

Upcoming Events

Next Steps

A free support group for adults who have lost a loved one.

Specific topics are presented each month and attendees have the opportunity to share their thoughts in a safe, comforting environment with their peers. Registration is not required.

St. Luke's Hospice

Fourth Tuesday of every month from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

December Topic:

"Cultivating Support After a Loss"

Grief Journey

An eight-week curriculum-based support group that shares helpful bereavement information and is facilitated by Hospice social workers. There is no cost to attend. There is a minimum of five attendees required.

Winter Session:

Meets eight Saturdays, January 8 - February 26 from 9:30 - 11 a.m. at St. Luke's Hospice

St. Luke's Hospice
290 Blairs Ferry Road NE, Suite 100
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

phone 319/369-7744
fax 319/368-5531
stlukescr.org



Dr. James Bell, St. Luke's Palliative Care and Hospice medical director, wrote the below editorial, which recently appeared in *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*.

Clarifying Myths about End-of-Life Decisions

In a recent medical study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, 36 percent of seniors said they believe the new health care law allows a government panel to make decisions about end-of-life care for people on Medicare. I think it's time to clear up this myth.

I talk with people every day about their choices in end-of-life care with an emphasis on quality of life. I never tell them what they have to do, and there is never anyone from "the government" standing behind me like a vulture waiting to swoop in and change the plan. There is no death panel provision in any health care law!

Hospice and palliative care match the kind of care people receive with their goals when they have serious illness. Our health care team has lengthy conversations about what the consequences of choices will more than likely be — that's the "palliative care" part. Then, when the patient chooses to focus on comfort instead of cure in the face of a terminal illness, hospice becomes appropriate.

Hospice isn't a place or a building — it's a kind of care. Most people are able to stay in their residence, which can be a very important part of quality of life both for patients and their loved ones. The hospice team journeys with people to help them live life to the fullest for as long as life lasts.

In 2009, approximately 1.6 million people in the United States received hospice services, but this is still only about 40 percent of the people who would more than likely qualify for hospice. Most insurance plans, including Medicare, Medicaid, HMOs and managed care plans, pay for hospice.

Non-profit hospices in Cedar Rapids, such as St. Luke's, offer hospice care to all patients, regardless of their ability to pay. Generous donors help us make that mission possible.

Knowledge is a powerful tool in making informed health care decisions. It's never too early, or too late, to start thinking and learning about end-of-life care. If you or your organization would like information about free educational opportunities, call St. Luke's Hospice at 319/369-7744.

Hospice Associates Awarded as “Guardian Angels”

The family of the late Janet Janss recently honored four St. Luke’s Hospice employees with Guardian Angel Awards for their exceptional care.

“It is very hard to verbalize what your care and compassion have meant to us,” wrote Kris Purdy, Janet’s daughter. “I have always known that St. Luke’s gives the best care to every patient – and now my family knows it, too. We are so grateful!”

Kris is pictured in the light blue shirt in the center of the photo. She is surrounded by (from left to right): Hospice Nurse Mary Anne Berry; Hospice Chaplain Jeremy Hudson; Janet’s granddaughter DeAnna Bilsland; Janet’s daughter Kathlene Bilsland; Hospice Social Worker Bruce Wlosinski; Janet’s son-in-law Leonard Purdy; and Hospice Director Stephanie Anderson.



Palliative Care and Hospice Medical Director Dr. James Bell was also honored, but is not pictured. This is Dr. Bell’s second Guardian Angel honor, which is recognized with a gold Guardian Angel pin.

The Guardian Angel program gives a patient or family an opportunity to express appreciation for a specific St. Luke’s associate, department or volunteer who made a difference in their health care experience. The gift is then directed to either the associate’s department or to the Guardian Angel Fund. For more information about the Guardian Angel Fund, please contact Amy Johnson Boyle, vice president at the St. Luke’s Health Care Foundation, at 319/369-7771.

St. Luke’s Hospice Speaker’s Bureau Staff and Volunteers Provide Education

Did you know St. Luke’s Hospice has a robust speaker’s bureau, including both fully trained volunteers and staff?

Presentations can be given on a variety of topics, ranging from general hospice information to more specific medical or bereavement information. All are offered at no charge and are part of St. Luke’s Hospice free benefits for our community.

Members of the speaker’s bureau provide informative, value-added education. The speaker’s bureau is happy to reach out to healthcare providers, communities of faith, civic organizations or any groups that want to learn more about end-of-life issues. Staff or volunteers will travel to speaking engagements and will provide materials to help aid in learning. Presentations are given throughout Hospice’s 50-mile service area.

To coordinate a St. Luke’s Hospice speaker for your next event or community group, please contact Megan McGurk, community relations coordinator, at 319/369-7744 or mcgurkma@ihs.org.

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St. Luke’s Mission: To give the healthcare we’d like our loved ones to receive.