

Accord Hospice officially welcomed to White Mountains

White Mountain Independent
Tuesday, November 26, 2013



WHITE MOUNTAINS
— A lot of people who are facing the end of their lives would prefer to die at home in surroundings with which they are familiar and comfortable.

That is not always possible.

When that is the case, there are sometimes not that many choices of where to go in rural areas like here in the White Mountains.

There are some local facilities that are either low or no cost, depending on the person's or their family's ability to pay and a couple of hospice facilities to choose from, but not as many as are typically found in more populated communities like down in the Valley.

"We offer a service that is more home-like because many things are stripped away in a sterile environment," Deidra Kearney said, noting that patients and family can decorate patient rooms with familiar knickknacks and mementos to help them feel more at home.

Accord has been offering services since the first part of July. Kearney has been in geriatrics for 16 years. She said smaller communities like Show Low are often overlooked when it comes to hospice care and that is why she and others decided to start this one. Kearney said sometimes patients have unfinished business of one sort or another they want to wrap up before they die, and that is one of the things Accord Hospice Care will strive to help them accomplish.

She noted that some families might be in crisis of one form or another during the time when a loved one is dying. Having a helping hand in the form of hospice

A group calling themselves Accord Hospice Care of the White Mountains has recently been created so people facing the end of life can have another option to choose from.

Their business office is located at 5658 State Route 260, Suite 9, in Lakeside, phone (928) 271-8013. A grand opening for the business was held Nov. 22.

care might be just what the family needs so they can be there for their loved one in their final days and hours.

She also pointed out that even if there is no crisis other than the loved one being close to death, the family may be overwhelmed by it all.

"They can be steeped in the process of making arrangements and we will do all we can to make sure they get to go through the grieving process after doing all the tasks that have to be done and we will make monthly support contact with the family."

Kearney said Accord staff will focus as much on the emotional needs of their patients as their clinical needs through things like massage (human touch), music and aromatherapy.

She said touching engages the patient with the care provider, letting them know that someone cares how they are feeling.

Kearney noted that they also strive to say "thank you" to veterans of military service, so they will know that the time they sacrificed away from friends and family is not forgotten.

Staff will also work to help prepare the family for what is coming through counseling sessions with staff and/or the Accord chaplain.

Once a loved one has died, Accord Hospice Care staff will provide 12 months of bereavement care, according to Kearney.

She noted that Accord Hospice Care is Community Health Accreditation Program-accredited.

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