



## Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor (Full-time)

### Overview of the Job

A palliative care approach acknowledges that advanced illness and death are significant events in people's lives for which psychosocial, spiritual and bereavement supports are necessary. In complex situations arising from social, psychological or physical circumstances, these interventions are best delivered by psychosocial-spiritual professionals who have the knowledge, skill and judgement to apply evidence informed interventions in collaboration with the larger health care team.

The Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor is concerned with the psychological, emotional and spiritual well-being of people who are dying, their partners and their families, as they deal with multiple issues across the psychosocial spiritual continuum, including but not limited to: adaptation to the illness and its consequences, social functioning and relationships, communication, grieving and spiritual suffering. Often, there is also a need for support with the necessary practical aspects of end-of-life decision making. The Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor provides a wide range of interventions including individual, couple and family counselling/support, advocacy, education, access to community supports, and spiritual companioning. The Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor also provides bereavement support and care for family caregivers whose loved one has died.

The Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor is a member of the Palliative Care Outreach Team working within a shared care model with family physicians, community nursing agencies, hospital and community volunteers. Reporting to the Director of Community Programs, the Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor performs all duties in a safe and healthy manner, in accordance with Hospice Niagara's policies and procedures, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and all other applicable legislation.

### Key Responsibilities

- Assist patients, partners and families with a wide range of psychological, social and practical services to support individual and/or familial psychological and emotional needs, financial, legal, healthcare and funeral planning, and advocacy issues
- Assist patients, partners and families with spiritual issues such as existential questions about meaning and purpose, belief or religious crisis, legacy work and culturally based needs that pertain to dying and death
- Support the therapeutic benefits of assisting the bereaved to reframe their story of their loss through storytelling and reminiscing, where appropriate
- Provide education as it relates to the grieving process and bereavement support; explain the process of normal grief and the multidimensional aspects and domains of grief (emotional, physical, cognitive, behavioural, social and spiritual)
- Encourage both loss orientation and restoration orientation through grief work hypothesis strategies
- Encourage the bereaved to utilize their own coping skills and resources in order to work through their grief
- Identify the need for further in-depth counseling and arrange the appropriate referrals.
- Assist with the planning, development and implementation of memorial services and/or services of remembrance in partnership with key stakeholders
- Act as a resource and support for the primary care team and the consult team with their own self-care and needs, as hospice palliative care providers

- Adhere to all standards, practices, policies and procedures regarding privacy and confidentiality of information, documentation and ethical practice as set forth by employer
- Promote patient safety in alignment with the Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Directions of Hospice Niagara
- Work within the basic principles of patient safety by doing the right thing for the right patient, using the right method at the right time
- Adheres to Hospice Niagara's patient safety policies and procedures
- Links to faith based or religious communities of practice, where appropriate
- Raise positive community awareness of hospice palliative care and of the programs and services provided by Hospice Niagara
- Demonstrate personal initiative and participation in other aspects of working for a non-profit organization, including participating in organizational events and fundraising activities
- Participate in organizational initiatives as appropriate
- Report any contravention of health and safety policies or regulations
- Other duties, as assigned

### **Academic, Training, Knowledge & Experience**

- Master's Degree (preferred) in Social Work, Educational or Counselling Psychology, Nursing, Theology or other academic preparation as assessed by the hiring team; Current registration with applicable college
- Training and experience specializing in mental health (preferred)
- Minimum two years of related experience with expert knowledge in hospice palliative care, end-of-life care, and oncology with supervision of clinical practice (preferred) and experience working across health care settings
- Strong consultation skills with expert knowledge of models of consultation and their application with individual, team and community service providers
- Vulnerable Sector Police Check (favourable, within past 12 months)
- Fundamentals of Palliative Care (preferred, must be completed within 12 months of hire)
- Other health and safety requirements of the organization
- Bilingual in French and English (preferred)

### **Skills and Competencies**

- Strongly demonstrates compassion, empathy and integrity
- Clear understanding and commitment to ethics, as they relate to hospice palliative care
- Proven leadership abilities with strong verbal and written communication skills with expertise in intra- and inter-professional communication strategies
- Strong consultation skills with expert knowledge of models of consultation and their application with individuals, teams and with community providers
- Excellent organizational, interpersonal, problem solving and decision making skills
- Research and/or program evaluation experience with knowledge of evidence based processes including appraisal of research, application of findings and collaboration of research projects
- High degree of self-direction and self-motivation
- Knowledge and understanding of community development
- Completes documentation and reports in an accurate and time-sensitive manner
- Strong dedication to the vision, mission and values of Hospice Niagara
- Highly developed inter-personal, problem solving and conflict management skills
- Demonstrates focus on person-centred care

- Demonstrates organizational, critical thinking and prioritization skills
- Proficiency in computer skills including Outlook, Microsoft Word and databases
- Flexibility to work varying shifts, including days, nights, evenings, weekends, and holidays based on client needs

## Evaluation

- Ongoing observation and feedback
- Annual performance assessment and discussion

## Application Instructions

Applications will be accepted until **November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018**. Applicants are to send their cover letter and resume as MS Word or PDF attachments via email with **Application: Psychosocial/Bereavement Counsellor** in the subject line to [careers@hospiceniagara.ca](mailto:careers@hospiceniagara.ca).

Hospice Niagara is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), individuals requiring accommodation during the application/recruitment process should advise Human Resources so arrangements can be made. All personal information is collected under the authority of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

We thank all who apply, however, only those selected to proceed in the recruitment process will be contacted. No phone calls please. For more information about Hospice Niagara, please refer to our website: [www.hospiceniagara.ca](http://www.hospiceniagara.ca).