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HopeWest

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We want to update our records, can you help?

Please reference the information below and send us an email so we can make sure and keep our records current.

- Would you like to unsubscribe to the Clinical News?
- Would you like to request more subscriptions for your staff?
- Did we misspell your name or send this newsletter to the wrong address?
- Do you have questions or recommendations for topics we can cover in the next issue?

*Please contact Alyssa Hampson at (970) 683-4921
or e-mail ahampson@HopeWestCO.org.*

Thank you!

(866) 310-8900 • HopeWestCO.org

Clinical News

Summer 2015



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Profoundly
changing the way
our community
experiences serious
illness and grief –
one family at a time.



HopeWest

Are more of your patients eligible?

Caring for a seriously ill patient is difficult. This is true not just for the patient and his or her family, but for everyone involved. Physicians and their medical teams are often challenged when caring for patients with complex needs. It is during these challenges when our expertise in caring for seriously ill patients can help the most, especially when asked to step in early for the diagnosis and treatment process.

We encourage all physicians with patients who have been diagnosed with a serious or life-threatening illness to contact HopeWest to create a collaborative plan of working together to provide the support these patients need and want. **Nearly all seriously ill patients are eligible for one of our specialized programs:**

Hospice Care

This comprehensive service is intended for patients who are living the last six months of their life. To be eligible for hospice care, the patient's attending physician and a designated HopeWest physician must agree that it is "more probable than not" that they will not likely live beyond six months. Since prognostication is always uncertain, many hospice patients may live beyond six months and can receive renewed eligibility; occasionally, patients are discharged from hospice care when their diseases unexpectedly stabilize. An interdisciplinary team provides for all needed care as it relates to the hospice diagnosis, with great expertise in managing symptoms, such as pain. Hospice professionals are available 24-hours a day to provide oxygen, hospital beds, and medications, along with the comforting services of chaplains, nurses, social workers, nursing assistants, physicians and therapists.

Transitions & Living with Cancer

These specialty programs provide an extra layer of support for seriously ill patients, regardless of life expectancy. Nurses and other professionals will meet patients in their homes and help guide them through our complex health care systems. As specially trained professionals, their focus is on managing symptoms, providing information and assisting in the development of care goals and plans. **All patients with serious illnesses are eligible and referral to the programs is recommended immediately upon diagnosis.**

HopeWest is here to partner with you and your patients and we have many more options available. We know that together we can help patients and families facing serious illness live the best life possible. If you have questions about how we can work together, please call, anytime.

**We are here when your patients need help – just call us!
24-hours a day, seven days a week.**

The Importance of Palliative Care



David West, MD
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As someone who is fortunate enough to witness the power of HopeWest’s care on a daily basis, I wasn’t surprised when I saw the results of a recent study regarding palliative care.

In an analysis conducted by the New England Journal of Medicine, doctors found that patients with terminal lung cancer, who began receiving palliative care upon diagnosis, lived longer than those who received standard oncologic treatment. Equally important, these patients also reported better moods, more mobility and less pain during their final months.

The three-year study, involving 151 patients with metastatic non-small-cell lung cancer at Massachusetts General, compared standard oncology treatments to oncology treatments combined with palliative care. The palliative care portion – like that of HopeWest – focused on pain relief, as well as other methods intended to improve the quality of life.

Findings show that patients who received palliative care from the beginning reported less depression and happier lives based on scales for pain, nausea, mobility and other aspects. Amazingly, these patients had less aggressive care at the end of their lives and lived nearly three months longer than those receiving standard care.

The researchers were unable to determine why the patients lived longer, but I believe the emotional support and pain management played a major role. Other studies have shown that support for depression extends life, and less pain leads to better sleep, appetite and increased conversation with loved ones.

Our physicians and nurses see these encouraging results everyday and applaud that it is now documented by scientific research. Our full-time physicians are board-certified in hospice and palliative medicine. Their advanced training, research and experience enable them to get pain and symptoms under control in about half the time of the national average of hospices. Additionally, our part-time physicians are highly experienced and educated in the field of palliative medicine.

HopeWest was fortunate to have a recent palliative care conference in Grand Junction, Montrose and Placerville, featuring renowned palliative care expert, Dr. Charles F. von Gunten. Each conference was at capacity which tells me the medical community wants to learn more.

“Seriously ill patients may rapidly develop very distressing symptoms, such as pain, nausea, dyspnea, vomiting, and delirium. Effectively treating these terrible symptoms is a skill many doctors, nurses, and other health professionals need to know more about. We were so privileged to attend and learn at the Palliative Medicine as a Core Competency in Practice conference important information varying from drug dosages to communication tips with patients and family members. Drs. Ferris and von Gruten are internationally respected experts and teachers, and having them teaching in western Colorado was a great opportunity.”

- David West, MD

HopeWest will be hosting Palliative Medicine – A Core Competency in the Practice of Medicine – in November 2015. All medical personnel looking to improve their skills caring for their most ill patients are encouraged to attend. Stay tuned for additional details.

HopeWest Transitions Program



Brian Whitmore

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The HopeWest Transitions program is much more than RN case management. It is a palliative care program designed to bridge the gap for patients who are facing a serious or life-limiting illness, regardless of life expectancy and who do not meet the “six months or less” prognosis eligibility requirement for the Medicare hospice benefit.

The goal of the Transitions team is to improve the quality of the patient’s life by relieving symptoms, coordinating care and educating the patient and family so they can make informed choices about their own immediate health care needs.

Once enrolled in HopeWest Transitions, patients receive – at a minimum – monthly RN visits and weekly telephone call consultations from a member of the team. Patients also have access to social workers, chaplains and patient volunteers, as well as our 24/7 on-call triage center with timely nursing visits for urgent needs.

The Transitions team works directly with the patient and family to find the resources they need to receive the best possible care, always in conjunction with their primary care physician and other services they may be receiving. HopeWest Transitions patients are often receiving curative care treatments or home health services with the goals of remaining in their homes and as independent as possible. While some insurances (including the VA) pay for the HopeWest Transitions program, most patients pay for our affordable services on an out-of-pocket based, sliding scale fee.

If patients cannot afford the fee, scholarships are available. No referred and eligible patient is ever denied services based on ability to pay.

Remember that referring patients to the Transitions program is important at the onset of diagnosis; this is often when patients and families are most vulnerable and need the most assistance, especially in the adjustment to their new reality and lifestyle.

Referral is easy and just a simple phone call away: (970) 241-2212.

Referrals can also be made via fax: (970) 257-2401 or by downloading the new HopeWest iPad or Android referral app on your tablet or cell phone.

An easier way to refer? There’s an app for that!

We’ve made referring patients in all locations – Grand Junction, Delta, Montrose, Plateau Valley and Meeker – easier than ever with our iPad, iPhone and Android referral app. Now, securing care for your patients is as simple as clicking a button:

1. On your device, click the “app store” icon
2. Search “HopeWest”
3. Find the heart logo with “HopeWest”
4. Click “install,” download & begin REFERRING!

NEED ASSISTANCE? We’d be happy to provide simple on-site training to you or your office team on how to install, download or use this new referral application.

For additional information and/or training, please contact our Access Team at (970) 241-2212.

