

The Comfort of Music Therapy



In 2015, what should have been a routine check-up was anything but for Paul and Sue Rosenau. While applying for insurance, Sue's physical indicated she needed follow-up testing and a CT scan. In less than 24 hours, Sue was rushed back to

the hospital where she learned she had cancer.

The next three years consisted of tests, treatments and eventually the decision for Sue to spend her final days in the comfort of her home with the compassionate care of Allina Health Hospice. That is when Paul and Sue experienced the benefits of music therapy.

"There's more to music than meets the ear," said Paul, recalling the day when a hospice music therapist came to their home to play guitar and sing. "The whole family was present. I could tell Sue was uncomfortable. She was in pain and struggling to breathe. Then the therapist began playing guitar and singing faith-based songs. I could see a change in Sue. She began to relax, and it seemed as if the pain and struggle disappeared. Everyone was shocked by the difference."

When the 20-minute session concluded, the therapist asked if she could stay longer and ended up playing an additional 30 minutes. Family

members left the room, but Paul stayed with his wife, holding her hand. "She gave my hand a little squeeze, then passed. I am so grateful her last minutes were peaceful and relaxed."

Paul noted that music therapy can also have profound effects on family members and loved ones.

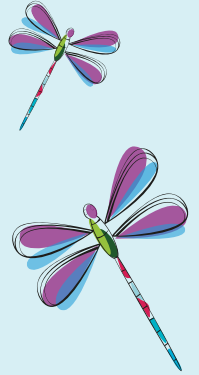
"Everybody in the room was impacted. Everybody was listening, calm and collected. It reduced the anxiety about what would happen next. You get the comfort that you are doing everything you can for your loved one. The assurance and comfort is nothing short of a miracle."

Sue was in hospice care for about two months but only had the opportunity to experience music therapy at the end of her care. Currently, Allina Health Hospice music therapists take on twice the case load as the industry standard, but are able to serve only about one-third of hospice patients. "I wish we could have done it more. The anxiety just left. It gave Sue peace," said Paul.

After encountering music therapy first hand and learning how great the need is for this service, Paul was inspired to support the program. "I would recommend it to everybody in hospice. If I would have known how much comfort it would bring Sue and our family I would have done it every day. The hospice music therapy program is a little bit of heaven."



Sharing Love and Light, the 2019 Dragonfly Gala



The 16th Annual Dragonfly Gala Sharing Love and Light takes place on Friday, April 26, 2019, at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest. With a new venue and a special giving moment in support of music therapy, this year's gala is expected to be the most successful ever! You won't want to miss it. And back for her third appearance as the Dragonfly Gala emcee is Cathy Wurzer, host of Morning Edition on MPR News and co-host of Almanac on Twin Cities PBS. We took a moment to sit down with Cathy and asked her a few questions about what hospice means to her and why supporting music therapy is so important.

What does hospice mean to you and why support Allina Health Hospice?

Until the death of my father and my friend, Bruce Kramer, I had some misconceptions about hospice, but those were quickly dispelled after experiencing the healing that can occur at the end of life through hospice care. The mysterious and powerful transition into death can be eased for the patient and family because of the extraordinary skill of the hospice caregivers, allowing the time left to be peaceful and even joyful. I found my grief softened by the tender care given my dad and Bruce by some extraordinary hospice caregivers, and it's that care that is also offered at Allina Health Hospice. I'm thrilled to support this same work being done by Allina Health Hospice.

Why is music therapy important to you and an important program for donors to support?

I've had a personal experience with the power of hospice music therapy thanks to my work with End in Mind, where I met a hospice patient who literally found her voice through music therapy. Mandy, an Allina Health Hospice patient, and her music therapist, Haylee, have written several songs together, and it was clear to me that the music was not only helping Mandy navigate her illness but her family's acceptance of her condition. Not everyone is a singer or musician but even listening to music (as my friend Bruce did on a daily basis) offers an inspirational avenue for healing. My wish is that music therapy be accessible to anyone who needs it.



What do you want people to know about hospice?

My hope is that people do not shy away from hospice and instead embrace the possibilities in that type of care.

You can hear Cathy speak more on the topic of hospice, music therapy and how we can all work together to make both available to all patients at the April 26 Dragonfly Gala. Learn more at allinahealth.org/hospicedragonflygala. Not able to attend? You can still help support these programs by donating at allinahealth.org/donatenow.

Why I Give: Barb Majerus

Allina Health Hospice Foundation Board Member and Hospice Volunteer



How long have you served on the Allina Health Hospice Foundation board?

It has been my honor and privilege to serve on the board since July 2018.

What is your experience with Allina Health?

I have been involved with Allina Health for 13 years. First as a neurosurgical patient and physical/occupational rehabilitation services recipient. Subsequently, as the spouse and primary caregiver of my husband, who went through numerous neurologic, heart and vascular surgeries, radiation, chemotherapy and rehabilitation programs in the Allina system.

Why do you give to Allina Health Hospice Foundation?

My husband and soulmate of nearly 30 years passed away on September 23, 2017, following a courageous battle with glioblastoma brain cancer. The Allina Health Hospice team provided amazing care and compassion to help my husband live his final months with as much dignity, humor and comfort as possible. And the support extended to my adult daughters and to me, both during his illness and following his death, was remarkable. As a result, I give of my time, talent and treasure to Allina Health Hospice so we can help other families as they navigate their end-of-life journey.

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

The foundation relies solely on the generosity of families, friends and communities to help fund wonderful hospice services, such as the J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice facility, music and pet therapy and grief counseling, that are not fully supported by insurance or individual or family finances. Through our collective efforts and willing hearts, perhaps we can make others' lives a little brighter and their difficult path a little easier.

Leave a legacy

by Deanna Morken



The worst thing that can happen in life is to lose the person you love the most! Bob and I were married for 31 years. I never wanted it to end. Our love was strong, but Bob's heart was weak.

He went into cardiac arrest while we were having dinner with friends in northern Minnesota and was airlifted to Minneapolis where he spent more than a month at Abbott Northwestern Hospital receiving the best of care.

It became obvious to both of us and our doctors that the end was near. There wasn't anything more we could do. I was losing my best friend and the love of my life.

All I wanted was for Bob to be as comfortable and peaceful as possible. Our doctor recommended J.A. Wedum Residential Hospice.

When I walked through Wedum's doors for the first time, a feeling of peace washed over me. As we settled in, my fears began to lift. It was a relief to simply be Bob's wife while the nurses took great care of his medical needs.

I will never forget what hospice has done for my family. Although I will never be able to pay them back, I want to help others who need a place like Wedum, even if they can't afford it. That's why I'm supporting the Wedum Compassion Fund and working with Ron Bagnall to update my estate plans and include hospice and my other favorite charities.

If you have questions about estate or charitable planning or would like to receive a free copy of "Planning for the Future," please contact Ron Bagnall at ron.bagnall@allina.com or 612-775-2585 or use the attached envelope.

You can make a difference

Tom and Jeanie Eckblad were married for 52 years prior to his passing in July 2018. During those 52 years, they traveled the world with their family as missionaries including 10 years in Bolivia. But when it came time for the ever-gentle and smiling Tom, suffering from Parkinson's disease since 2002, to have more complex medical care, the Eckblad's found the support they needed right here in Brooklyn Park at the J.A.Wedum Residential Hospice.

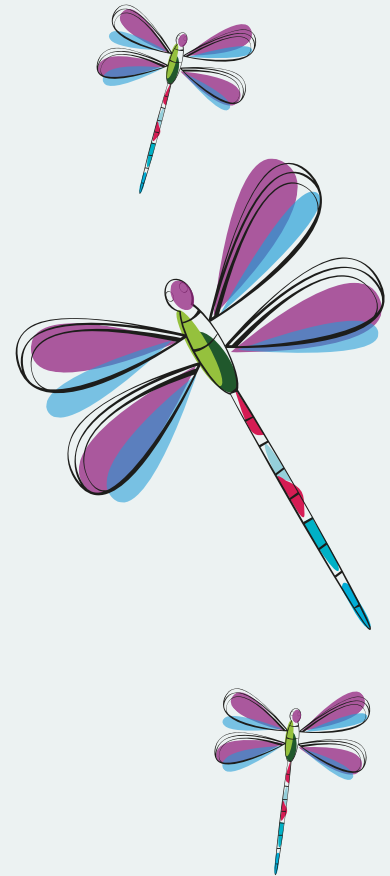
Wedum staff provide around-the-clock care in a home-like setting to hospice patients. It also allows family members, like Jeanie and her extended family, to take a step back from care giving and focus on being a family during the final stage of their loved one's life.

Thanks to a committed and caring Allina Health social worker, Meridee Miller, Tom and Jeanie were admitted to Wedum. While there, Tom received the care he needed to make him as comfortable as possible during his end-of-life journey. At Wedum, compassionate care also extends to the family. Jeanie recalled, "The nurses and staff were very kind, professional and encouraging at all times." The family could rest easy knowing Tom's medical needs were being cared for and simply focus on being present with their loved ones.

Tom and Jeanie would not have been able to afford the \$500-per-day room-and-board expenses without the Wedum Compassion Fund. Not covered by Medicare or private insurance, these costs are often out of reach for many patients and families. This fund, established by dedicated volunteers early on in 2012, made certain Tom was not turned away. "I was relieved the whole time he was there," Jeanie said. "It [the fund] was an extension of what we felt being there – just tremendous compassion."

In 2018, the Wedum Compassion Fund made it possible for 107 patients who otherwise could not afford it to be admitted to the J.A.Wedum Residential Hospice house. Each year, the need for the Wedum Compassion Fund exceeds \$300,000. Come the end of December, our fund is often depleted.

The ability to be able to offer this to our patients and their families is a blessing, as Jeanie called it. But we need your help ensuring everyone who needs this blessing, receives it. A donation of \$500 provides one night stay for a hospice patient. To make a donation visit donate.allina.com or call us at 612-775-2521. Thank you for supporting Allina Health Hospice patients and their families!



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– Jeanie Eckblad

What Actively Dying Means

BY AARON GOLDISH, MD

When confronted with approaching death, many people want to know when they can expect death to actually occur. This is hard to determine but many palliative and hospice care team members may use the term “active dying” to describe patients who approach their end of life.

This process typically last minutes to an hour but can occur in the days leading up to death. It comprises a myriad of signs and symptoms that are often used as indicators for when patients and their loved ones require additional care and support.

The signs of active dying that are typically seen include:

- breathing pattern irregularities, such as periods of apnea or pauses in breathing.
- trouble clearing one’s airway to get rid of saliva resulting in the commonly referred “to death rattle,” which is the result of the shutting down of the part of the brain that controls breathing.
- skin changes resulting from the circulatory shutting down and causing cold or clammy skin and/or mottled coloring especially in the arms and legs.
- cognitive changes where the patient may have intermittent periods of confusion or unresponsiveness, including seeing or hearing loved ones that have already passed.

As these symptoms start to manifest, family members and loved ones should work with their care team to discuss these changes. They will often require some level of reassurance through this natural process of death as the symptoms can be distressing. Our goal as a hospice team is to support our patients and their loved ones during this transition from life to death.

Dr. Goldish is a physician with Allina Health Hospice and Palliative Care. To learn more about this stage of the end of life or more about Allina Health Hospice please visit our website at allinahealth.org/medical-services/chronic-and-advanced-illness/hospice/.



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Shared Journeys

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



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