

Shared Journeys

We serve patients and families by raising funds for end-of-life care that provides peace, dignity and comfort.

Commemorative Bricks

If you make a gift of \$250 to the Wedum Compassion Fund, you will qualify for an engraved brick in memory or celebration of a loved one. Your gift will help patients who cannot afford Wedum's room and board expenses. The brick will be permanently placed at the J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice as a lasting tribute. To learn more, please call us at 612-775-2550.

Legacy Giving

Would you like to learn how you can leave a legacy or make a gift in memory of a loved one that will comfort others at the end of life? Ron Bagnall of the Allina Health Hospice Foundation can provide information. Please contact him at Ron.Bagnall@allina.com or 612-775-2585.

Shared Journeys

Veteran Pinning Ceremony

As a longtime partner of the We Honor Veterans program, Allina Health Hospice has been committed to serving and honoring veterans who need end-of-life care. One special way Allina Health Hospice honors those who have fought for our country is through the Veteran's Pinning Ceremony. The Veteran's Pinning Ceremony creates a time and space for veterans to share their stories with friends and family, and reflect on their life of service.

During these ceremonies, the individual is presented with a personalized framed certificate of thanks, a thank you note signed by the entire hospice team, and a metal flag pin that can be placed on their military shirt or hat. While a ceremony can range from a small gathering to a large celebration, the purpose of the ceremony remains the same - to honor the veteran and thank them for their commitment to our country.

"These ceremonies give veterans the freedom to share their story. It provides a special time for them to feel proud about their service," describes Mary Schoeneck, a social worker with Allina Health Hospice. During pinning ceremonies, veterans are given the time and attention to share stories that they may not have felt comfortable sharing before, and connect with fellow veterans.

In one instance, the pinning ceremony took place at a former U.S. Marine's home that was filled with marine memorabilia and meaningful items related to their years of service. When presented with the certificate of thanks by another former Marine, it brought the veteran to tears. "You can see it in their face and body, their whole disposition changes when they are being honored by others who have also served," Schoeneck explained. It is moments like this that inspire members of Allina Health's hospice team to be involved in these ceremonies and to show support for programs honoring veterans. As Schoeneck noted, "We don't thank veterans or publicly show our gratitude for them enough, so it's really special that Allina Health Hospice takes the time to partner with and support these programs."



Veteran Irl Larsen during a pinning ceremony

Allina Health Hospice Foundation has been committed to supporting veterans with the financial burden that can accompany hospice care. The Honoring Veterans Fund was created to assist veterans' room and board expenses at the J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice. In 2017, more than \$47,000 was used to assist veterans with hospice room and board expenses.

If you would like to contribute to the Honoring Veterans Fund and provide them the comfort and care they deserve, contact the Hospice Foundation at 612-775-2550 or online at allinahealth.org/hospicefoundationgivenow.

Frequently Asked Questions About Grief And Grief Counseling

Grief is a natural response to death and everyone experiences grief in different ways. Whether you're seeking face-to-face counseling, group support groups or connections to community resources – Allina Health is here to support you during your grief journey.



Aaron Beaudry, MSW, LICSW, Allina Health grief counselor, sat down with us to answer some of the most common questions about grief and grief counseling.

1. Why is grief counseling so important?

Not everyone is open to, or in need of grief counseling. We live in a “hurry up and get over it” society, but this type of counseling allows people the space and time to process the death of their loved one. Also, people can often have compounded grief so the current death can bring up past losses, thus, compounding the individual's current experience.

2. Why does Allina Health offer 13 months of counseling?

Our bereavement program is available to friends and family members for 13 months after the loss of their loved one. It can be an overwhelming time, and people often don't realize the need for support right away. As time passes, people can experience increased feelings of grief and loss, and they have the option to reach out to us for support. Within those 13 months, we can also support people through the “firsts” (birthdays, anniversaries and holidays) without their loved one. Bereavement services are not a requirement of our hospice program, but rather a service available to those who need it.

3. What are some of the challenges people face along with grief?

The challenges that come along with grief is different

for each person. For example, the loss of a spouse is very life changing as it impacts each area of your life. Adult children coming in for the loss of their parent may have challenges of family dynamics that were heightened during their parent's illness. Or, someone who struggles with mental health or chemical dependency issues may reach out for support because their symptoms have increased or they've lost track of taking care of themselves during their loved one's illness. Someone who has served as the caregiver may experience grief due to the death, as well as the loss of their caregiver role.

4. What's important for people to understand about grief?

Grief is not a mental health issue, it is very normal. It is not usually a linear process but a forward, backward, sideways kind of experience. Also, people are incredibly resilient.

5. What has been most meaningful to you in your years working as a counselor?

The most rewarding piece of my work is being able to see heartbroken individuals find hope in their future. I see it physically wash over them and it's a true honor to be present during this time in someone's life. Allina Health Hospice Foundation continues to support the Bereavement Service Team by providing a variety of resources to them in their work to help grieving families.

Anyone may contact the Allina Health Grief Resources line for more information or resources at 651-628-1752 or AHCSGriefResources@allina.com.

Why I Give: Julie Mack

Allina Health Hospice Foundation Board Member and Hospice Volunteer



How long have you served on the Allina Health Hospice board?
I've been on the board for three years.

How long have you been involved with Allina Health and in what capacity?
I started by volunteering two evening shifts a month at J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice when it first opened in 2011. That year I also started volunteering at and attending the Hospice Dragonfly Gala. I found the people involved to be so committed and compassionate that I was swept up in helping achieve the mission and raise funds for Allina Hospice.

Why do you give to Allina Health Hospice Foundation?

I was motivated to give and volunteer after losing my ex-husband, Jim, to cancer 12 years ago. During his last two months, Jim's hospice care team encouraged him to do what he wanted to do before the end of his life. With the hospice team's support he was able to achieve his goals, which included a cruise with our daughter and even a goodbye party! It amazed me to think that all of it was possible because of the efforts of his hospice care team. They were angels in our lives and I give so that others can experience what we did.

What do you want others to know about Allina Health Hospice Foundation?

I want people to know that hospice can be a life giving opportunity for those who are faced with the end of life. I wish that people would access hospice care sooner so that they can truly benefit from the team approach to their care. I wish that doctors would help people understand this is an option and discuss it sooner with their patients. And, I wish that people knew that the care extends not only to the patient, but to the whole family.

Giving in Our Community

Community fundraising events are a fun way to raise money for a great cause. Here are a few examples of local communities and organizations collaborating to make a big impact for hospice patients and families in their community.



Dragonfly Gala event emcee Brett Hoffland, News Reporter at KSTP-TV.

15th Annual Dragonfly Gala

On April 27, more than 309 generous attendees raised close to \$222,000 for Allina Health Hospice patients and their families. Funds raised at this year's gala went to the Wedum Compassion Fund which provides compassionate care for patients at J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice, regardless of their ability to pay. This event would not have been successful without the support of the event committee, local businesses, community members, Allina Health staff and volunteers, and the kindness of our donors.

2nd Annual Suits And Sneakers Basketball Fundraiser



On March 18, families and friends gathered at the Owatonna High School gym to cheer on teams of local Owatonna celebrities. Thanks to the generous community, event sponsors, volunteers and attendees, this year's event raised over \$4,600 - nearly doubling the amount raised last year! Funds benefit the Homestead Hospice House Patient Care Fund. This event was made possible through the collaboration between the Community Relations Board of Faribault Area Hospice and the Owatonna Homestead Hospice House, part of Allina Health. Congratulations to the Sneakers Team for walking away with the win!

3rd Annual Share N' Care Dinner

On April 18, the Share N' Care Dinner, Hutchinson Foundation's longest running fundraising event, took place to celebrate hospice care within the Hutchinson community. The event included entertainment from comedian C. Willi Myles, a delicious dinner and a story from a local hospice volunteer. The evening was the perfect combination of funny, touching and entertaining. More than \$12,000 was raised to support music and massage therapy for hospice patients in Hutchinson.

Contact us at **612-775-2550** or HospiceFoundation@allina.com to learn more about how you can organize your own community event to benefit Allina Health Hospice in your community.



Comedian C. Willi Myles at the 33rd annual Share N' Care Dinner.