HEALTHY KANSAS CITY

The Heart of Hospice

A mission-based nonprofit, Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care relies on compassionate team members and volunteers, as well as the support of its community, to provide expert care and comprehensive programs for those facing serious illness or grief.

There are dozens of hospices in Kansas City, but only one offers the highest level of care: Kansas City Hospice & Palliative Care (KCH).

At KCH, a mission-based nonprofit, no patient is turned away—no matter their age, complexity of need, or financial situation. This applies to the organization's hospice and palliative care as well as its pediatric hospice, the only one of its kind in the region. Loved ones and family members also receive care through grief support and counseling services.

Determining if an organization is a nonprofit is a great starting point for finding the right hospice or palliative care provider, but there are other factors to consider as well. These include checking to see how long the organization has been in operation—20 years is a good benchmark—whether a provider has an inpatient unit for those needing increased symptom management, and if the facility has a well-staffed, multidisciplinary team of medical professionals with the proper certifications.

If you ask President & CEO of KCH David Wiley, meeting these criteria is crucial to supporting the hospice's mission—to bring expert care, peace of mind, comfort, guidance, and hope to people who are affected by serious illness or by grief.

"Our focus is the patient," says Wiley, who began working with KCH in 2013 after seeing how the team cared for his mother in 2011. "We don't have to worry about shareholders. It's all about providing high-quality care to patients and families."

Putting the *Care* in Caregiving

Surveying by the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems, which polls loved ones of hospice patients, determined people will recommend KCH 89% of the time (higher than the national benchmark). KCH also consistently surpasses national benchmarks on all seven other listed criteria, including communicating effectively with families, treating patients with respect, and training loved ones to care for patients.

Leaders at KCH understand the best way to support patients is by onboarding compassionate, skilled team members. In addition, KCH offers myriad programs for patients with varying needs, including Carousel Pediatric Care—the region's only multidisciplinary team trained and dedicated to meeting the needs of children facing serious illness. When medical needs become too complicated to manage at home, loved ones may be eligible to receive care at one of KCH's two inpatient centers—Kansas City Hospice House™ or NorthCare Hospice House.

Another community program, Solace House Center for Grief and Healing, was created to give specialized support to people who are grieving the death of a loved one, including those who were lost suddenly or unexpectedly.

KCH provides nearly half a million dollars annually in uncompensated care for those without a funding source; it also provides special services not offered by traditional hospices that insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid reimbursements don't cover. The team relies heavily on partners, donors, and more than 300 trained volunteers to support patients and the surrounding community.

"Our donors' support allows us to say 'yes' to families and not turn them away if they can't pay," says Caryn Hohnholt, chief development & communications officer. "That is immensely meaningful to our team and those we serve."

Kansas City Hospice
& PALLIATIVE CARE
KCHospice.org