



Hospice Currents

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COACHING FOR CAREGIVERS

Private consultations are available, in the home or our office, with a nurse practitioner, for family members who help care for a family member or friend who needs some assistance due to illness, disability, or frailty.

Caregivers can request an overall evaluation of their situation, including an assessment of the person they help care for, and can receive information, support, and education about various topics, e.g., the disease process (including Alzheimer's Disease); managing medications; giving personal care; maintaining safety; planning for future health care needs; caring for themselves while caring for someone else; etc. Referrals for other services may also be made.

In addition to this new program, other services of our Caregivers' Connections Program are also available and include:

- ***Volunteers** - can provide 1.5 – 2 hour/week for respite breaks for caregivers, or can help with errands, transportation, etc.
- ***Time Out** - stress reduction education and/or counseling, in the home or office, which may include talking, learning relaxation techniques, yoga, etc. Thai Shiatsu massage is also available.
- ***Caregivers Support** groups or private sessions
- ***Alzheimer's Disease Educational Consultations** for caregivers of persons with the disease
- ***Lending Library** of caregiver-related topics.

All our services are free of charge! For more information or to arrange for an appointment, please call our Hospice Office at 508-825-8325.

Coaching for Caregivers is being partially supported by a grant to Hospice from Elder Services of the Cape & Islands, to whom we are sincerely grateful for both their funding and continued confidence!

Upcoming & Ongoing...

The Marla Ceely Lamb Mothers' Day Dinner & Auction: Saturday, May 12th, 2007 at the Faregrounds Restaurant

Dreamcatcher Dinner & Auction: Sunday, June 17, 2007 • 6:00 PM at Galley Beach

Garden Conservancy Open Days: A garden tour in Sconset: partial proceeds to HCONF – June 28th

Coping with Cancer Support Group: Every other Monday, 1 – 2:30 PM, for persons with cancer and those who love them

“Time Out” for Caregivers: Every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month

West Meets East

by Charlene Thurston, RN, ANP
Director of Hospice

In October, 2006, I had the good fortune of joining a group of twenty-two U.S. professionals who formed a delegation on palliative care to meet with colleagues in China & Tibet. As part of the People to People Ambassadors Program, formed by President Eisenhower in the 1950s, we visited seven hospices and palliative care programs, and enjoyed several cultural excursions in Beijing, Chengdu, and Tibet over a ten day period.

The mission of the People to People's Program is to bring people of different nations together in order to enhance understanding and respect for each other's values and traditions, and that goal was definitely achieved in our experience. Wherever we went, the people, from strangers to colleagues, were wonderful and welcoming, and obviously in the midst of rapid cultural change, sometimes desired, and sometimes not. The drive to become westernized, after the long repression of the Cultural Revolution, was most remarkable in some of the larger urban hospitals we visited. While most members of the U.S. team were eager to learn about Eastern modalities of care, some Chinese hospitals were now excluding traditional Chinese methods from their repertoires, in their efforts to become “modern”. Fortunately, our visits to two traditional medicine hospitals fulfilled our desire to see their “traditional medicine” modalities in practice.

At the Traditional Tibetan Medicine Hospital in Lhasa, we were honored by having a classroom lesson by a cardiologist, who used a series of 84 colorful wall charts (thangkas) to explain the foundation of Traditional Tibetan Medicine. Their fundamental belief is that most illnesses are a result of

As President of the Foundation

It is our great pleasure to announce that Peter and Sarah Monaco are the Dinner Sponsors for the fourteenth Annual Dreamcatcher Dinner and Auction to be held at Galley Beach on Sunday, June 17, 2007. This fabulous evening will begin with a welcome cocktail and Spanky's ever-popular raw bar. The cocktail hour will be followed by dinner served al fresco in a gala tent on Cliffside Beach. The gourmet dinner, prepared by the Galley's Chef de Cuisine, will be served with wines that have been selected by hosts David and Geoffrey Silva to complement each course. This year we are once again including a Silent Auction which will start at the beginning of the cocktail hour. The many exciting items will be on display in the main tent with something for everyone - don't forget to stop by and place your bids. The main event will be the Live Auction and we are very fortunate to have Rafael Osona as our auctioneer. Rafael has generously donated his time and has presided over our auction for each of the previous 13 years and he will again this year lend his wit and powers of persuasion to the task of raising funds for our Nantucket Hospice. Offerings include many unique Nantucket experiences, dinners at local restaurants, a special item dedicated to our sister hospice in South Africa as well as trips to many exciting destinations including a BACKROADS trip to the Amalfi Coast in Italy, a week in England and one week in Beaune, France at the home of Denis and Susan Toner. A few new and exciting items being auctioned this year include a cruise on a Barton & Gray Hinckley Picnic boat, a reserved parking place for the summer season at the Jared Coffin House, and a fabulous stay in California wine country. Be sure to make your reservations as this will be an evening not to be missed. We look forward to seeing you in June at Galley Beach!



Michael Varbalow

the three poisons - materialism, aggression, and ignorance - and that most illnesses originate in the mind. Their treatment strategies include behavior modification, psychological care, acupuncture, massage, cupping, bloodletting, and many other techniques. Spirituality is a major part of everyday life in Tibet, with even the most modest homes having a chapel, and prayer beads and prayer wheels ever present. Likewise, spirituality is a major component of healing. Astrologers are also very important and are consulted for all major decisions, including how and when to perform medical procedures and burials. While we were not able to meet with lamas to learn about their rituals with the

dying, we did learn that, after a death, lamas remain with the body of the deceased until it is buried by either cremation, water, ground, or sky burials, and instructions from the Tibetan Book of the Dead are read daily for 49 days in order to guide the spirit through the bardos after death. During our stay in Tibet, we also had the opportunity to visit three most important monasteries and the Potala Palace, and thoroughly enjoyed our time learning about the rich Tibetan culture so steeped in ancient traditions.

Our visit to the Chengdu Traditional Chinese Medicine University and Clinics, which see about 3000 patients a day, was another highlight of our trip.

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(...West Meets East...continued from page one)

During our tour of the clinics, we saw patients receiving acupuncture, massage, TCM exams, etc., visited the pharmacy to see herbs being prepared for medicinal remedies, and participated in a lively discussion with a number of physicians and nurses about palliative care. In our professional discussions, the oncologist, who was credentialed in both western medicine and Traditional Chinese Medicine, (TCM), stated that their goal was to combine the best treatments from both systems. He finds that TCM is particularly helpful for such problems as loss of energy, poor appetite, constipation, diarrhea, shortness of breath, insomnia, etc., as well as for those types of cancer that typically respond poorly to western medicine treatments.

For pain, he feels western medicine drugs are much more effective than TCM. Another physician spoke about TCM's fundamental philosophy that life is a river of chi (energy), and that when body and soul separate, death occurs. He taught that the patient should be peaceful at the time of dying, and that people around him or her should be quiet, so as not to interfere with the separation of body and soul. He stated that TCM has a strong relationship with Buddhism and Taoism.

Throughout our entire visit with professional colleagues, what was most evident in all philosophies was the importance of the psychological well being of the patient. Even in the more modern medical centers, it was viewed as the dominant factor in illness and healing, and, in discussing treatment approaches, all physicians who spoke mentioned psychological care as primary, with medicines and physical interventions following. Their interactions with patients demonstrated a deep respect for the patient as a person, versus just a body, and, when introducing patients, first spoke about who he/she was in life, before moving onto describing the illness. This was so beautifully demonstrated at SongTang Hospice in Beijing, a 200 bed inpatient facility which combined hospice with long term care, where we spent our longest day. Here physicians, nurses, and personal care attendants interacted with patients, and with each other, on a peer level, as persons all with unique gifts. Doctors joined patients in the day care area, and personal care attendants lived with patients at the hospice. A newborn baby, who had been abandoned, was sent to the hospice and is being cared for as part of their family. Teens come in to volunteer to socialize with patients, and perform little shows to entertain patients. As a farewell celebration for our delegation, doctors, nurses, aides, and patients performed a beautiful song, accompanied by hand and arm movements imparting love and appreciation. It was a most moving and touching farewell.

As I reflect on the trip, a few of the many observations which impressed our delegation most come to mind, particularly those that pertain to the treatment of the patient by the health care staff. These include the primacy given to the patient's psycho-spiritual state as a factor in both illness and healing; the respect shown to each person encountered, no matter his/her station in life; the belief that maintaining a peaceful and quiet environment during the active dying stage of a patient's life enhances the transition from this life to whatever follows; the recognition that traditional eastern modalities are more effective for some ailments, while western approaches are best for others.

The opportunity, provided by the People to People's Program, for western and eastern health care professionals to exchange ideas was extremely valuable to members from both sides of the Pacific. It is our hope that such exchanges will help to develop a framework for integrating the best that both systems have to offer.

For those interested in reading a more detailed report of this trip or in viewing the photos on-line, please call or e-mail our office.

The family and friends of Marla Ceely Lamb invite you to their 15th annual Mothers' Day Dinner and Auction, on Saturday, May 12th at the Faregrounds Restaurant.

Proceeds from this event, in addition to this spring's Calendar raffle produced and distributed by Marla's family, and the generous donations to the MCL Transportation Fund throughout the year, go entirely to the fund. This year the fund supported 63 patients with cancer who needed to travel off island for treatment.

As always we sincerely thank those families who have directed that memorial contributions be made to the Marla Ceely Lamb Transportation Fund or to Hospice Care of Nantucket Foundation. Because of these donations we are able to continue to provide services free of charge.



A Partnership in Caring

Funded by the Hospice Care of Nantucket Foundation, the hospice program is operated as a department of the Nantucket Cottage Hospital. Hospice is a specialized health care program, dedicated to providing excellent physical, psychological, social, and spiritual care to persons with life-threatening illness and their families.

Children's Grief Support

The third season of *Tapestries*, our supportive program for grieving children, teens, and their families, began again in the fall. Group sessions, for both the children and the adults, facilitated by bereavement professionals and specially trained volunteers, continue every other Tuesday evening through June 12th, to be resumed again the following fall.

In addition to the group, individual counseling and support is provided to community children and their families. Education and support is also provided to schools and child care providers.

Tapestries, like all of our Hospice programs, is free of charge, and funded through donations to Hospice Care of Nantucket Foundation. We extend our sincere thanks to the Nantucket Golf Club Foundation for a generous grant to help support the program, and to the First Congregational Church for generously providing a space, especially since the program is not affiliated with the church.

Since so many children have been affected by the death of a loved one recently, we thought it might be helpful to include the following excerpt from Facts for Families from the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry on Children and Grief: "...children react differently from adults. Preschool children usually see death as temporary and reversible, a belief reinforced by cartoon characters who die and come to life again. Children between five and nine begin to think more like adults about death, yet they still believe it will never happen to them or anyone they know.

Children who are having serious problems with grief and loss may show one or more of these signs:

- an extended period of depression in which the child loses interest in daily activities and events
- inability to sleep, loss of appetite, prolonged fear of being alone
- acting much younger for an extended period
- excessively imitating the dead person
- repeated statements of wanting to join the dead person
- withdrawal from friends, or
- sharp drop in school performance or refusal to attend school

If these signs persist, professional help may be needed. A child and adolescent psychiatrist or other qualified mental health professional can help the child accept the death and assist the others in helping the child through the mourning process. "

For further information including camps for grieving children, call 508-825-8325 or email: hospice@ackhosp.org, or visit an excellent website for children & grief: www.dougy.org



Hands across the Water

As many of our readers know, as part of our National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization's effort to help the hospices in Africa, we've developed a relationship with Cradock Hospice in South Africa in order to provide moral, collegial, and modest financial assistance. We've previously reported about our success in engaging Direct Relief International in providing some medicinal support to several hospices in South Africa, and are eagerly awaiting news about the disbursement of the medications which have now been sent.

Since our last newsletter, we have been instrumental in helping Cradock meet some very important goals. Thanks to the generosity of donors who were interested in helping in this cause, we raised \$13,000 at our 2006 Dreamcatcher Auction, specifically designated for the African hospice effort. Our hope was to help Cradock reach its long-standing goal of becoming independent from its parent hospice, thereby making it eligible to receive some South African government funding. In order to do so, it had to hire a nurse specially trained in palliative care, and it was having trouble finding enough money to do so. Our gift, however, made this possible, and the staff reports that the nurse has been hired and is in the process of training, and that Cradock is now designated as an independent hospice. Thanks to its new status, Cradock has also been chosen to serve as an ARV center, and will now be able to dispense antiretroviral drugs to its patients, the drugs which have extended the lives of so many persons with AIDS in the U.S. For staff members who've watched all their patients die quickly from AIDS, the change to seeing many improve has been startling and most gratifying. They are most grateful to us for caring enough to help them in their daily struggle to care for so many people with so little. We, in turn, are very grateful to our donors who've participated in this effort.

If interested in helping, or in making a donation for Cradock Hospice, please let us know.



Hospice Care of Nantucket Foundation

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