



Encircled by Care

“We are renowned for our knowledge in how to reduce pain and suffering while increasing quality of life and joy. It’s our job to ensure that our patients and their loved ones get the most out of every day.”

—MELINDA EGGING, CHC, PRESIDENT,
THE DENVER HOSPICE



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More from life

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The Denver Hospice surrounds people facing advanced and terminal illness with unmatched levels of comfort, compassion, and expertise.

Early in 2022, Melinda Egging, president of The Denver Hospice—a not-for-profit organization serving the entire Denver metro area—spoke with a terminally ill woman about the vast array of services available to her. “You mean you’ll cover the cost of my medications?” the woman asked, disbelieving. Egging assured her the costs would be covered. “You’ll get all the supplies for my home, even a wheelchair? Because I can’t afford it,” the woman insisted. Egging told her that hospice care is part of Medicare and is covered by most commercial insurance plans; she would not get a bill. Instead of spending weeks or months in a hospital, she’d be comfortable at home with her loved ones, fully supported by a world-class team of deeply compassionate physicians, nurses, social workers, and volunteers.

“So many people don’t know about this resource—or they don’t understand it. That needs to change,” says Egging, whose passion for hospice care is evident in every word she speaks. “We put patients above profit. We are driven by the belief that hospice and palliative care is not about losing life, but adding to it.”

Hospice care is designed to bring compassionate comfort to people experiencing a life-limiting illness or injury, while palliative care focuses on relief from symptoms and stress of serious illness while seeking curative treatment. Studies have shown that these models of comfort-based care can even help patients live slightly longer, Egging adds.

A Life-Based Paradigm

Another common misconception is that hospice is a place people go when there’s nothing more a doctor can do. “We’re not a ‘place’; we’re a philosophy. With quality of life in mind, we provide medical, emotional, and spiritual care for people who are nearing the end of life, including children,” explains Egging. “And while we welcome patients at our state-of-the-art Inpatient Care Center, 95% continue living at home where they feel most comfortable and empowered.”

Patients and families are offered a wide range of services including a veterans’ program, music and art therapy, pet therapy, and calming touch (a gentle massage technique). When a patient passes, family members may receive specialized grief support services at the recently opened Amy Davis Hospice Support Center.

Whenever Egging explains to a prospective client how hospice and palliative care can transform a stressful, painful, often frightening time into an altogether different experience—profoundly sad, yes, but also steeped in competency, comfort, and love—she shares in their joy and relief. “It strikes a chord for me,” she says. “Here is another family we can encircle and help. It is such a beautiful thing.”