

Health Article

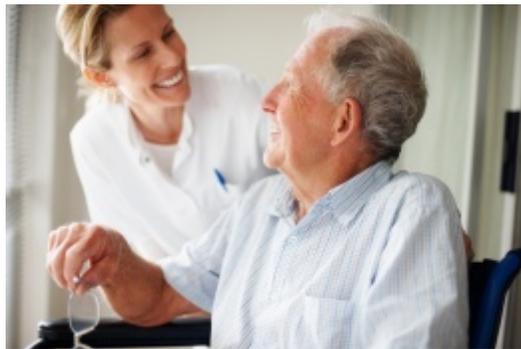
Hospice Niagara Brings Palliative Care Home

The organization focuses on improving the quality of life for people living with life-limiting illnesses, death, dying, grief and loss.

By Sandra Vlaar Ingram

Posted on September 1, 2016 @ 1:35pm

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After a lifetime of being the rock of her large and loving family, the woman confided that, nearing the end of her life, she felt more like a dirty pebble in the mud—no longer useful because she was unable to do the things she once loved. Maria Becker, Psycho-Spiritual Clinician with Hospice Niagara's South Community Palliative Care Team, knew that anticipatory grief was a big part of her client's struggle—anxiety about dying and leaving her cherished family.

"She needed to accept that she could no longer be the family's rock," recalls Maria, a retired psychiatrist. "I went to see her nearly every day, and with the passing of days, she was able to say instead that she was a shiny, beautiful pebble that sees all that has been rich and rewarding in her life; that she had done her best and because of that, her family was strong. Being part of that transition was just so wonderful."

To Maria, this client represents Hospice Niagara's goal to improve the quality of life of individuals and their families living with a life-limiting illness. Providing care within their clients' homes, the Hospice Niagara Community Palliative Care Teams in Niagara, in partnership with Community Care Access Centres (CCAC), include Palliative Care Physicians, Nurse Clinicians, and Nurse Practitioners, Psycho-Spiritual Clinicians, Bereavement Advisors, and Clinical Navigators. Other team members include CCAC Care Coordinators, family physicians, pharmacists, community nurses and other care providers.

"Through these teams, Hospice Niagara can provide much-needed palliative care services for people within the comfort of their own homes, where the majority of Canadians prefer to be at the end of their lives," explains Maria. "We serve a population of over 300,000 people, so we must continue to strengthen community palliative care."

To Maria, being part of a person's end-of-life journey is a privilege.

"In a way, the end of life reminds me of the teenage years," says Maria. "It offers an opportunity, a sensitive time of life where, if guided and supported with compassionate care, can produce rewarding outcomes. Being there and being part of that transition is a gift."

[About Hospice Niagara](#)

The organization focuses on improving the quality of life for people living with life-limiting illnesses, death, dying, grief and loss. Through a variety of programs and services, Hospice Niagara is able to provide compassionate comfort and support to families throughout the care continuum. We rely on community support to provide these programs and services at no cost. HWS

For more information, visit hospiceniagara.ca, email info@hospiceniagara.ca or call 905.984.8766. Stay connected through Facebook and Twitter or email news@hospiceniagara.ca to receive our eNewsletter.

Join us at Taste of the Harvest at Mike Weir Winery on Friday, September 9, 2016. Ticket: \$95 before August 26 and \$100 afterwards. Special group pricing available. Visit hospiceniagara.ca/taste or call 905.984.8766 for details.

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