



Rebecca Ashling, RN, founder of Housecall Providers Hospice and revered as a 'Hospice Legend,' is surrounded by the members of the Housecall Providers leadership team. In the foreground is Terri Hobbs, who served as Executive Director from 2011 to 2017.

Hospice celebrates 15 years of service

Housecall Providers Hospice marks a significant milestone as it celebrates its 15th anniversary this year. Since its founding in 2009, the hospice has provided compassionate end-of-life care to approximately 4,000 patients, demonstrating a commitment to providing patient-centered, end-of-life care throughout the Portland metro area.

The hospice was initially created to extend the continuum of care for Housecall Providers' primary care patients, ensuring they received consistent and compassionate care at the end of their lives. In 2015, the hospice broadened its scope, opening its doors to serve adults who were not

previously the organization's primary care patients, thereby expanding its reach and impact within the community.

Rebecca Ashling, RN, who founded Housecall Providers Hospice, reflects on this milestone: "I feel so proud that the hospice has hit (See "Hospice celebrates" page 7)

Summer 2024

Special hospice anniversary edition

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Improving lives
by bringing
health care home

housecallproviders.org



Rebecca Ramsay, MPH

CEO reflections

As we celebrate the 15th anniversary of Housecall Providers Hospice, we reflect on the journey that has shaped our organization and the critical role nonprofit medical care plays in our community. In an era where for-profit hospice care has surged, our mission-driven approach remains unwavering, prioritizing the well-being of our patients over financial gain. This commitment to always putting patients first is what sets us apart, enabling us to provide the compassionate, holistic care our community needs and deserves.

This spring, we joyously celebrated with current and former employees, recognizing the exceptional care we have delivered to over 4,000 patients over the past 15 years. When patient-centered care is the core of your mission, you attract the finest workforce. This dedication is why we are one of only two hospices in Oregon to earn all four rings in the 2023 Quality Connections program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization signifying service excellence.

The health care landscape has significantly shifted over the past five years, with for-profit hospices now comprising about 73% of all providers. We encourage you to review the attached insert, which details how community-based, mission-driven hospice organizations prioritize the well-being of their patients, families and caregivers with integrative services, offering an alternative to for-profit entities that often prioritize profitability.

Hospice care epitomizes empathetic and responsive medical care, requiring a patient-centered approach that addresses medical, emotional and spiritual needs. Our volunteers play an indispensable role in this mission, providing companionship, respite for caregivers, and assisting with various tasks, profoundly impacting the lives of those we serve. An article on page 6 of this newsletter features a heartwarming story of one such volunteer, Wendy Usher, underscoring the invaluable contributions volunteers make to our organization.

Lastly, we are still basking in the success of our community-wide event, Toss for a Cause, held on June 1 at Sellwood Park. Feedback from fellow nonprofits, volunteers and staff highlighted the fun and camaraderie it fostered, with many praising the outstanding opportunity to build a strong network to serve the growing numbers of seriously ill and homebound members in our community. Next year, we'll collaborate with our partners to increase attendance and continue working toward making this event a beloved Portland tradition.

Thank you for joining us on this journey and supporting our mission to deliver exceptional, patient-centered care. Together, we can keep making a meaningful impact in the lives of those we serve.

In community,

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Rebecca". The script is elegant and cursive, with a large, flowing 'R' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'a'.



Thanks to the 45+ volunteers who helped make Toss for a Cause so memorable and successful.

Toss for a Cause showcases community spirit

On June 1, Sellwood Park was alive with excitement as over 200 attendees gathered for Housecall Providers' inaugural Toss for a Cause event. With the support of the weather and more than 25 community-based nonprofits and civic organizations, the day was filled with friendly cornhole competition, community spirit, and invaluable networking opportunities.

CEO Rebecca Ramsay expressed her enthusiasm, saying, "The event was a great success, and it wouldn't have been possible without the incredible support from our community-based partners, sponsors, and volunteers. The turnout and the positive energy from everyone involved truly exceeded our expectations. We are thrilled to see such strong support and look forward to making this an annual tradition!"

The event aimed to unite the public with local nonprofits that provide vital services to elders, adults with disabilities and those with serious illnesses. Attendees were able to gather valuable information and assistance for themselves or their loved ones, and plan the steps

needed to age in place in the greater Portland area. Feedback from nonprofit partners has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants expressing a strong desire to be involved in Toss for a Cause next year as well.

Over 45 dedicated volunteers offered their time, energy and enthusiasm to ensure the event's success. Their contributions were invaluable, from setting up the event and supporting activities to refereeing games, managing the food trucks and beer garden, and ensuring everything ran smoothly from the welcome tent to the family fun area and takedown. Like the nonprofit partners, most of the volunteers have also expressed their eagerness to be part of the

festivities next year, highlighting the event's impact and community spirit.

Housecall Providers is grateful for the generous support of sponsors and contributions that helped make this initial year possible, especially our silver sponsors, Threadgill's Memorial Services and State Serv—Delta Care. Other sponsors included: Alberta Abbey, Central City Concern, Eleva Group, AARP Oregon, Morel Ink, Multnomah County, Connected Home Health and Hospice, DocuMart, Interstate Special Events, Kashi Clinical Laboratories, and National Seating and Mobility. This support not only helped to fund the event but also deepened connections within the community.

Thank you to all for making Toss for a Cause an unforgettable day of community, camaraderie and learning. Plans are already underway to enhance the event, ensuring it is an even more engaging and impactful celebration of community next year. ■

Celebrating

of nonprofit, patient-



Housecall Providers patient Don Dickey is surrounded by friends on his last day.



April 10, 2012

Hospice team guides Don through final passage

Don Dickey led an active life, excelling in sports as a youth, pursuing several different careers as an adult and making friends wherever he went. Beset with lung problems from his twenties, he became a Housecall Providers primary care patient in 2007.

December 1, 2013



Gifted man receives the gift of compassionate care

"Billy was just so alive, he lit up every room he was ever in," says Cathy, Billy's wife and most certainly his biggest fan. "So it was especially hard for him to be sick. Lots of days, he just didn't want to see anybody. But he always made an exception for Rebecca."



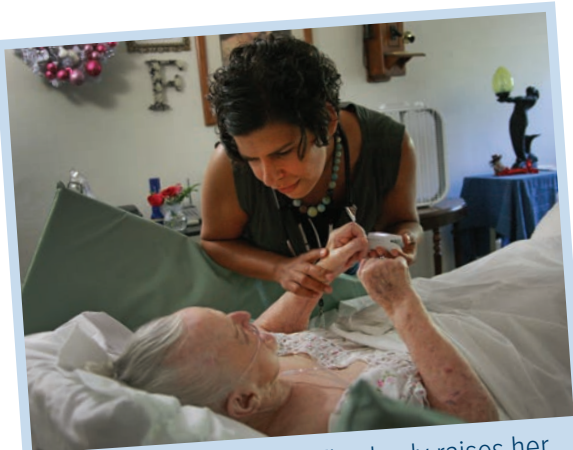
Billy Randolph at home, where he received our hospice services.



July 15, 2013

A magical moment between patient and clinician

Bending over Flo is her clinician, Amy Long, NP. Now on hospice, Flo's pain is being managed but, in respect of her wishes, she will not receive treatment intended to extend her life.



As Amy moves closer, Flo slowly raises her left arm. Her message is understood.

15 years

-centered hospice care



Gino's nurse, Gillian, loved seeing him riding in a slick classic car again.



November 8, 2019

One more classic joy ride

Over his lifetime, Gino has owned 25 classic cars. Knowing how much Gino would love to ride in one of these beauties again, Gillian called Affordable Classics in Gladstone. Owner Juan Ruiz was happy to oblige her request to indulge a fellow car enthusiast.

January 24, 2019



Wish comes true for young hospice patient

For hospice team members who traditionally care for individuals at the latter stage of their lives — people who have, for the most part, come to terms with their mortality — providing end-of-life care to a 22-year-old changed the dynamics.



Steve and Nancy Jean surprise their patient Jason with a party before his trip to Disneyland.



A moment that captures the love between the two sisters.



January 30, 2022

Changing roles: hospice nurse to family caregiver

As a nurse, Mary knew the other side of the coin is difficult, so she was as prepared as she could be to take on the role of caregiver. But the difficulty of being the person to make hard decisions regarding her sister's care cannot be overstated.



Wendy Usher, Housecall Providers Hospice's longest-serving volunteer, started with our organization in 2011.

A hospice volunteer reflects on the sacred

Over 15 years, inspiration has come in many forms to Housecall Providers Hospice. One of those sources of inspiration is our longest-serving volunteer, Wendy Usher. Since 2011, she has quietly been doing what hospice volunteers do, spending time with hospice patients, being a companion, listening to stories and bearing witness to transformation. For our special 15th anniversary hospice edition, Wendy shares her experiences to illustrate the profound and meaningful impact of volunteering with Housecall Providers Hospice.

Wendy first started as a volunteer back in 2011, when Housecall Providers Hospice was only two years old. She remembers fondly those early days, seeing Housecall Providers founder Dr. Benneth Husted speak, meeting our hospice's founder Rebecca Ashling, and mostly, how much Volunteer Coordinator Todd Lawrence did to make it possible for her to volunteer. She laughs now, thinking back, "I just remember saying to Todd, I can only volunteer on Mondays and Thursdays from noon to 12:45 during

my lunchbreaks and it can't be more than a mile from work." But Todd didn't miss a beat, happily arranging schedules to make it happen.

"It seems to me now that Todd recognized how important it was to be able to do this. It seems selfish almost but there really is something deeply profound about volunteering with Housecall Providers," Wendy remembers.

Unlike many new volunteers, Wendy came to Housecall Providers

Hospice with a wealth of experience in hospice care. She started as a greeter at an inpatient hospice in Washington state at 16 and began volunteering shortly after. She explained that the lessons learned from hospice work are invaluable, teaching that judgment has no place in this environment. By setting aside personal biases, one opens the door to understanding diverse values and experiences, which is essential in providing compassionate care.

Wendy elaborated on the significance of her volunteer work, emphasizing how patients often reflect on what has mattered most in their lives.

"At the end of their lives, people try to resolve the unresolved and find peace. It is a sacred time, and as a volunteer I get to bear witness to this process of life," Wendy reflects. "It is a profound feeling, enriching everyone involved and a reminder to live life as authentically as possible."

Addressing those considering volunteering who may be feeling hesitant, Wendy offers reassuring advice. She believes that if someone thinks volunteering might be a good fit, it likely is. She also emphasizes the excellent training provided by Todd Lawrence, which equips new volunteers with the confidence and skills needed to find the work rewarding and beautiful. Wendy's journey with Housecall Providers Hospice stands as a testament to the deep impact of compassionate volunteerism. ■

("Hospice celebrates" from page 1)

15 years and been able to maintain a culture of love and hope throughout all levels of patient care. From small beginnings that were challenging, to how honored the team feels to be able to deliver hospice care to the community, I am excited and confident about the future."

Housecall Providers Hospice stands out as one of the few nonprofit hospices left in Portland, maintaining its dedication to patient-centered care amidst a landscape increasingly dominated by for-profit companies. This dedication to quality care is evidenced by its remarkable achievement of earning all four rings in the 2023 Quality Connections program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. This accomplishment places Housecall Providers Hospice among the top providers of high-quality, person-centered hospice and palliative care in Oregon (one of two hospices to hold this honor), underscoring its commitment to excellence and continuous improvement.

Chief Executive Officer Rebecca Ramsay, MPH, expressed her pride in this achievement: "This is an incredible achievement for our hospice, and it acknowledges and validates the clinical excellence we are committed to when caring for our hospice patients and families."

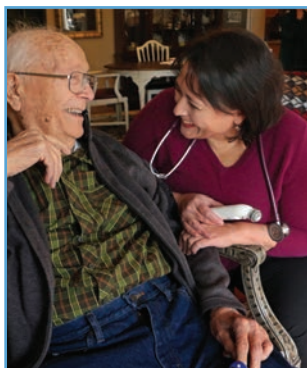
As a member of the National Partnership for Healthcare and Hospice Innovation (NPHI), Housecall Providers Hospice adheres to a values-based approach that emphasizes "People Over Profits." According to the NPHI Blueprint, nonprofit hospices typically provide more comprehensive care, with 10% more nursing visits, 35% more social worker visits, and twice as many therapy visits compared

to for-profit hospices. Nonprofits also spend significantly more on bereavement services and less on advertising. This dedication to patient care over profit is a core value that has driven Housecall Providers Hospice to become a trusted and respected organization in the community.

The NPHI blueprint further illustrates the urgent need for a transformation in health care, emphasizing that nonprofit hospices are uniquely positioned to lead this change. Their commitment to mission-driven, patient-centered care contrasts sharply with the profit-driven motives that often characterize for-profit providers. This commitment is not merely about tax status but about embodying values that prioritize patient well-being and comprehensive care over financial gain.

Housecall Providers Hospice's 15-year journey is a tribute to the impact of compassionate, nonprofit care. As the organization looks to the future, it remains dedicated to its mission of providing exceptional end-of-life care, guided by a deep sense of responsibility to the patients and families it serves. Rebecca Ashling's words resonate deeply with this mission: "Housecall Providers Hospice will continue to be a beacon of hope and love in our community, offering unparalleled care and support to those who need it most."

Housecall Providers Hospice delivers care to many of the assisted living communities throughout the Portland metro area as well as within private homes. If you or a loved one would like to learn more about the benefits of hospice care or have questions whether hospice care is the right choice for you or a family member, please visit housecallprovidershospice.org for more information. ■



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with a gift today.**



housecallproviders.org/donate-now



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