

# Hospice is a support system for the living, not just for ‘when the time comes’

- Sponsored by: Putnam County Homecare & Hospice
- February 3, 2020



Most people don't want to talk about death and dying. It's an unfamiliar process that they would rather deal with 'when the time comes.' That often means when their loved one's death is imminent, the family calls hospice and makes the final arrangements.

But hospice care is so much more than just making end-of-life arrangements and enduring those last few days.

“Most people think that hospice is only for when death is days away. It's physically and emotionally draining to watch your loved one go through the hospice process and pass on, so we offer support sooner rather than later,” said Kris Bellman, hospice supervisor at Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice in Ottawa, Ohio.

“With hospice you have a team of caregivers and nurses that can be helpful to the patient and their family for months, and even years, before the patient’s end of life.”

The patient and family also develops a longer relationship with the hospice staff. “We get to know what the patient’s likes and dislikes are and how we can best serve them,” said Bellman. “Once that end does come, they have seen us for a long time and we’re already comfortable with each other.”

Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice also has approximately 60 volunteers who provide emotional, physical, spiritual and social support to the patients and families. “A volunteer can pray the rosary, read to them, watch television and just sit and talk about the good ol’ days,” said Bellman. “We also offer support with paperwork, such as power of attorney and other parts of the end of life decision-making process.”

When the end does finally come, Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice stays by the family’s side with a bereavement program available for up to 13 months after a loved one has passed and a ‘Good Grief’ three-day fun camp every summer for a child 5 to 18 years old who has suffered a loss. “The loss isn’t just for families who have been in our hospice, we open it to any child that has suffered a loss,” said Bellman.

While helping a loved one go through the end of life can just seem overwhelming with the emotions and type of decisions that need to be made, Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice is here to help.

“If a patient receives a non-curable diagnosis, they usually try treatments to try and lessen symptoms and give them a few more months,” explains Bellman. “When the treatments are no longer beneficial it’s typical to broach the subject of hospice, but why not talk about it as soon as you receive the diagnosis? We can coordinate with the doctor for an individualized plan of care and be here to provide a quality of life rather than a quantity of days.”

For more information, contact Putnam County HomeCare & Hospice, 575 Ottawa-Glandorf Road Suite #3 Ottawa, OH 45875. Call 419-523-4449 or visit <https://pchh.net/>.