

Hospice provides comfort at the end of life

By Tina Bruess and Rebecca Phillipsen

At Barton Hospice, we help people with advanced illness live more comfortably and meet the end of life with confidence, grace and dignity. Our clinicians and staff give a voice and provide knowledge about what a person and family needs to know as the person approaches the final chapter of life, with a focus on quality of living and relationships.

Here are some myths and facts unraveled about Hospice care:

Myth: Hospice is only for cancer patients.

Fact: Hospice is available to all terminally ill individuals and their families, regardless of diagnosis.

Myth: Hospice means giving up hope.

Fact: Hospice does not mean “giving up hope,” but can help people and their families revise what they hope for. Hospice focuses on maximizing the quality of life based on individual choices, so that the person may live as fully as possible for as long as possible.

Myth: Hospice is only for elderly individuals.

Fact: Hospice care is for individuals of all ages facing a life-threatening illness.

Myth: Hospice care is only provided by special nurses.

Fact: Barton Hospice care is provided by an interdisciplinary team of professionals – physicians, nurses, home health aides, rehabilitation staff, a medical social worker, a spiritual advisor, bereavement counselors, and volunteers.

Myth: Hospice accelerates the dying process.

Fact: Hospice does nothing to hasten or postpone death. It is

simply a service to make patients more comfortable at the end of life. If the patient begins to show signs of recovery, they can be discharged from hospice and resume their daily life. Choosing hospice care is not a death sentence.

Myth: Hospice services end when the patient dies.

Fact: Barton Hospice provides that patient's family bereavement support for 13 months following the patient's death. This support includes individual counseling, group grief support sessions, as well as our specialized support for children – Camp Sunrise. Barton Hospice also hosts a memorial ceremony annually honoring loved ones lost at Light up a Life. This year's Light up a Life will be Dec. 3 from 6-7pm at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

For more information about Barton Hospice, go online or call 530.543.5581. Barton Hospice will be the recipient of all proceeds from the sixth annual Barton Health Festival of Trees and Lights, Dec. 3-7 at Harrah's Lake Tahoe.

Tina Bruess is Hospice services coordinator for Barton Home Health & Hospice and Rebecca Phillipsen is a medical social worker for Barton Home Health & Hospice.