



The Bridge

Summer 2005, Volume 1, Issue 1

... improving access to quality care for New Hampshire residents with life-threatening conditions

Distribution List

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Hospice Conditions of Participation (COPs)

The proposed Hospice Conditions of Participation (COPs) from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services became accessible for inspection to all providers and interested parties on May 27th.

Resources and helpful links are available to NHHPCO members and the public on the NHHPCO website at www.nhhpc.org.

The proposed COPs reference several NHHPCO initiatives and programs focusing on hospice performance measurement. NHHPCO's data collection and benchmarking initiatives offer information on national performance by which a hospice can gauge its own level of performance. NHHPCO has three distinct data collection efforts: the National Data Set (NDS), the Family Evaluation of Hospice Care (FEHC) surveys, and the End Result Outcome Measures. All three resources provide opportunities for performance measurement.

NHHPCO is currently offering mentoring support for the National Data Set (*see story below*), and as resources permit, will next focus on the Family Evaluation of Hospice Care (FEHC) survey.

"NHHPCO's performance measurement tools, referenced in the proposed COPs, provide a valuable resource for quality assurance and improvement efforts," said J. Donald Schumacher, president and CEO. "We are honored the CMS recognizes the value of these tools and we hope that more providers will take advantage of them as we continue to strive for the highest levels of quality and access."

NHHPCO invited 3 state representatives to attend a "Train the Trainer" session on June 9-10. The NH participants were: Maryanne Mercier, Sue Herrmann, and Wanda Harris, all NHHPCO Board Members. These participants conducted an Open Forum and Information Meeting in Concord, NH on June 23rd. Twenty-two people were present, representing 17 agencies. Comments will be forwarded to NHHPCO. CMS has asked for an industry wide, coordinated response. All comments will be reviewed by CMS who will determine what changes should be made to the proposal before the final rule is issued some time in the future.

Yvonne Corbeil, Executive Director, NHHPCO

Your Personal Invitation to Participate in the NDS

I am the Quality Management Coordinator at Seacoast Hospice and am honored to be a volunteer for NHHPCO. I am working with Yvonne

Corbeil and Martha Tecca as a NH Mentor for facilitating an increase in New Hampshire's participation in the NHHPCO National Data Set (NDS).

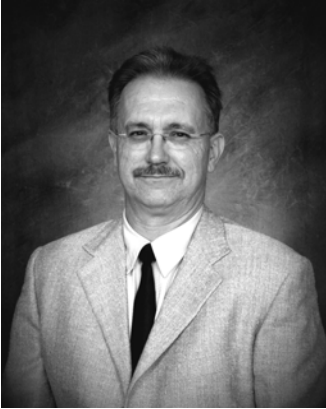
As someone strongly committed to Quality Improvement, I have been involved in

our agency's revision of internal forms so that we can easily obtain some of the requested data that the NDS seeks. Some of these data capture points may be found in our nursing assessment, the initial visit note, the nursing

see Benchmarking on page 9

RSVP Requested!

From the President...



“This is an unprecedented time of opportunity in our country to further the level of awareness of end-of-life issues”

The New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHHPCO) is dedicated to providing all citizens of our state with access to excellent care when facing life-threatening conditions.

NHHPCO exists to benefit the people of New Hampshire. We carry out this mission by raising public awareness and expectations, by advocating for expanded access to high quality hospice and palliative care and by educating professionals and other caregivers.

As a concerned citizen of this state, you know that care of persons with serious illness and their families can be a profound challenge. NHHPCO works to create a statewide climate that enables member organizations to advance their own vision and mission to meet the challenge of care within their local communities. Through its resources and services NHHPCO assists member organizations to develop their caring capacity.

Our legislative advocacy group focuses on state actions in the area of life-threatening illness. We have been working on improvements in New Hampshire’s advance directive statute clearly needed in the wake of the Schiavo case. On the Medicaid front, we are collaborating with the Governor’s office to assure that Medicaid reform in this state will take into account deficits in end-of-life care. We are collaborating with the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization to respond to the proposed changes in the critical Hospice “Conditions of Participation” just announced.

NHHPCO has also been involved in the New Hampshire Cancer Control Collaborative and has ensured that hospice and palliative care principles are reflected in the goals and objectives throughout the cancer care continuum as New Hampshire moves forward in its five year New Hampshire Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan.

The New Hampshire Cancer Pain Initiative, a Board Committee of NHHPCO, has a new re-

source in the person of Deborah Kimball as a direct result of a collaboration with the New England Pain Relief Project of the American Cancer Society.

We offer access to the region’s leading clinician educators who can bring the EPEC and ELNEC medical and nursing curricula on end-of-life care to professional staff in state institutions. We have initiated the first of a series of workshops for the support and education of the LNAs who give so much of the “hands on” care in hospice agencies. Our annual fall conference, “Pain and Beyond” has consistently won rave reviews from participants. Our Executive Director, Yvonne Corbeil, became internationally known coordinating palliative care education at McGill University and the biennial International Congress on Care of the Terminally Ill. In her position at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Yvonne is helping to guide development of the palliative care services required to attain excellence at various New Hampshire institutions through mentoring of staff, access to resources, and direct consultation.

In the months to come, watch for further developments as we roll out the next phases of our strategic plan, including collaborations in state-wide benchmarking and quality indicators, support for pediatric palliative care, and public awareness initiatives.

This is an unprecedented time of opportunity in our country to further the level of awareness of end-of-life issues in our public and our professional communities, and to prepare for the daunting onslaught of demographics we are all facing in both our professional and personal lives. Please join us in addressing these challenges.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patrick Clary".

*Patrick Clary, MD
President, NHHPCO Board of Directors*

Looking at the Proposed 2006 Hospice Wage

Below is the analysis of the impact of the Proposed 2006 Hospice Wage Index in New Hampshire and its comparison to the FY2005 Hospice Wage Index prepared by NHPCO.

NHPCO has also put together a wage index calculator to help hospices look at their rates and compare with FY2005 wage index. The Wage Index Calculator is

based on FY2005 payment rates. As you may know, the FY2006 rates have not yet been released, and should be available during the summer.

Here are some important points prepared by Judi Lund Person, MPH, Vice President, NHPCO:

1. As a reminder, every year there are winners and losers with the wage index. This year has especially large changes for some counties – both positive and negative. The changes are due to the establishment of 49 new Metropolitan Statistical Areas after the 2000 Census, and the realignment of many counties – from rural to urban, and from large urban to medium urban.
2. The new Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSA) replace the MSAs as the designation for a geographic area. They are established by the Bureau of the Census and OMB and are used by CMS and many other governmental entities.
3. In 1997, hospices went through a negotiated rule-making to realign the payment structure. The agreement means that each year the hospice wage index is subject to a budget neutrality factor. This factor is applied *see Wage Index on page 5*

FY 2006 Proposed Hospice Wage Index Published in the Federal Register April 29, 2005 New CBSA designations and comparisons to the FY 2005 Wage Index included							
State	2005 MSA Code	2006 CBSA Code	State County Code	County Name	2005 Wage Index	2006 Proposed Wage Index	% Difference
NH	9930	30	30000	BELKNAP	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
NH	9930	30	30010	CARROLL	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
NH	9930	30	30020	CESHIRE	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
NH	9930	30	30030	COOS	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
NH	9930	30	30040	GRAFTON	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
NH	1123	31700	30050	HILLSBOROUGH	1.1972	1.1318	-5.46%
NH	1123	31700	30060	MERRIMACK	1.1972	1.1318	-5.46%
NH	1123	31700	30070	ROCKINGHAM	1.1972	1.1318	-5.46%
NH	1123	40484	30080	STAFFORD	1.1972	1.0870	-9.20%
NH	9930	30	30090	SULLIVAN	1.0690	1.0571	-1.11%
Total Counties						10	
CBSA						4	
Rural						6	

From the Executive Director...



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to the first official edition of *The Bridge*. We hope that you will find, reflected in these pages, the energy and dedication of the Board, Committee Members and Volunteers of NHHPCO. We are moving on many fronts... and there is yet much to be done. Let me add a few more highlights to the ones mentioned in the President's message.

Membership

As you browse this edition of *The Bridge*, you may be saying "...but I didn't think I (or my organization) was a member of NHHPCO?" That may very well be the case. You may have noted that we are sharing information broadly, through the website and broadcast emails, beyond our membership. Our rationale is that inclusive sharing and collaboration will foster and empower our mission *to improve access to quality care for New Hampshire residents with life-threatening conditions*. We shall all benefit as this advocacy work moves forward. If you are not currently a member, we hope you will become partners with us in our efforts and consider joining NHHPCO in the weeks and months to come. More information is available at www.nhhpco.org/join.htm. There will continue to be benefits *for members only* including the traditional discounted fees for conferences and educational events.

NHHPCO website

This brings us to www.nhhpcco.org website. You may have noticed that we have had a facelift! Web development continues as we work towards creating a state-wide virtual meeting place for hospice and palliative care related issues. The website is updated on a day-to day, PRN basis. In addition to NHHPCO news, in the months to come watch for development of consumer and professional resources and a Members' Corner, similar to the space we have initiated in this newsletter. We wish to make

this a working tool for the membership.

Also, please note that we are offering to put up an informational web page for provider members who do not have a web presence. Please feel free to call or email me to explore this possibility for your organization. This is offered *free of charge* for member organizations. Lastly, the 'Employment Opportunities' page is another venue for you to consider as part of your recruitment efforts.

We hope you will use these web resources that we are making available to you. It can only get better with your input and participation.

NHPCO National Data Set

Every recent visitor to the website will know that we are making a concerted effort to support an increased participation in the NHPCO Hospice National Data Set. We are grateful to Martha Tecca for her consulting time, and to Andrew Martin for his persistence and persuasive skills in moving this project forward. I refer you to his column on this topic in this edition for further details.

15th Annual NHHPCO Fall Conference

Our Conference Committee is hard at work fine-tuning the details for our Fall Conference. Mark the date – Wednesday, October 19th, Radisson Hotel and Conference Center, in Manchester. Please read the conference information provided on the website and check regularly for further developments — www.nhhpco.org/conference.htm. We expect a record breaking attendance in this southern New Hampshire venue and are looking forward to welcoming you there.

Collaborations

- We are actively seeking collaborative opportunities to advance a common vision for improved access and quality of end-of-life care in New Hampshire. As mentioned in the President's message, one such collaboration with the New England Pain Relief

“You may have noticed that we have had a facelift! Web development continues as we work towards creating a state-wide virtual meeting place for hospice and palliative care related issues.”



Project of the American Cancer Society has resulted in a half time coordinator for the **New Hampshire Pain Relief Project**, and a grant from the American Alliance of Cancer Pain Initiatives. Planning is currently in progress for a Strategic Planning Meeting on August 19th. Please watch the NHHPCO website for details as they evolve.

- NHHPCO is also collaborating with the **Bringing Children Home Project** to develop a statewide approach for providing hospice and palliative care to children with life-threatening illnesses or conditions. Please read the invited column authored by Nancy Chase, RN, in this issue for more information and watch the NHHPCO website for further details as they evolve.
- Additionally, in order to fulfill our goal of increasing public awareness and expectations about end-of-life care issues, NHHPCO is partnering with the NH Partnership for End-of-Life Care to launch a statewide consumer awareness campaign in the fall that will be titled - **It's About How You LIVE.**

Developed by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), the goals of this campaign are for providers, coalitions, professionals and volunteers across the country to:

- stimulate dialogue in their local communities about the need for improved end-of-life care;
- provide information for consumers about how to access end-of-life care resources; and
- support consumers in taking action to improve end-of-life care.

Plans are now in progress. We look forward to working with our member organizations across the state to bring this program to your community. Stay tuned, and... you guessed it... please watch the

NHHPCO website for details as they evolve.

Broadcast Email

A short note about broadcast email. It is evident that the web will play a large role in optimizing our communications and building capacity. It is broad-reaching at a fraction of the cost of other communication modalities. But there are drawbacks. Some of you do not have access to the broadcast informational emails we have begun to send out regularly even though you have requested to be on our emailing list. Frequently, this is because of the security 'firewall' at the parent server hosting your institutional email. If you are not getting these emails, and wish to, please contact us at webmaster@nhhpc.org so that we can work out an individual solution to the problem for you. Likewise, please contact us if you wish to change your destination email address, or if you wish to be removed from our mailing list altogether.

“It is evident that the web will play a large role in optimizing our communications and building capacity...but some of you do not have access to the broadcast informational emails we have begun to send out regularly ”

Lastly, all content in broadcast email messages can be found on the web pages at www.nhhpc.org and are available for download in a repository called Broadcast Email at www.nhhpc.org/email.htm.

Yours truly,

*Yvonne J. Corbeil
Executive Director, NHHPCO*

Wage Index, from page 3

to the hospital wage index (pre-reclassified and pre-floor) so that the dollars spent in this year are budget neutral to what would have been spent under the old wage index formula.

4. This is a proposed rule. There is a 60 day comment period. The NHHPCO Regulatory Subcommittee will address the issues and proposed comments. NHHPCO is exploring a number of options that would help counties that have been hard hit by the adjustments this year. By definition, if we address the large decreases, we will also be addressing the large increases. NHHPCO will be able to address some possible adjustments through the discussions at the Regulatory Subcommittee, Public Policy Steering Committee and the NHHPCO Board of Directors.
5. NHHPCO expects, and CMS states, that the final wage index rule will be out in August.

*Yvonne Corbeil
Executive Director, NHHPCO*

Members' Corner

Community Health & Hospice of Laconia Hosts Monthly Caregiver Focus Group

Community Health and Hospice is hosting a monthly CAREGIVER FOCUS GROUP which is designed for caregivers who want to learn more about problem-solving and education related to caregiving issues. The group usually meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM at CH&H. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 21.

"CARING CAREGIVERS" SUPPORT GROUPS are also offered. "Caring Caregivers" are support groups for caregivers of persons with memory-impairment and others in long term caregiving situations. Sharing caregiving resources, peer support, and creative problem-solving are the focus of the group. Please contact Pat Marceau at CH&H (603-524-8444, ext. 343) for additional information.

*Jackie E. Bonafide
Director of Development
Community Health & Hospice, Inc., Laconia, NH*

Gail P. Ciccarello Joins Circle of Life Program at Nashua's Saint Joseph Hospital

Saint Joseph Hospital announces the appointment of Gail P. Ciccarello, MSN, ARNP, ACNP-BC, as Nurse Practitioner for the Circle of Life/Palliative Care Program.

Ms Ciccarello is a Hospice and Palliative Care Advanced Practice Nurse. She is also board certified as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. Ms Ciccarello has extensive experience as a hospice nurse, critical care nurse and nursing instructor. She is a member of several national nursing and healthcare organizations including the National Council of Hospice and Palliative Care Professionals.

As the in-hospital nurse practitioner for the Circle of Life Program, Ms Ciccarello works in collaboration with the Medical Director and the other members of the Palliative Care Team. She coordinates the medical and nursing care of palliative care patients, and supports palliative care education for medical practitioners, nurses and the community.

*Jean Montana
Director of Quality & Resource Management
Saint Joseph Hospital, Nashua, NH*

Second Annual NHPCO Golf Tournament

The Second Annual New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization Golf Tournament will be held Friday, August 26, 2005 at the beautiful Canterbury Woods Country Club in Canterbury, NH (just off Route 93). The purpose of this tournament is to raise funds for NHPCO.

We are looking for individuals and businesses to be Diamond, Platinum, Gold, Tee, Green, Cart, or Mulligan



sponsors. We are also looking for golf teams and individual golfers, and/or items for raffles. Individuals/Businesses will be advertised in all tournament marketing and promotional materials and will receive acknowledgement on the NHPCO website at www.nhhpc.org/golf.htm.

For more information, please contact Dee Marie Pinfield at 603-669-8107 or Mary Kazanowski at 603-472-2550, or mkaz.nh.ultranet@rcn.com.

We hope to see you there for a day of recreation for a good cause.

Introducing the New NHPCO Logo

Old and even new covered bridges are characteristic and beautiful features of our regional landscape. Such bridges have long provided safe passage across rivers under shelter from our famously inclement weather, providing cover from hail, sleet, snow and Nor'easters of every variety.

We knew as we refocused the New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization that we wanted a new graphic identity to go with the new reality, ideally an image that was both regional and as rich metaphorically as the traditional emergent butterfly of our previous incarnation.

The image the board of directors has approved approaches this ideal. Covered bridges

have a long history in New England, especially in our state because of its many wild, mountain-born rivers. The image suggests the aspiration of hospice and palliative care to provide

"...bridges have long provided safe passage..."

transition under cover from the metaphorically heavy weather of dying. The falling leaves add another dimension, representing the consoling presence of nature.

Thanks to all who participated in building this image. In particular, special thanks go to Jeff Nesmith and Tanya Prather.

Patrick L. Clary, MD, President, NHPCO Board of Directors

NHHPCO Committee Updates

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee was appointed last August during a Board of Directors' strategic planning retreat. The first task of the committee was to develop a new look for NHHPCO. We are pleased to introduce our new logo and revised website. You are encouraged to visit the site at www.nhhpco.org to see the exciting new look and content!

Many thanks to committee members Susanne Fortier, Susan Hermann and Tanya Prather.

Mary Swanson, Chairperson

providers the opportunity to identify their priorities and needs related to education around end-of-life care issues.

Other Education Committee initiatives include the development of an online library of resources related to hospice and palliative care, exploration of opportunities to collaborate with other statewide groups on educational endeavors, and the organization of a workshop for LNAs, hospice clergy and volunteers with support of the The Palliative Care Service, LLC.

Please keep an eye open for our survey. We look forward to your input.

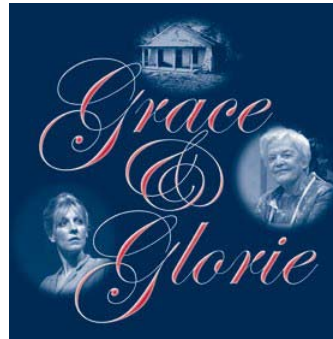
*Kathy Hopkins, Chairperson
Inga Johnson, BOD Liaison*

Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is actively developing ideas to bring financial resources to NHHPCO. This committee is seeking additional members to help bring these ideas to fruition. If you are interested in serving on this committee please contact Jean Montana via email at jmontana@sjh-nh.org.

NHHPCO held a Benefit Performance of *Grace and Glorie* at The Peterborough Players Theater on June 14, 2005. It was a delightful evening of fine theater. *Grace and Glorie* is a two-person play about Grace, a feisty 90 year old who has checked herself out of the hospital and returned to her cottage in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and Glorie, a hospice volunteer and transplanted New York sophisticate with sorrows of her own. The play was preceded by an Hors D'oeuvres reception.

All proceeds from this special Dress Rehearsal Performance went to support our mission to



promote excellence in hospice and palliative care in New Hampshire.

The event also provided an opportunity to meet and enjoy members from Peterborough and the surrounding communities.

We are grateful to The Peterborough Players for their support in helping us bring this special event to you. We are also grateful to all our supporters and to the Peterborough Lions Club for their donation towards refreshments for the evening. The spirit of those in attendance and those who were supporting us from afar was very heartwarming.

Jean Montana, Chairperson

New Hampshire Cancer Pain Initiative (NHPCI)

Earlier this year, NHHPCO entered a collaborative relationship with the New England Pain Relief Project of the American Cancer Society to rejuvenate the New Hampshire Cancer Pain Initiative. Through the generous support of the American Cancer Society, a half-time Pain Coordinator, Deborah Kimball, is now in place for the state of New Hampshire.

Deborah Kimball is a New Hampshire resident with past experience in inter-agency collaboration and grant writing, with many successful outcomes to her credit. In collaboration with

Patricia Trotta, Program Manager for the New England Pain Initiatives, and members of the NHHPCO board, Deb submitted a grant proposal to the American Alliance of Cancer Pain Initiatives (AACPI) for capacity building in New Hampshire. We are pleased to report that a grant has been awarded and planning meetings, projected to begin in August, are currently being developed.

Anyone interested in working on improving cancer pain management on multiple levels is invited to contact Deb Kimball at Deborah.Kimball@cancer.org or Paula Caron at Paula.A.Caron@hitchcock.org. Also, please watch the NHHPCO website at www.nhhpco.org for updates as plans evolve.

Paula Caron, Chairperson

Public Policy Committee

HB656—relative to medical decision making for those adults with out capacity to make health-care decisions for themselves and establishing procedures for Do Not Resuscitate Order. The house judiciary committee voted to retain the bill. In the backdrop of the Terri Schiavo case, the judiciary committee heard testimony 3.14.05, many in favor, some opposed to the proposed bill. Dr. Meg Gerken testified on behalf of NHHPCO in support of the bill. The bill has now gone to a subcommittee with a report due to the full committee. The text of the bill can be found at: www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2005/hb0656.html.

Maryanne Mercier, Chairperson

SAVE THE DATE

NHHPCO Annual Fall Conference Pain & Beyond: 2005

Wednesday, October 19th
8 a.m.– 3:45 p.m.

Keynote Speakers:

Kerry Cranmer, MD, CMD
*"Hospice & Palliation in the
Long Term Care Setting:
Enhancing Comfort and
Dignity"*

Ira R. Byock, MD
*"The Ethics and Practice of
Loving Care"*

Gretchen Brown, MSW
*"Palliative Care: Gateway to
Hospice"*

Additional Information:

877-646-7742

conference@nhhpco.org
www.nhhpco.org

Education Committee

The Education Committee met on May 3rd and discussed plans to initiate a new educational needs survey. This survey will allow hospice and allied healthcare

Networking Group News

Social Work Home Health and Hospice Networking Group

The mission of this networking group is to provide a forum for social workers in NH that are providing Home Care & Hospice Services to come together for purposes of collegial support, sharing of community resource information, continued expansion of education to other agencies and professionals as to the nature of our work, and also continued education and support to the clientele in our care.

This group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (every other month) from 8:30 am to 10 am at the NH -NASW office in Concord. The months in which meetings are held are January, March, May, July, September, and November.

The next meeting:

WHEN: July 12th, 8:30 am-10 am

WHERE: NH-NASW Office, 105 Loudon Rd., Suite 4307, Concord

Meeting notices and minutes are sent out by email. For more information or if you would like to be added to our email list, please call Sue Morrill at the NH-NASW office at 603-226-7135 or email her at naswnh@worldpath.net or Laurie Farmer at 603-224-4093 or

lfarmer@crhc.org.

Laurie Farmer

Chairperson, Social Work Home Health and Hospice Networking Group

Palliative Care Clinicians Special Interest Group

The Palliative Care Clinicians Special Interest Group meets twice annually and is open to physicians, PAs, ARNPs, RNs and clinicians of other disciplines coordinating or otherwise interested in palliative care programs. The group talks about business, operational and ethical issues, and the meetings provide an opportunity to network with others doing related work.

Some of the projects of this group have included working on a simple opioid rotation card and to look at protocols important in palliative care.

The meetings usually combine dinner with business. The next meeting is scheduled for October 18, prior to the 15th Annual New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization *Pain and Beyond* conference. The meeting will be held at The Yard in Manchester, NH, in the Trellis Room from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Please call Dr. Patrick Clary, 603-778-7391 if you would like more information.

Patrick Clary, MD

Chairperson, NHHPCO Palliative Care Clinicians Special Interest Group

Hospice and Palliative Care Coordinators Meetings

Meetings are held every other month at the NH Hospital Association, 125 Airport Rd, Concord.

Contact: Susan Herrmann

603-352-2253, ext. 192

sherrmann@hcsservices.org

Bereavement and Volunteer Coordinators Meetings

Meetings are held quarterly at the NH Hospital Association, 125 Airport Rd, Concord, 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. Next meeting Sept. 21.

Contact: Tanya Prather

603-424-3822

tanya.prather@hhhc.org

Home Health and Hospice Social Work Committee Meeting of the NH-NASW

Meetings are held at Prescott Park, the NASW office in Building 4, 105 Loudon Road, Concord, 8:30am to 10:00am. Remaining meetings in 2005 are: July 12, Sept. 13, Nov. 8.

Contact: Laurie Farmer

603-224-4093

lfarmer@crhc.org

Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplain Meetings

Meetings are held monthly on the third Thursday from noon to 2:00pm at the VNA of Manchester, 1850 Elm St, Manchester.

Contact: Kathleen Cullen

603-622-3781

cullen1@elliott-hs.org

Seacoast Regional NHHPCO Meetings

First Thursday of every month from 8:00am-9:30am except July and August. Healthcare professionals interested in hospice and palliative care are welcome to attend.

Contact: Ginny Cole

603-749-4300

gcole@seacoasthospice.org

NHHPCO Palliative Care Clinicians Special Interest Group Meetings

Meetings held twice annually. The next meeting will be held at The Yard Restaurant in Manchester, NH, in the Trellis Room, on October 18, 2005 from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm (split checks is the custom). This meeting is open to physicians, PAs, ARNPs, RNs and clinicians of other disciplines coordinating or otherwise interested in palliative care programs.

Contact: Dr. Patrick Clary

603-778-7391

pclary@nhhpc.org

Benchmarking, from page 1

visit note and in NHHPCO's patient core measure sheet. By looking ahead at what NDS data is requested, we attempt to revise our internal forms to easily access that data for yearly NDS submission.

As a volunteer NH Mentor for the NDS through NHHPCO, I strongly urge all NH agencies to participate in the NDS starting today. As Martha Tecca discussed in the recent audio conference on 17 May entitled *Facts, Figures & the Future – Knowledge is Power*, there is much value to be gained by collecting both national and regional NH state level data for benchmarking and consequent agency specific strategic decision making.

We had nine NH agencies participate in the NDS for the year 2003. The NHHPCO would like to see that figure double to eighteen for the year 2004. As you read this, we are past the 15 June 2005 deadline date for submitting 2004 data. However, I urge you to use the NHHPCO direct link to the National Data Set www.nhhpco.org/benchmarking.htm to download a copy of the survey and familiarize yourself with it today, if you have not already done so. Those agencies currently participating, please continue to do so; and those agencies who have not yet submitted data, please pick *at least five questions* to answer for year 2005.

By completing that achievable goal of five questions, you will become a valued member of the National Data Set, contributing to the growing body of knowledge for New Hampshire. Each following year, you will be able to answer a few more questions as you become more familiar with the requested survey data. Together, as a state body, we will be able to document best practices for quality care and service and have significant data to advocate for hospice needs locally and nationally.



NHHPCO Board of Directors

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I am available to you via email camartin@nhhpco.org or phone 603-749-4300, ext 121 to discuss any issues you encounter with the NDS. I would enjoy receiving an email from every one of you, updating me with your survey filing status of the NDS or just bouncing questions for further discussions online or in this newsletter. I look forward to hearing from all of you.

C. Andrew Martin, BS RN CHPN

New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization



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Bringing Children Home

The Visiting Nurse Association Health System of Northern New England (VNAHSNNE) was awarded a grant by the Endowment for Health, Inc. in the fall of 2001 to develop a new pediatric care delivery model that would bridge the gap between inpatient pediatric care and home. The goal was to seek out, engage, and utilize the existing resources within our combined service areas to meet the needs of children discharged from the hospital and their families.

Over the past three years the VNAHSNNE agencies have developed common clinical pathways, a pediatric training

program for home care nurses, and a collaborative pediatric quality improvement process. Additionally, the VNAHSNNE has strengthened its relationship with referring hospitals to ensure that children and families who would benefit from home care services are referred and a seamless model of care is in place among hospital, home, primary care provider, and pediatric specialists.

The Bringing Children Home project has an active advisory committee. The willingness of the advisory committee to become and remain involved with the

Bringing Children Home project reflects the strong support and commitment of a wide range of organizations in addressing the needs of children and their families. This committee has provided a forum that previously did not exist to discuss the needs of children and families being cared for at home.

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The VNAHSNNE is continuing to build on the work begun under the Endowment grant. Recently, the VNAHSNNE pediatric work group began discussions with the **New Hampshire Hospice and Palliative Care Organization** and Children's Hospital at Dartmouth to develop a statewide approach to supporting palliative care for children with life-threatening illnesses or conditions.

If you have any questions regarding the Bringing Children Home project please contact Nancy Chase, RN nchase@crhc.org or 603-224-4093 x4246.



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*... improving access to quality care
for New Hampshire residents
with life-threatening conditions*

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