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HOSPICE FOUNDATION | FALL 2017

# Shared Journeys

Sandy Bisig (left) and Sharron Smith (right) a few months before Sharron's passing.

## Closest thing to feeling like home

Sandra (Sandy) Bisig describes her big sister Sharron Smith as one of the “kindest, most helpful people you’d ever meet.” Bisig wanted a place that matched her sister when it came time to find Smith hospice care. Homestead Hospice House in Owatonna, Minnesota, was that place.

Smith passed away at age 79 on April 1, 2017, seven years after being diagnosed with breast cancer. A relapse in February determined that Smith’s treatment options had been exhausted. Bisig began searching for a place that could serve as a transition prior to Smith’s return to home.

“All along, Sharron wanted to return home, but we knew she wasn’t physically able to do so yet,” said Bisig. “I was so discouraged by the places that I found. They weren’t comforting or nurturing.” It was then that a hospital social worker mentioned Homestead Hospice House.

“I was impressed from the moment I met with people at Homestead,” said Bisig. “It was the most wonderful place, but Sharron’s insurance didn’t cover it.” That was when Bisig found out about the Allina Health Hospice Foundation’s Owatonna Patient Care Fund.

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# Closest thing to feeling like home (continued)

The Owatonna Patient Care Fund supports patients who could not otherwise afford the room and board expenses at Homestead. Applications are reviewed based on financial need, and a sliding scale fee is provided. Bisig applied for the funding for her sister, and Smith was able to move in in March.

Smith was made to feel welcome from the moment she arrived at Homestead Hospice. Staff members helped her to her corner room at the facility, where she had large windows on two walls. They helped her put up pictures of her family and friends to make it feel like home. They introduced her to some of the amenities, including the whirlpool bath and extensive menu. The sisters immediately felt comfortable about the decision to come to Homestead.

“Everything Sharron hoped for was being done for her. The staff were so gentle and caring,” said Bisig. “I asked Sharron if she was looking forward to going back to her home and she told me that she would miss the care.”

Because the move to home hospice care could be stressful, Smith was comfortable, and her extensive family and group of friends were able to visit regularly, it was decided that Smith would stay at Homestead Hospice House. As Bisig said, “She was in a good place.”

“I feel really blessed to have found this place for Sharron,” said Bisig. “I’m so grateful for the care she received. It takes a special person to do what these people do. I can’t thank the people at Homestead Hospice House enough for what they did for Sharron.”

If you would like to contribute to the Owatonna Patient Care Fund and help patients like Smith on their journey, please contact the Hospice Foundation at **612-775-2550** or online at [allinahealth.org/hospicefoundationgivenow](http://allinahealth.org/hospicefoundationgivenow).

To learn more about Homestead Hospice House, visit [allinahealth.org/homestead](http://allinahealth.org/homestead) or call **507-446-0936**.

## Leaving a legacy

**WRITTEN BY:** Deanna Morken, Allina Health Hospice supporter and volunteer

Dorothy Kettner is a bit like an old-fashioned Clark Kent: mild mannered on the outside, but strong and determined to do good on the inside – a person of substance and of many passions.

Dorothy has lived most of her life in Minnesota working as a librarian in Marshall and Fergus Falls. Aside from her obvious love of books, one of Dorothy’s other passions is travel. She has taken 26 cruises all over the world and simply loves being on the water – from a cruise ship to a tiny fishing boat. Cats also catch Dorothy’s fancy. She shares her home with a rascal named Sabrina. The welfare of animals is important to her and will be part of her legacy.

Assisting people in hospice care through her bequest to the Allina Health Hospice Foundation will also be a part of Dorothy’s legacy. Her strong desire to help others comes from the experience she had with her younger brother, George, who was an Allina Health Hospice patient. Dorothy was thrilled with the care he received as well as the comfort hospice provided to her.

Dorothy’s way of doing good in the world is to help the organizations she believes in. She has been helped along the way by Ron Bagnall of Allina Health Hospice Foundation. “Ron listened to what I wanted to accomplish and helped me put those ideas into effect,” said Dorothy. “His understanding of estate planning has been invaluable.”



*Dorothy Kettner (left) and Deanna Morken (right)*

At 74 years old, Dorothy hasn’t retired from the activities she enjoys. She is an independent woman who is used to working hard to help others. However, enjoying life is important, too, so she just booked her 27th cruise – a transatlantic. Thanks and bon voyage, Dorothy.

If you would like to learn how you can help others at the end of life through your estate plans or would like to receive a free copy of *37 Things People Know About Wills That Aren’t Really So*, please contact Ron Bagnall at [Ron.Bagnall@allina.com](mailto:Ron.Bagnall@allina.com) or **612-775-2585**.

# 7 SIGNS your aging loved one needs additional care

**WRITTEN BY:** Leslie Swartz-Williams, MD, Allina Health clinics

It can be difficult to know when an aging parent or loved one needs additional care. Here are a few signs that may be noted.



- 1. Mismanagement of medication.** Refills are not ordered or there are leftover pills when they should be gone.
- 2. Driving accidents or getting lost while driving.** There is confusion with directions when driving to and from familiar locations. For example, your loved one runs through a stop sign even if he or she is used to the area simply because they didn't notice the stop sign.
- 3. Signs of not eating well and overall trouble with meals.** You notice your parents are losing weight and there is no healthy food in the refrigerator or pantry. They have a preference for eating cereal or other "easy" foods or have trouble preparing meals.
- 4. Missing medical appointments.** Your loved one forgets to schedule or puts off scheduling medical appointments or simply does not show up for existing appointments.
- 5. General forgetfulness.** You come to visit your mom and find she left the stove on and burnt up the teapot. She changes her story about what actually happened or gives a fancy explanation for why the teapot burned and how it wasn't her fault. Or she calls you repeatedly with questions you recently answered.

- 6. Injuries they can't explain.** Your dad has a new bruise or a cut and cannot tell you how or when the injury occurred.
- 7. Basic household duties and cleaning not being done.** You notice dishes piling up in the sink or the garbage has not been taken out. This is especially concerning if your loved one does not recognize the need to clean. If you learn that bills are going unpaid or their pets are being neglected, these are signs they aren't thinking clearly.

## So now that you know the signs, what should you do?

First, bring your loved one to see his or her doctor for an evaluation to make sure medications are being dosed properly and there is not a medical problem that can be resolved. Depending on the results and the needs identified, you might want to begin researching options for help. For example:

- meals and cleaning, which can be provided through services
- home health services to help with medications and medical appointments
- you can begin to handle paying bills
- transportation can be arranged when driving is no longer safe.

Talking to your loved one about getting help can be difficult and uncomfortable. If your loved one has a doctor who he or she knows and trusts, the doctor can help you have these discussions or lead the discussions. Sometimes having this discussion come from a doctor can carry more authority, and the doctor can often explain the needs for care based on medical results.

For help navigating your loved one's care, visit [allinahealth.org](http://allinahealth.org) or call Care Navigation Help Desk at 612-262-2200.

## 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL Allina Health Hospice Blizzard Blast Charity Event

*Save the date*

**Friday, Feb. 2, 2018 – 5:30 p.m.**

Glencoe City Center  
1107 11th Street E., Glencoe, MN

Join us for a special night filled with fun, live music, inspiring stories, fabulous silent and live auction items and opportunities to make a difference!

This event supports hospice patients in Hutchinson, Glencoe and the surrounding communities by providing music and massage therapy, which are not reimbursed by Medicare or private insurance.

# 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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Help make lives  
work for patients  
and clients!

Join us for the  
great Minnesota  
Give Together!

**give**  
**TO THE MAX**  
**DAY**   
**NOV 16, 2017**

[allinahealth.org/hospicefoundationmax](http://allinahealth.org/hospicefoundationmax)



## VETERANS DAY

**Honoring  
all who served**

Saturday, November 11, 2017

We thank veterans for their service and sacrifice, and are honored to care for them at the end of life.



WE HONOR VETERANS