As we prepare to enter our fourth decade of providing hospice care to Niagara County families, we are preparing for challenges and opportunities ahead. We have several key initiatives in progress for 2019 that will help maintain our service levels and transform our programs.

While we were disappointed that Governor Andrew Cuomo vetoed the bill that would have granted patients in Assisted Living Programs to access hospice care, the bill has already been re-introduced into the New York State Senate by Gustavo Rivera of the Bronx. We are hopeful that this bill will eventually be signed by the governor by the end of the year. Without this law, there are 750 Niagara County residents who have to choose between leaving their facility to receive hospice care or having to go without it. Leaving a facility can be a difficult, traumatic process for patients and families.

With the increase in referrals from dementia patients’ families, we have developed an enhanced Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia care program for patients and families. There is a growing need for these patients, and their care has to be customized to address varied symptoms, and behaviors.

We are also educating our community more about Medicaid-related services and benefits, including New York State’s 12-month prognosis for Medicaid-only patients, the no look-back provision for the Hospice House Residential Unit when enrolling in Medicaid, and the option for Managed Long-Term Care (MLTC) members to receive concurrent hospice care.

We are pleased to continue presenting our annual signature fundraising events this year, including the Gran Fondo Bike Ride on June 15, the 20th annual Jack Beatty Memorial Cruise & Clambake on July 12, the Mighty Niagara Half-Marathon and Hospice Dash 5K on Sept. 21.

Thank you for your continued support of Niagara Hospice! Best wishes to you and your family throughout 2019.

- John Lomeo

We were pleased to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Niagara Hospice in 2018 with a special proclamation from the Niagara County Legislature in November.

The care that Niagara Hospice has provided to more than 25,000 patients over the last three decades is truly remarkable and demonstrates the commitment of our organization to serve the needs of our community’s residents when they are faced with terminal conditions and end-of-life care planning.

The board is very engaged with the Niagara Hospice leadership team and staff in navigating health care industry challenges and emerging regulatory developments while identifying the best avenues to optimize and expand care to patients in need.

There are approximately 214,000 residents of Niagara County, yet nearly 25,000 of our general populations does not have direct access to hospice care. There are a variety of barriers to providing care to residents in different types of living facilities. We are all working together to enable greater access for the appropriate care for every person.

I encourage anyone interested in becoming a volunteer to call and learn how you can contribute in a variety of patient-focused activities, special events management and general administrative services. The staff is always eager to have new people be a part of the patient and family care team.

The board had a great time hosting the Cocktails & Cash event with this year’s Halloween theme. We were very pleased to have the event sell out on our way to raising more than $17,000. We look forward to seeing community partners, friends and neighbors at our upcoming special events throughout the year!

Thank you for your support of Niagara Hospice. We are forever grateful for the community’s efforts in fundraising and volunteering to sustain our levels of patient care and family support services.

Should you have any questions for the board or staff, please give us a call at 439-4417 or email info@niagarahospice.org. We always welcome feedback.

- Dan Mandaville
In the News

* President & CEO John Lomep wrote a guest column for the Lockport Union-Sun & Journal about National Hospice Month in November.
* Niagara Hospice was featured on WGRZ-Channel 2’s “WNY Living” program in December.
* Niagara Hospice was featured on ESPN 1520 AM’s show “The Raw Truth With Robbie Raugh”
* Dr. Sarina Bax DeBiaso wrote an expert column in the Niagara Gazette about New York State’s extended 12-month prognosis for Medicaid-only patients

Patient Referral Sources

1. Family Member 397
2. Mt. St. Mary’s Hospital 148
3. Roswell Comprehensive Cancer Center 121
4. Northgate Health Facility 80
5. Niagara Falls Memorial Center 69
6. Buffalo General Hospitali 63
7. Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital 60
8. Eastern Niagara Hospital 54
9. Pathways Palliative Care Program 37
10. Veterans Administration 27

Website & Social Media

• 69,111 unique visitors went to NiagaraHospice.org, an 18% increase from the previous fiscal year
• September had most traffic with 7,859 unique visitors
• Highest daily volume was March 12 with 895 visits
• Niagara Hospice Facebook page has 5,148 followers
• Niagara Hospice LinkedIn page has 916 followers

By the Numbers

• We served 938 patients and their families this year.
• Among 10 most frequent diagnoses, Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia comprised 44%.
• 74 percent of patients accepted spiritual support.
• Our staff was supported by 123 volunteers (26 new ones) who provided 8,548.35 hours of direct-patient services and $138,533.13 in savings.
• We raised $61,227 from 30th anniversary fall appeal.
• The Special Events department raised $229,846.
• Our largest fundraising event was the Mighty Niagara Half-Marathon & Hospice 5K Dash with 1,800 runners and more than $64,000 raised.
• The Jack Beatty Memorial Cruise & Clambake raised $34,000 to help purchase new ambulette.

Key Initiatives for 2019

1. Finalize reconfiguration plan with the New York State Department of Health to maximize Hospice House GIP and resident occupancy.
2. Illustrate shift away from cancer admissions and rise in other diseases by promoting Alzheimer’s disease and Related Dementia (ADRD) community-based care program.
3. Raise awareness about New York State’s 12-month prognosis for hospice care for Medicaid-only patients with a terminal illness.
4. Highlight the benefits of enrolling in Medicaid for Hospice House residential unit with “no look-back” provision to save assets.
5. Promote Continuous Care and concurrent hospice care for Medicaid enrollees in MLTC with a terminal disease.

Recent Achievements

1. Niagara Hospice surpassed national average in Medicare family caregiver survey results in seven categories.
2. Our per-patient expense was $8,000 below hospice cap.
3. We have an active streak of 344 days without lost time due to an accident (as of 2/5/19).
4. We received 30th anniversary proclamation from Niagara County Legislature.
5. Niagara Hospice was named “Best Home Health Care” in 2018 Niagara Gazette Readers’ Poll.
6. Organization purchased new ambulette with proceeds from Jack Beatty Memorial Cruise & Clambake.
7. We received grant from Town of Niagara and Fashion Outlets USA for annual “Give Fashionably” program
8. Vice President Danielle Burngasser was selected as presenter at Buffalo Business First mentoring event.
9. As only accredited hospice in Western New York, we renewed our certification with the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC), demonstrating commitment to providing high-quality care and services that exceed national standards of excellence.
Niagara Hospice Program Highlights

Spiritual Care

Rev. Nancy Faery began as the new Director of the Spiritual Care Department on March 1, 2018, replacing Rev. John Marshall, who had served in that position for more than eight years. Nancy holds a Master of Divinity from Colgate Rochester Divinity School. She is APC (Association of Professional Chaplains) Board-Certified as a chaplain and is one of 13 certified Hospice/Palliative Care Chaplains in the country.

Whether a patient is in Hospice House, home care or a skilled nursing facility, all are offered Spiritual Care support. Our hospice Spiritual Care Counselors are integral members of the hospice team. They are professionals who plan, assess and care for a patient’s and family’s spiritual needs throughout the end-of-life process. The Spiritual Care Counselor is dedicated to providing the patient and family with care and spiritual counsel that meets their needs and is in accordance with that patient’s wishes.

If a patient does not wish to engage with a hospice chaplain or any form of spiritual care, they do not have to. It is entirely optional and the patient can change their mind at any time. Spiritual Care Counselors do not seek to convert patients or bring them into the fold of a specific religion, but to instead meet the patient where they are on their spiritual journey, respecting the unique experience of each individual and helping the patient discover renewed meaning and spiritual peace. Regardless of religion, creed or culture, chaplains provide patients with compassionate spiritual support and counsel.

Days of Remembrance were held in May and September. These were opportunities for family and friends to receive another layer of support as they remember their loved ones with pictures, music, readings and fellowship.

Bereavement Services

The Niagara Hospice Bereavement Department provides bereavement support services to families of hospice patients. Counselors helped families in the following ways:

• 1,029 friends and family members received supportive bereavement mailings, visits and telephone calls
• 1,855 supportive phone calls
• 162 individual counseling sessions, 13 home visits and 149 office visits
• 48 pre-death bereavement phone calls and 7 pre-death bereavement visits to patients & their families
• 110 support group sessions
• 36 Camp Hope campers & 38 Camp Hope volunteers
• More than 12,200 Bridges newsletters, 4,000 supportive cards and 2,000 letters mailed

Bereavement counselors also support Niagara Hospice through their participation in the annual Memorial Butterfly Release and Light-A-Life events, Niagara Hospice Memorial Garden Dedications and Remembrance Celebrations.

Community Relations

While Niagara Hospice and community partners support, organize and promote several signature fundraising events throughout the year to support the organization, the Volunteer Department coordinates the speakers’ bureau, which features presenters who educate a variety of organizations across Niagara County about the services and benefits of hospice care. Our speakers’ bureau visited 23 community health events and fairs and delivered 22 presentations to other agencies throughout the county.

Volunteer Services

Volunteers are an essential part of hospice care as they provide a sense of comfort and support to patients and their families.

Through patient visits, pet visits, PPOM program, vigil team, transportation services, respite for caregivers, friendly visits, Legacy recordings, veteran visits, office and other non-patient related work and special events, volunteers provide significant support to the organization every year. Staff held several volunteer enrichment and appreciation programs to thank them for their service and provide educational opportunities.

Niagara Hospice is the only New York State-certified hospice provider in Niagara County and has served more than 25,000 individuals and their families since 1988.

During fiscal year 2017-18, Niagara Hospice received 1,482 referrals, cared for 938 patients and provided 56,226 total days of care with an average daily census of 154 patients.
Niagara Hospice began its grassroots movement in 1980 when the Reverend Robert Cook of the Town of Tonawanda gathered a group of concerned citizens, including co-founder and current Hospice Board Member Patricia Evans, to discuss the feasibility of developing a hospice program for Niagara County. As a result of that first meeting the first board of directors was formed in 1984 and the organization became incorporated as an Educational Association. In 1986 a Certificate of Need was presented to the New York State Department of Health by then board President Patricia Evans and in June 1988, Niagara Hospice, Inc. was licensed to serve its first home care patients. In that year, the agency served 89 patients with an average daily census of five. We are proud of our 30 years of service and look forward to dedicated care in the future.

1980 – On December 11, the first gathering of individuals interested in developing a hospice in Niagara County took place at the Payne Ave. Christian Church at corner of Payne Ave. and Wheatfield St. in N. Tonawanda.
1981 – Formation and first meeting of adhoc committee to develop a hospice in Niagara County occurred.
1982 - Niagara Hospice Educational Association, Inc. was incorporated on October 20.
1984 – Niagara Hospice Educational Association established at the old air base in Cambria and Board of Directors is formed
1986 - A Certificate of Need was presented to the NYSDOH (New York State Department of Health) by then board President, Patricia Evans.
1987 - A Certificate of Amendment was filed on November 30 to change the name of the corporation to Niagara Hospice, Inc.; all necessary policies and procedures developed by newly hired first CEO, Martin Jackson.
1988 - Niagara Hospice, Inc. was licensed to serve its first home care patients in June.
1990 – Hospice offices moved to “The little house on the prairie” - a small ranch near the air base in Cambria.
1991 - Headquarters was moved to the Colonel Payne School building in North Tonawanda.
1996 - The new Sunset Drive administrative building opened in February under the leadership of CEO Carol Gettings.
1999 – Niagara Hospice received accreditation on June 1 from the Accreditation Commission for Home Care, Inc.
2000 - Current Niagara Hospice CEO, John Lomeo, was hired in August
2001 - Camp Hope established as the first bereavement camp for children in Western New York.
2002 – Niagara Hospice established a Pet Visit Volunteer program.
2004 - The $3 million “Wings of Serenity” campaign was launched in December to build Niagara Hospice House.
2005 - The Niagara Hospice Pharmacy Practice residence program was accredited in September by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists. It is the first pharmacy practice with emphasis in home care based in a hospice to receive accreditation in the nation.
2006 – Construction of Niagara Hospice House on the Sunset Drive, Town of Lockport campus began in May.
2007 – First patients admitted to Niagara Hospice House on June 5.
2010 - Niagara Hospice opened two additional residential suites at Hospice House, bringing the total to 10 residential and 10 general in-patient.
2012 – Hospice at Jeanne’s House – A Northgate and Niagara Hospice Collaboration began serving residents in need of 24-hour skilled nursing and hospice services. Notably the only collaboration of its kind in New York State at the time.
2013 – Niagara Hospice and the Schoellkopf Health Center announced a new partnership that led to the opening of a hospice unit on Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center campus. David’s Path is named for David Winker, a beloved Memorial Medical Center employee who spent his final days surrounded by family while being cared for at Niagara Hospice House.
2014 - Niagara Hospice received accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC). Accreditation is a voluntary activity where healthcare organizations submit to peer review of their internal policies, processes and patient care delivery against national standards. By attaining accreditation, we have demonstrated our commitment to maintain a higher level of competency and desire for excellence in our services and customer satisfaction.
2014 – David’s Path renovation was completed and a dedication took place at Schoellkopf Health Center on March 28.
2017 – Niagara Hospice received renewed accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) in April; Niagara Hospice House celebrated 10 years of service in June; Niagara Hospice House residential wing named in honor of Paul Beatty, Sr. “Paul R. Beatty, Sr. Residential Suites” in July.
2018 – Niagara Hospice commemorated its 30th anniversary in June, having served more than 25,000 Niagara County residents and their families.
2018 – 10th annual Niagara Hospice Dash 5K fundraiser was held in Youngstown, N.Y. with more than 1,500 runners.
2018 – The Niagara County Legislature issued a proclamation for National Hospice Month and the 30th anniversary of Niagara Hospice in November.
Financial Summary
Fiscal Year July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

Net assets the beginning of the year $ 9,722,532

Revenues, gains and other support:
  Operating Revenues $12,786,975
  Contributions / Memorials 552,942
  Grants 18,781
  Events/Passive Income Generators 229,846
  Other revenue 116,385

Total revenue, gains and other support $13,709,445

Expenses:
  Program services $11,079,668
  Support Services 1,701,552
  Events/Passive Income Generators 193,210

Total expenses $12,974,430

Change in net assets $  730,499

Net assets the end of the year $ 10,453,031

Fiscal Year 2017-18 Expenses

- Program Services: 85.4%
- Administrative Services & Special Events: 14.6%
2017-18 Niagara Hospice Board of Directors

Dan Mandaville, Chairman
Christopher Aikin, FNP, Secretary
James M. Shaw, DDS, Treasurer

James Baker
Mary Brennan-Taylor
Michael Cushman

Patricia Evans
Linda Flessel RN
Nicholas Granchelli

Sharon Jean Hewner, PhD
Janice P. Litz, LCSW-R
Paul Nanula

2017-18 Executive Team

President & CEO.................................John L. Lomeo
Medical Director.....................................A.J. Bax, MD
Chief Operating Officer.........................Carlo Figliomeni
Vice President of Hospice Services........Frank Maietta, MS