

The Helping Hand

Spring 2013



Hospice
of helping hands
John Tolfree health system

Changes in Health Care Reimbursement

Hospice of Helping Hands, a non-profit hospice care provider, receives reimbursement for patient care services from Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance at a per day rate of \$142. The reimbursement rate needs to cover service costs that include medications relevant to the patient's terminal diagnosis, supplies, and all direct care provided by our hospice team of nurses, social workers, hospice aides, spiritual advisors and bereavement services.

As of April 1, 2013 the Federal Government has implemented a sequestration cut of two percent for all hospice agencies billing Medicare. This means that hospice agencies will bill at the 100% reimbursement rate, but the Medicare Administrative Contractor will deduct 2% before paying the claim. (VNAA – Advancing Nonprofit Home Health Care and Hospice, www.vnaa.org) This sequestration cut is slated to last up till 2019, unless reversed by congress. While this doesn't seem like a large reduction in reimbursement, it will make a hefty impact. At Hospice of Helping Hands, we expect the sequestration cut to result in a \$49,000 reduction in reimbursement each year. For a small, non-profit hospice agency this is a big hit.

At this time, Medicare is the only insurance provider implementing reductions to hospice reimbursement. Currently Hospice of Helping Hands is billing Medicare for 94% of their patient census. There is no better time than now to make a donation to your local non-profit hospice agency – Hospice of Helping Hands. "We (HHH) are insistent on continuing to provide the highest quality of hospice care that our community has become accustomed to, despite the reductions in reimbursement," states Donnelle Napier, HHH Director.

HHH Rolls Out a New Logo

As an affiliate of the John Tolfree Health System (JTSH,) Hospice of Helping Hands has changed their logo in an effort to better integrate and brand the Health System.

Many in the community are unaware that Hospice of Helping Hands is an affiliate of the JTSH, which includes:

- West Branch Regional Medical Center
- Tolfree Foundation
- Medical Arts Center of West Branch
- Medical Arts Center of Lakeside

As an affiliate of the JTSH, Hospice of Helping Hands is the preferred provider for hospice services.

All affiliates have adopted the new logo and accompanied branding standards. The unity established in the new logos will help the JTSH educate the public on all the services they provide in Northeast Michigan.

"Wings of Hope" Memorial Service
Saturday, May 18th
10:00 a.m.
Iron's Park, Large Pavilion,
West Branch, MI

*A hopeful time of reflection &
a special butterfly release ceremony to
honor your loved one.*

We have "Soup"er Volunteers

National Volunteer Appreciation week is April 21-27. Hospice of Helping Hands volunteers will be invited to attend a special appreciation dinner as we celebrate their dedicated service to our agency. The theme of this year's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner is "Soup"er Volunteers. At the dinner, soup will be included in the menu and the anticipated skit will be "soup-themed."

In 2012 our "Soup"er volunteers...

- made 596 patient visits
- drove 27,615 miles
- logged 3,835 hours

If you see one of our volunteers wearing their HHH green, make sure to give them a pat on the back. They are a very important part of our team and the service they provide touches many hearts.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner/Yearly Competency
Wednesday, May 8, 5:30 p.m.
Quality Inn & Conference Center, West Branch

Camp Warm Hearts Review

February 1 – 3, 2013, Hospice of Helping Hands and MidMichigan Home Care welcomed 42 campers and 37 volunteers to Camp Warm Hearts - a weekend winter camp for children ages 5 – 15 who have experienced a significant loss of a loved one. Campers participated in various activities that included scrapbooking, an outdoor scavenger hunt, 'Stop Before You Pop' workshop, a carnival, crafts, memory box wood burning, sledding, and several healing circles. Healing circles are grief-related activities that allow Campers to talk about their loved one and learn ways to cope with their grief. The multiple healing circles focus on sharing favorite memories of the camper's loved one; dealing with anger, guilt and sadness; building self-esteem and a support system; and writing messages to their loved one.

Camp Warm Hearts is held annually the first weekend in February at The Springs Camp between West Branch and Gladwin. Camp is completely supported by donations from the community. For more information or to make a donation, call 800-992-6592.

April 16th - National Healthcare Decisions Day

Hospice of Helping Hands along with other national, state, and community organizations, is leading a massive effort to highlight the importance of advance healthcare decision-making—an effort that has culminated in the formal designation of April 16 as National Healthcare Decisions Day (NHDD).

NHDD organizers are asking interested organizations and individuals throughout the country to help raise awareness about the importance of advance care planning on this special day—and throughout the year. To help realize this goal, they have created a Web site with information and tools for the public to talk about future healthcare decisions and execute written advance directives (healthcare power of attorney and living wills) in accordance with their applicable state laws.

The Web site (nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org) also includes tips on how advocates can raise awareness in their communities.

Hospice of Helping Hands has offered to provide a free presentation on Advance Directives to the associations and churches in their service area. If you know of a group/church that would like a presentation, please call Rhonda at 800-992-6592.

Hospice Refresher

Recently, there has been a lot of research publicized on hospice care. Here are some facts with supplemental research data to "refresh" your memory on the special care we provide.

Hospice is not for just the last couple days.

Recently Brown University published in the Journal of American Medical Association that they while hospice use is increasing, it is often used as a last resort. This is unfortunate as late hospice referrals won't be able to fully benefit from the many specialized services that hospice offers. The study's authors stated that hospice care should be offered as an option earlier in the disease process.

Hospice saves Medicare money

Published in the March edition of Health Affairs was a study that built off of the 2007 Duke University study that found hospice care saves the Federal Government money. The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization wrote in their April Newsletter: "While the findings were limited to enrollment of one to 105 days, the researchers suggest that investment in the Medicare hospice benefit translates into savings overall for the Medicare system."

Hearts for Hospice a Success

February 1st – 15th, red and gold hearts covered the walls and windows of several local businesses who participated in the Hearts for Hospice fundraising campaign. Red paper hearts were sold for \$1.00 each and gold hearts were sold for \$5.00 each with all proceeds benefiting Hospice of Helping Hands, Inc.

The 2013 top selling Hearts for Hospice business establishments by county are as follows:

Arenac County: Miss Michelle's Country Kitchen

Gladwin County: Central Michigan Federal Credit Union

Iosco County: Pickles Hard Hat Bar

Ogemaw County: McGregor's Country Store

Oscoda County: First Federal of Northern Michigan Credit Union

Roscommon County: Old Town Tavern

This year over 75 businesses participated in Hearts for Hospice raising over \$8,000. Hospice of Helping Hands, Inc. is a non-profit hospice organization serving Northeast Michigan since 1979. For more information on hospice services or how you can help your local hospice organization, go to www.HospiceofHelpingHands.com or call 800-992-6592.



Pictured above is the display of Hearts for Hospice at Ogemaw Lanes in West Branch.

Save the Date

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner/Yearly Competency - Wednesday, May 8, 5:30 pm, at the Quality Inn and Conference Center, West Branch. Volunteers, please plan to attend this fun evening of fellowship, good food, entertainment, and recognition.

Employee/Volunteer Inservice - Tuesday, April 23, 11:00 am, in the large Diabetic Education Conference Room. The speaker, Darcy Lewis, will present "Do These 6 Things to Create Ease in Your Life." She will teach us how to apply simple self-help techniques to minimize stress and maximize brain power. Darcy is a consultant and instructor for Connected Learning, LLC and is the President of the US Touch for Health Kinesiology Association. She also is a Certified Touch For Health and Brain Gym Instructor. Please plan to attend!

How you can Help!

Duck Race - Saturday, July 6th
at Iron's Park, West Branch

You can help by: selling tickets at Walmart or Glens; coming early to the race to set up and sticker the ducks; or staying after the race to clean up.

"Scotty" Golf Outing - Friday, August 2nd
at the West Branch Country Club

You can help by: gathering door prizes from local businesses, putting up flyers, asking your friends to get a team together, helping with various tasks the day of the outing, watching for a hole-in-one, or GOLFING!

Hospice Yard Sale - September 6-8

Collections start July 30th on
Tuesdays from 2 - 6 p.m.

Thursdays from 12 noon - 5 p.m.

You can help by: taking a department manager role or assistant department manager role (pricing a department and setting it up on the tables,) putting up flyers, helping set up with a department right before the event, setting up tables, bringing treats for the volunteers, being a cashier, helping clean up, or scheduling volunteers.

What our families are saying...

"They were a blessing to us both and he was given excellent care."

"They were always helpful, informative, and supportive. They were a great source of comfort for the final days."

"In retrospect, Hospice should have been recommended in June or earlier. Had we known more about hospice and the ease of transfer between hospices, we may have opted for earlier transfer to AuGres."

"It was very much appreciated and we would not have been able to do it without HHH."

*~Direct quotes from Hospice of Helping Hands
2013 First Quarter Patient Satisfaction Surveys*

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