



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Patricia Klein
Public Relations Specialist
Good Shepherd Hospice
www.goodshepherdhospice.org

863-551-3941 (desk)
863-616-2890 (cell)
kleinp@goodshepherdhospice.org

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The National Institute for Jewish Hospice reaccredits Good Shepherd Hospice

LAKELAND, FLA. – The National Institute for Jewish Hospice (NIJH) has reaccredited Good Shepherd Hospice. With NIJH accreditation, Good Shepherd Hospice affirms to the public that it has taken a voluntary step to address the unique end-of-life care needs of Jewish patients in the community. Established in 1985, the NIJH's goal is to educate healthcare providers nationwide about the many aspects of providing hospice care for Jewish patients. Good Shepherd Hospice joins more than 40 other hospice organizations that have earned NIJH accreditation.

To achieve accreditation, Rick Bennett, HPC Healthcare corporate director of spiritual care and volunteer services, attended an accreditation training conference to learn how Good Shepherd Hospice can enhance its ability to respond to patients and families of the Jewish tradition and faith. HPC Healthcare is the not-for-profit parent organization of Good Shepherd Hospice.

Among the subjects covered at the conference were Jewish medical ethics; the Jewish way in death and mourning; and a comparison of Jewish versus secular ethics regarding end-of-life issues.

Good Shepherd Hospice's NIJH accreditation requires that all staff and volunteers become familiar with various aspects of caring for Jewish patients facing the end of their lives. In addition, NIJH operates a 24-hour hotline where families, patients and caregivers can consult with NIJH staff for guidance and counseling during unprecedented Jewish ethical situations. NIJH also provides resource materials, such as booklets and tapes, for educating Good Shepherd Hospice staff and volunteers.

About Good Shepherd Hospice

Good Shepherd Hospice is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that has provided compassionate and comprehensive hospice care to Polk, Highlands and Hardee County residents since 1979. Healthcare professionals and trained volunteers embrace the Good Shepherd Hospice mission to make the most of life by relieving the suffering of patients and their families affected by end-of-life issues. The organization is a 2008 recipient of a Circle of Life Citation of Honor and is the only local agency offering hospice programs accredited by the Joint Commission, the nation's premier healthcare accrediting body. The United Way of Central Florida partially funds the community programs offered by Good Shepherd Hospice. For more information, please visit the website at www.goodshepherdhospice.org

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