



For Immediate Release

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Hospice of Michigan Seeks Volunteers in West Branch

West Branch, Michigan, April 7, 2015 – Hospice of Michigan will hold a volunteer orientation on Thursday, April 30 in West Branch.

New volunteers are asked to go through a training course where they learn more about HOM, the principles of hospice, the grieving process and how to help patients, families and staff. The session will be held at HOM's newly opened West Branch location, 2492 Business Loop I-75, Suite 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and will include a complimentary lunch. Advance registration is required.

Volunteers are an integral yet often invisible part of a hospice team. Caregiving for a terminally ill loved one can be exhausting for family and friends, and a volunteer can provide opportunities to get away for a needed break.

"If you have a few hours to spare every week, you can make a real difference in someone's life," said Kathy Lietaert, volunteer program manager at Hospice of Michigan. "Making a cup of tea or reading the newspaper to someone struggling with illness not only adds normalcy to their day, it gives caregivers much-needed relief and the personal time they need."

Lietaert said the opportunities for an HOM volunteer are virtually limitless. Some of the ongoing volunteer needs include:

- Companionship visits and caregiver relief
- Bedside vigils to ensure that patients in their final hours will not die alone
- Care by professional massage therapists, hairstylists and manicurists
- Specialty programs such as pet, music and aroma therapy
- Seamstresses, crafters and scrappers who can assist in creating birthday or other special occasion cards or leading other hands-on projects
- Veterans who can reach out to their fellow service members through the We Honor Veterans program, which is designed to address the unique needs of military personnel at the end of life
- MyStories Program™ in which volunteers record special stories told by the patient

Prospective volunteers will be asked to go through a training course during which they will learn more about HOM, the principles of hospice, the grieving process and how to help patients, their families and HOM staff.

"The best volunteers have a passion for helping others," Lietaert said. "They are dedicated, compassionate, nonjudgmental and flexible. They may or may not have a specific skill to share, but they have the time and the willingness to make a difference in the lives of patients and their families."

“At some point or other, everyone who volunteers will ultimately get something out of the experience.”

If you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities for Hospice of Michigan or to sign up as a volunteer, visit <http://www.hom.org/get-involved/>. For additional information, contact Lietaert (231.779.5409, klietaer@hom.org) or Amanda Fleming (989.705.2604, afleming@hom.org).

For those who have experienced a loss, HOM encourages a waiting period of one year before becoming a volunteer to allow for the processing of grief.

About Hospice of Michigan

A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state. The nonprofit cares for more than 1,700 patients each day, raising more than \$4 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. HOM offers a broad range of services to enhance the quality of life at the end of life, including At Home Support™, our advanced illness management program, community-based palliative care and pediatric care programs. HOM provides grief support and counseling, caregiver education and support, and education programs for physicians and health care professionals through its research, training and education arm, the Hospice of Michigan Institute. For more information, call 888.247.5701 or visit www.hom.org.

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