After a 5-year struggle with complications from an episode of sepsis, Beverly’s husband, Chuck, entered hospice. “The truth is that when someone goes into hospice care, the entire family enters hospice care,” said Beverly.

“Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice made it possible for my husband to spend the last months of his life as he wanted, in the comfort of his own home,” said Beverly. “With the help of the hospice team and a wonderful volunteer, all provided by Park Nicollet, he was able to die peacefully. I am forever grateful.”

Shortly after her husband passed away in the care of Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Hospice, Beverly watched as her brother, in the process of being transitioned from a hospital to his home, also passed away. The pain this complicated transition caused the family was undeniable.

“The emotional shift that needs to take place to accept that a loved one is going to die is like stepping through a door into a completely different life,” said Beverly. “It was very painful to watch my sister-in-law and her children suffer through this. Trying to figure out how to move my brother when he was so fragile was incredibly traumatic for their family. This should not be the experience for any family during the last precious hours or days of a loved one’s life. Rather, it should be a sacred time of remembrance, and a time to dwell on their shared grief, pain and loss.”

For Beverly, the contrast between the two experiences highlights the need for programs like the Comfort Care Bed and the Transition Guide Role to fill in the gaps and ensure every patient’s dignity. “It’s the right thing to do. I’m proud to be a part of this project for Methodist Hospital. People in our community need the help these programs can bring at end-of-life.”
In Gratitude*

Thank you to the donors who are building their legacy by supporting these new innovative programs.

*Gifts as of June 5, 2017

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Call or email Beth Warner at
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We are nearing our goal!
Help us make it the rest of the way.

$812,056 Raised to Date
$1 million goal