

Hearts for Hospice



Gulfside
Hospice

Lic. 1989

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Responding to the Needs of Our Community

***Our team never stopped working
to provide compassionate care to
our patients and families.***



The last few months have brought significant challenges to our community and the world. Like so many, you have probably been impacted by these uncertain times. This is true for Gulfside patients, families, employees and volunteers as well. The end-of-life journey can be difficult even under the best of circumstances, so you may imagine what it is like now.

The COVID-19 pandemic definitely impacted Gulfside, but some things didn't change.

Our doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains and bereavement counselors never stopped working 24/7 to provide compassionate care to our patients and families. More than 600 hospice patients were cared for wherever they called "home" and in our two hospice care centers. Our home health patients still received skilled nursing care that allows them to stay safer at home, instead of rehabilitation centers.

However, Gulfside experienced many challenges during this pandemic too.

Gulfside faced PPE shortages, staff exposure to COVID-19 and a lack of testing. More than 300 employees worked remotely to protect patients and themselves from risk of exposure. Most devastating was the temporary closure of our five Gulfside Thrift Shoppes, resulting in lost revenue needed to make hospice care available to all who need it regardless of their ability to pay.

Today, Gulfside remains committed to providing high-quality care to our patients and families.

Thanks to the support of our donors, Gulfside was able to help patients and families with their hospice, palliative care and home health needs during this healthcare crisis. While keeping our focus on patient-centered care, Gulfside will continue to lead the way in solving challenges and meeting the medical needs of our community. Your donations makes this, and so much more, possible. Thank you!





GRANTS FOR GRIEF

The grief you feel after losing a loved one can be unexplainable. It's one of the few life events that completely shakes us and changes the way we live from that moment on. In some cases, a loss can mean going to call someone and remembering they're no longer there. In other cases, it can mean rearranging every aspect of our lives. Every person's grief experience is different.

Physical pain can be described, identified and managed, but emotional pain can be more complicated to manage. Emotional pain and grief from losing someone can come and go without warning. It can be triggered by the smallest thing and stay with you for hours, days or even months, with no clear way of escape. They say grief comes in waves and we view Gulfside's bereavement services as a life raft to help you stay afloat when it may become too much to manage.

Gulfside's bereavement team faithfully serves the families and loved ones of those who have experienced a loss. Group sessions or one-on-one counseling is available to anyone struggling with the emotions that comes from losing someone. As a non-profit hospice, we believe it's important to provide this service to the community at no cost. When someone has lost their spouse, family member or best friend, the last thing we'd want to do is add financial stress when they just need someone to talk to.

Last November, Gulfside was awarded a grant from the Florida Medical Clinic Foundation of Caring to help strengthen our grief counseling services and certify our bereavement staff in grief trauma counseling. There are currently only a few

organizations in Pasco County that meet the specific need of children and families suffering from traumatic grief. With this grant, Gulfside is able to provide special counseling for the trauma that comes from the sudden loss of a loved one.

Studies have found that individuals who don't receive services to help them process their traumatic grief are at a higher risk of becoming incarcerated and/or abuse drugs and alcohol. Receiving funding from the Florida Medical Clinic Foundation of Caring has helped us directly impact our community through helping these at-risk individuals.

With the help of grants and financial gifts, we are able to offer a vital resource which could be the difference between life and death. We'd like to recognize the Florida Medical Clinic Foundation of Caring and our donors for allowing us to guide families and children through the darkness of grief into a place of healing and hope. We could not do it without you.

Florida Medical Clinic Foundation of Caring presented a check for \$6000 towards Gulfside Hospice's Family Bereavement Program, making it possible for two Gulfside counselors to become certified in grief trauma.





The Gift of Letting Go

A Story From the Daughter of a Hospice Patient

Written by Linda Miller

For twenty or so years Mom had a litany of things she was not going to do: go to doctors, take prescriptions, let people run tests on her, go to the hospital, live in a nursing home. I would say Mom, "It happens to everyone eventually, it'll happen to you too." Her answer... "I'm not going to do it!"

When the inevitable came about, we took Mom to her appointments for doctors, tests, procedures, hospitalizations and prescriptions. Mom was angry, refused to accept some necessary medical advice and started saying, "I'm ready to die." When she was at an appointment, she would stonewall staff with silence.

Her health was declining and I had promised my father to care for Mom after he was gone. I was focused on getting her to appointments, speaking to medical staff on her behalf, keeping the chronology of her many events and doctors' advice. She was focused on not doing all of the above.

One day she told me, "I don't want you to take me to any more doctors and I am not going to the hospital anymore." I said, "That's okay," and then I began to think about what that meant. Next she said she was tired of taking pills. My "job description" changed drastically. My daughter was a hospice nurse. I knew what needed to be done. I had to honor Mom's wishes.

What I learned as we all transitioned, I am sharing with you for two reasons: First to honor my mother with dignity by doing what she wanted, not what others might suggest; and secondly that you have the opportunity to honor your family member in your own way.

"I learned that letting go of lifelong routines can make your relationship much happier and less stressful... I could just be her daughter and we could talk about old times."

The hardest thing was making the first call to hospice. The easiest part was trusting the whole Gulfside Hospice staff to guide our family. I will never forget sitting in Mom's room after Jane completed the intake process.

"The easiest part was trusting the whole Gulfside Hospice staff to guide our family."

I felt such a massive relief. Mom asked if those papers meant she didn't have to go to the hospital ever again. When I said yes, she replied "Good, I'm tired and want a nap."

I learned that letting go of lifelong routines can make your relationship much happier and less stressful. Not carrying responsibilities that are no longer needed will free up your spirit to love someone purely and simply. Best of all, I didn't have to talk Mom into doing things she didn't want to do. I could just be her daughter and we could talk about old times.

Thank you, Gulfside Hospice.



Frances Miller

A Mother's Day Gift with a Purpose



This year, donors celebrated Mother's Day in a special way and supported Gulfside Hospice at the same time. Family matriarchs were honored with a donation that helped make hospice care possible for those in need.

If you'd like to make a memorial gift honoring a special woman in your life, it's never too late to make a difference. Visit Gulfside.org to learn more.

Questions? Please email Elicia Hinson, Annual Gifts Assistant at elicia.hinson@gulfside.org.

View our special Mother's Day tribute wall, Legacy of Love, by visiting
Gulfside.org/legacy-of-love.

In Loving Memory

Gulfside offers a variety of ways to remember loved ones on our Walls of Caring, in our Butterfly Gardens and with memorial gifts.

From September 2019 through April 2020, generous donations were given to Gulfside Hospice from families and friends in honor or memory of the following loved ones, who will remain in their hearts forever:



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Alan Chaikin
Amy Jo Crews
Deborah A. Lees
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Nilda M. Ortiz

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