

Merrimack Valley Hospice

- Merrimack Valley Hospice
 - Founded in 1980
 - End-of-life care for more than 30 years
 - Multidisciplinary Teams
 - Medicare & Medicaid certified – State licensed
 - Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors
 - Our mission is to create and deliver innovative and responsive community health programs which provide effective and compassionate care.
- Merrimack Valley Hospice House
 - Opened in June 2009
 - Provides end-of-life care for patients who, for a variety of reasons, can no longer remain in their own homes
 - 21 private suites
 - The only Hospice residence in the region licensed to care for children
 - Merrimack Valley Hospice House Levels of Care
 - General Inpatient (GIP)
 - Requires frequent medical and nursing care
 - Management of symptoms such as pain for nausea and vomiting
 - Routine Care
 - Patients who are unable to stay at home
 - Family/caregivers are in need of additional assistance with care
- Merrimack Valley Hospice Provides
 - Skilled nursing care
 - Pain control
 - Symptom management
 - Personal care for patients
 - Grief & bereavement counseling
 - Supportive services for the patient & family
- The Hospice Team
 - The heart of hospice care is the “Interdisciplinary Team” (IDT)
 - The patient and family members are important members of the Team
 - The Team approach means that there is a group of people working together to ensure that all of the patient’s needs are met
- The Team approach includes the following aspects of care:
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Spiritual
- Personal Physician
 - Most patients chose to remain with their personal physician
 - The personal physician will be involved in decisions regarding treatment and medications
 - The personal physician must approve the plan of care

- Medical Director
 - Our medical directors follow each patient's care closely
 - Is available for consultations and home visits
 - Our medical directors are in touch with the personal physician as needed
- Nurse
 - RN's and LPN's coordinate the patient's care
 - Make regular visits to the home to assess the patient's status and needs
 - Provide expert pain and symptom control
- Social Worker
 - Provides emotional support and counseling
 - Can help the entire family with day-to-day concerns that often come with a terminal illness
 - Can help find community resources
 - Can arrange nursing home placement
 - Help with funeral arrangements
 - Assist with advance directives
 - Can also provide specialized support to children and adolescents as needed
- Chaplain
 - Provides non-denominational spiritual support to patients and families
 - Can act as a liaison with the patient's own religious community
 - Respects the faith and beliefs of patients and their families
- Hospice Aide
 - Provides personal care
 - Assists with activities of daily living, e.g. dressing and bathing
 - Can provide assistance with meals
- Volunteers
 - Must complete in depth training if working with patients and families, as outlined in the regulations
 - Same standards as paid employee
 - Provide a variety of supports including:
 - Companionship
 - Truck in Callers (weekly check in calls for all home patients)
 - At the House, volunteers support patients and families, greet at the front desk and help in the kitchen
 - Filling in to give caregivers a needed break
 - Light housekeeping
 - Volunteers offer specialized skills including pet therapy, Reiki, massage and hairdressing
 - Sitting vigil
 - Threshold Singers: a group that sings bedside to people a capella
 - Keepsake Program: teddy bears and pillow are made from clothing from a loved one
 - Veteran to Veteran support
 - Volunteers also help with bereavement services & administrative support
 - **Cannot** transport patients, give medications, handle money or provide personal care

- Bereavement Counselor
 - Provides grief support from the time the patient is admitted through the bereavement process for up to 24 months
- Bereavement Services
 - Bereavement services are provided for up to 2 years and are based on individual needs
 - Telephone “check in” call approximately 1 month (or sooner, depending on needs) after the death of the patient
 - Home visits by bereavement counselor for support when requested
 - Check in call at one year after the death
- Bereavement Services
 - Informational mailings at regular intervals to help the bereaved understand the grieving process and coping with loss
 - Referral to a Merrimack Valley Hospice support group or other community resources
- Bereavement Support Programs
 - Individual and group support focused programs
 - Adult support groups may include
 - General bereavement
 - Widow and Widowers
 - Loss of a parent
 - Children’s programs may include
 - Concurrent caregiver support group
 - Monthly workshops using art, crafts and nurturing activities
 - Day-long outdoor therapeutic programs
 - Workshops on coping with holidays and special days for both children and adults
- Expressive & Complimentary Therapies
 - Expressive and complimentary therapies are an added service available to all patients of Merrimack Valley Hospice
 - Massage
 - Reiki
 - Expressive therapy
- Massage Therapy
 - Can help with relaxation
 - Can help with types of pain
 - Merrimack Valley Hospice utilizes licensed massage therapists who practice a variety of massage techniques
- Reiki Therapy
 - Japanese therapy that can help with stress reduction and relaxation
 - Administered by “laying on hands”
 - Treats the whole person including body, emotions, mind and spirit creating a feeling of relaxation, peace and security
- Expressive Therapy
 - Known as creative arts therapy
 - Is the use of the arts as a form of therapy
 - Used to manage stress, alleviate pain and express feelings

- Unlike traditional art expression, the process of creation is emphasized rather than the final product