

Executive Summary

Executive Summary of 2003 Circle of Life Award Winner

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter
Mari Jo Winkle
Project Manager/Grants Administrator
1100 C South Stratford Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
www.hospicecarecenter.org

Hospice & Palliative CareCenter (HPCC), established in 1978, was the first hospice agency in North Carolina. Formerly known as Hospice of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County, the organization recently changed its name and expanded its mission to include palliative care. It now serves patients and their families in eight counties within a 50-60 mile radius of Winston-Salem.

Today, Hospice & Palliative CareCenter provides the four interdisciplinary services that are the cornerstones of hospice care--medical, emotional, spiritual, and social--to patients and families who face a life-limiting illness. Palliative and hospice services are provided regardless of diagnosis, prognosis, treatment status, or ability to pay, thereby enabling patients with advanced illness and their loved ones to live as fully and comfortably as possible. Their comfort is enhanced by HPCC's ability to provide medications through their own pharmacy. HPCC is guided by the principles of raising public expectations and improving the quality of end-of-life care as it seeks new and creative ways to increase understanding and improve the delivery of care near the end of life. To achieve these goals, HPCC has developed close relationships with a wide range of health care providers in medical centers, long-term care facilities, and community organizations in order to improve professional and public education about end-of-life and palliative care and deliver home and hospice care to diverse populations, including children, people with chronic, life-threatening illnesses, and residents of long-term care facilities. A strength of HPCC is its proactive approach to forging collaborative relationships with area churches, schools, community organizations, and volunteers. HPCC offers information and support to anyone with questions about serious illness from time of diagnosis through bereavement, including preliminary planning for end-of-life care as well as free bereavement counseling for anyone in the community, regardless of whether their loved one had been a client of HPCC.

HPCC is well respected within the North Carolina service community and has been nationally recognized for its innovative programs. These programs include:

- Pediatric Community Alliance (PCA)—an advocacy group comprised of 100 individual members representing 48 organizations focused on improving the quality of care for infants and children living with a life-threatening condition.
- Community Partnership for End-of-Life Care—a program that engages health care

professionals, faith community leaders, health care systems, leaders of local human service agencies, patients and families in an effort to ensure that more patients' wishes are known, documented, and honored at the time of death. Rather than focusing on advance directive documents, this program fosters relationships and ongoing conversations that can surface and clarify patient's wishes about their care.

- FOCUS Program for congestive heart failure (CHF) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)—a comprehensive, coordinated disease management program that aims to decrease the number of exacerbations of symptoms that require emergency room visits or hospitalization, and to support the patient and family caregiver in managing symptoms at home.
- Hospice and Palliative Medicine Curriculum—collaborating with Wake Forest University School of Medicine, HPCC offers hospice and palliative care rotations for residents and fellows. HPCC also has developed a multi-year curriculum in hospice and palliative care, and provides education and training for nurses, social workers, and clergy.