

Heartnotes

A PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL OF HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

Winter 2013

About this Issue

As we approach the season of giving, this issue of *Heartnotes* has plenty in store for you. We'll share some big news within our organization and offer helpful holiday tips to share with your patients, residents or families to help them make the most of the holidays.

Coming soon, Evercare will become Optum



WE'RE CHANGING
OUR NAME BUT THE
CARE EXPERIENCE
REMAINS THE SAME

By Cynthia Seiwert,
Chief Operating Officer

It's big news for us and for you, too. Beginning in March 2014, our name will change from Evercare™ Hospice & Palliative

Care to Optum™ Palliative and Hospice Care. Optum is a leading health services company that provides health and information services to 1 in 5 Americans.

What does this mean for you and your patients? We're making this change to sharpen our focus and better align with the organization's greater goal of helping the health system work better for everyone.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

Optum is transforming care all along the care continuum, providing in-home and in-facility care and care management to support the changing needs of vulnerable and elderly populations.



For more information or to learn more about Evercare™ Hospice & Palliative Care, visit:

EvercareHospice.com



Tips for Making the Most of the Holidays



HELP YOUR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES COPE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

By Diana Pirez, RN, Chief Nursing Officer

Everything seems to converge this time of year. Not only do we have Thanksgiving, the traditional religious holidays and New Year's coming up, but November is also National Family Caregiver Month and National Hospice and Palliative Care Month.

Diana Pirez, RN has served as Chief Nursing Officer of Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care since 2012. She is focused on continued clinical improvement that supports quality outcomes for our patients and families.

The holidays can be a difficult time for those dealing with a serious illness, as well as their families and those who have recently survived the passing of a loved one. So, in the spirit of the season, we thought it would be helpful to give you some tools and resources to share with your patients and families.

6 TIPS TO HELP CAREGIVERS MANAGE STRESS AND ANXIETY

Family caregivers make up 29% of the U.S. adult population.¹ Often, they are so busy taking care of others, they neglect their own care. Share the following tips with caregivers. Encourage them to take 30 minutes to take stock of their emotional and physical health, and take steps to improve their well-being.

1. Focus on what you can provide, rather than what you can't provide.
2. Accept help from others, and don't hesitate to ask for it.
3. Join a caregivers support group.
4. Seek support from your friends, family and loved ones. Remember, you are not in this alone.
5. Set your own health goals. Have you eaten today? Have you exercised this week? Have you seen your doctor lately?
6. Schedule 15 minutes each day for yourself. Do something you enjoy, such as taking a short walk or writing in a gratitude journal.



Most caregivers learn what to do by taking cues from the health care team.

¹ The National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP (2009), Caregiving in the U.S. National Alliance for Caregiving, Washington, DC.



5 TIPS FOR COPING WITH LOSS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season is not always joyous for everyone. For those who have lost a loved one, it can be a time of loneliness and depression. Share the following tips with surviving family members to help them cope with their loss during this time:

1. **REMEMBER** – Stay connected to your loved one who has passed by looking at old photographs or reading old letters from them.
2. **SHARE** – This is a time to share your grief and affection with family and friends. Lean on the most important people in your life.
3. **GIVE** – Make a donation or volunteer for a good cause. Giving improves your state of mind and makes you feel better.
4. **GET INVOLVED** – Be with people. Do things you enjoy. Try something new.
5. **TAKE CARE** – Be mindful of your own needs. Focus on eating right, exercising and getting adequate sleep.

You can find all these tips, plus additional tools and resources at [EvercareHospice.com/Heartnotes](https://www.evercarehospice.com/Heartnotes)

LEARNING ABOUT HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE

November was National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. We'd like to remind you that we offer many tools and resources to help your patients facing serious illness understand their care options. Often times, patients who are diagnosed with a serious or terminal illness may be overwhelmed and have trouble getting answers to all their questions.

Share these FAQs — available in a trifold brochure at [EvercareHospice.com/Heartnotes](https://www.evercarehospice.com/Heartnotes) — with patients and families to help clarify their care options to help them make informed decisions.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN DIAGNOSED WITH A SERIOUS ILLNESS?

This is a difficult time for you and your loved ones, but it's important to get all the information you need to understand what to do next. Here are some helpful questions you may want to ask:

1. What does this mean?
2. How serious is this?
3. What are my options?
4. When do I have to decide?
5. What if I have more questions?
6. When can I schedule an advance care planning meeting?

WHAT IS HOSPICE CARE?

This service is offered when life expectancy may be six months or less. Hospice care is an option when treatments are no longer helpful. Hospice care can help you live with comfort and dignity, and offers care wherever you live, such as your home, hospital room or nursing home.

The goals of hospice care are to:

- Help you learn about your illness and what to expect
- Manage pain and symptoms to help improve your quality of life
- Provide supportive services to match your values and goals of care
- Offer support to your family and loved ones, during care and for one year after your passing

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COMING SOON, EVERCARE WILL BECOME OPTUM

Rest assured, our mission is not changing — we will continue to provide your patients and their families with the same individualized, compassionate care we're known for today. You can expect a renewed commitment to best serve our patients, families and partners.

As part of the name change, the next issue of *Heartnotes* will feature a new look and feel. We're excited about the move from Evercare to Optum, and we're set to create the best care experience for patients and their families.

Evercare will become



If you have any questions about the upcoming transition to Optum, please don't hesitate to reach out to your local Evercare representative.

Cynthia Seiwert is the Chief Operating Officer of Evercare Hospice. With more than 15 years of leadership experience in post-acute care operations, Seiwert oversees our 17 hospice agencies, ensuring programs help patients and families live each day to the fullest.

Latest News

NEW SNF REGULATIONS

Evercare is working with our skilled nursing facility (SNF) partners to ensure they are aware of the new SNF regulations, Section 483.75 (t), and have the appropriate documentation in place. For more information, talk to your Evercare representative.

CONVERSATION STARTER

According to a recent survey by The Conversation Project, more than half of respondents admitted their loved ones' experience could have been improved had they had a conversation about their end-of-life wishes. Let your patients and families know about the resources available at EvercareHospice.com/AdvanceDirectives.

RESULTS OF PALLIATIVE CARE STUDY

A study in the *Journal of Palliative Medicine* found that in-home palliative care was effective at reducing symptoms for chronically ill patients. To read the study or learn more about Evercare's palliative consultations, visit EvercareHospice.com/ClinicalResources or talk to your Evercare representative.

Ready to Help

Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care is available all day, every day to quickly respond to patient referrals and needs. Call us at 877-765-4445. To learn more about Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care, please visit us online at EvercareHospice.com.



Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care is part of Optum, a leading health services company. Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, sex, religion, color, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or other protected factor. Services provided regardless of ability to pay.



Evercare Hospice & Palliative Care is accredited by Community Health Accreditation Program, an independent, third-party accrediting body recognizing only the highest standards in quality care.