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When Every Moment  
is Precious, There's No  
Time to Waste

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Transforming Data &  
Embracing Technology  
to Work More Efficiently

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Reaching New Heights  
in Fundraising

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# EVERY PERSON EVERY TIME

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## 2023 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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## OUR PURPOSE

*We meet our patients and families where they are with urgency, purpose and compassionate accountability surrounding them with decades of dedicated hospice expertise.*

## OUR CULTURE

*Our strength comes from working together providing more layers of support for anyone with a terminal illness who seeks and needs our care regardless of age, diagnosis or financial circumstances.*

Bob Cahill, President and CEO (LEFT)  
Patrick Miller, Incoming President and CEO

# *Change is the only constant in life.*

*- Heraclitus, a Greek Philosopher*

CHANGE is a powerful concept. The prospect of change can trigger a variety of emotions and responses. While some struggle with it, I find change to be inspiring, exhilarating, and exciting.

Change leads to innovation. Change leads to growth. And within the NorthStar Care Community, change is imperative to sustain our mission to serve **Every Person. Every Time.**

I am proud of our legacy of embracing change. Whether it's been driven by necessity, or by a vision for the next generation of end-of-life care, our ability to adapt has kept us relevant amidst a constant and rapidly changing healthcare environment. And by welcoming change, we have firmly established our place on the national stage.

As I assume the role of President and CEO – and mark my 20th year with the organization – I am reminded that there is no shortcut to success. Working closely with my predecessor, Bob Cahill, and the rest of our executive team, we have navigated through a complex series of events – a global pandemic, challenging economics, regulatory changes, service line expansion, affiliation, and so much more – to become a stable, nationally-recognized leader in end-of-life care.

This path has been hard-earned and is a testament to our continued willingness to embrace change. Most importantly, it reflects an unwavering commitment to serve patients and families during life's most sacred moments with care that is consistent, comprehensive, and above all, compassionate.

As mentioned earlier, our mission – **Every Person. Every Time.** – is our commitment to do what's right and best – for patients and families, community partners, referral sources, donors, and for our greatest treasure, our employees and volunteers.

Our employees and volunteers have chosen to do this important and difficult work. They are the foundation for our excellence as they skillfully and gracefully uphold our mission. They are the ones who continue to elevate and redefine quality end-of-life care so patients and families across Michigan – and the country – have access to the care they need and deserve.

I am excited for the challenge that lies ahead. I am grateful to Bob Cahill, who taught me so much about leadership and friendship. His legacy of financial stability, decisive clarity, compassion for our staff, and vision for the future, is something I not only admire, but will build upon as we move into the next era of end-of-life care.



Patrick Miller  
INCOMING PRESIDENT & CEO





# 2023 at a GLANCE

OVERALL CENSUS:  
HOSPICE + PALLIATIVE CARE

**6,639**

TOTAL  
PATIENTS  
▲ 0.2%

**1,072**

VETERAN  
PATIENTS

**80**

PEDIATRIC  
PATIENTS  
▲ 13.3%

**1,249**

PALLIATIVE CARE  
PATIENTS  
▲ 44.0%

**EVERY DAY COUNTS** WHEN  
FACING END OF LIFE

TOTAL HOSPICE PATIENT  
DAYS OF SERVICE

**418,529 days**

AVERAGE  
LENGTH OF STAY\*

**88 days**

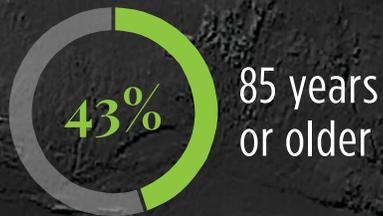
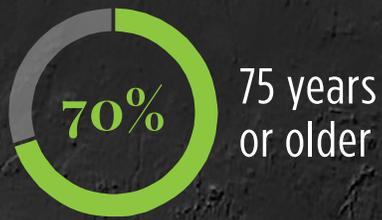
MEDIAN  
LENGTH OF STAY\*

**24 days**

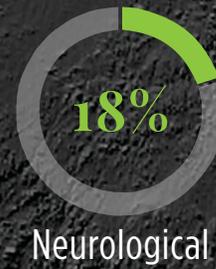
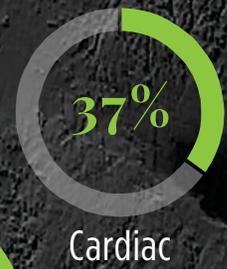
*\*Based on hospice data only*

*\*\*Live Discharge Rate = Discharges/(Deaths+Discharges)*

## PATIENT AGE



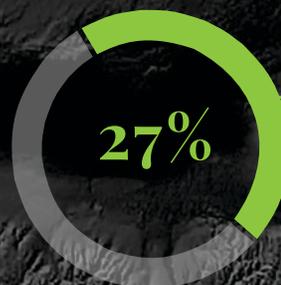
## PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS



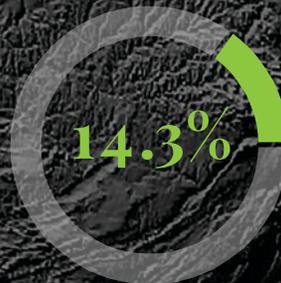
## Family Home



## Alternative Residence



## Long-Term Care Facility



## LOCATION OF HOSPICE CARE

## Hospital





NorthStar Palliative Care has opened doors to new and deeper engagement with referral partners – notably physicians and physician groups. Growing stronger each year, these relationships within the physician community have provided a path to serve a segment of the community that has traditionally been heavily resistant to the “H word.” This has resulted in promoting a timely transition to hospice care for patients that may not have even considered accessing hospice care in the past.

948

NorthStar Palliative Care patients  
REFERRED TO HOSPICE IN 2023

REPRESENTING

80,737 days

of hospice care

3rd highest  
referral source

(NorthStar Palliative Care was ranked 7th for referrals to hospice in 2020)

MORE THAN

540 patients

served daily

(vs. 99 in 2020)

885

new patients  
admitted

(+22% vs. 2022)

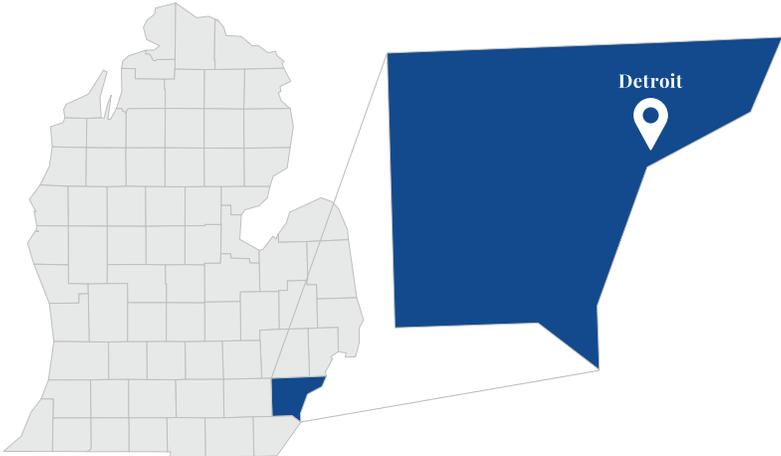
164,146

patients days  
of service

(+35% vs. 2022)

# A Significant Step Toward Health Equity

The NorthStar Care Community was awarded a \$350,000 grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund to expand NorthStar Palliative Care to Detroit, one of the Michigan’s most medically underserved cities.



“

What we have found is that getting patients high quality palliative care services sooner allowed them to also engage with the more robust support of hospice services sooner and for a longer period of time than others who did not have palliative care.

Thomas O’Neil, MD FAAHPM, Director of Medical Affairs and NorthStar Palliative Care.

# Meeting Patients and Families Where They Are

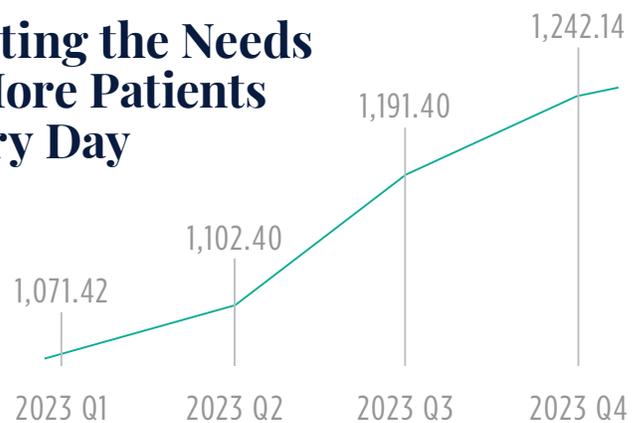
Focused on being the hospice organization that always says “yes” when patients and families call, Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice refined referral and admissions processes to ensure that we met every patient’s needs when and where they desired.

Driven by a goal to offer every referral a bedside visit within one day – and often the same day – all nurses were trained to conduct admission visits so patients could get the care they needed as soon as possible.

This level of urgency and compassion resulted in tremendous census growth in the second half of the year and dramatically reduced the days of a first visit by more than two days and increased conversion rate by 10%.



## Meeting the Needs of More Patients Every Day



## Overcoming Objections

Partnering with Clinical Operations and Referral Intake, the Manager of Customer Experience and Sales Development offered valuable training for new and veteran employees focusing on skills to help front-line employees be better prepared conduct difficult end-of-life conversations.

## Breaking the Century Mark

As census continued to build in the second half of the year, six teams set a new standard, each exceeding a daily census of 100 patients.

ALPENA	DEC. 2, 2023	131
ARBOR CENTRAL	NOV. 11, 2023	112
DEARBORN	OCT. 18, 2023	111
MACOMB	OCT. 3, 2023	114
OAKLAND NORTH	AUG. 15, 2023	100
TRAVERSE CITY	NOV. 9, 2023	171

# Recognized as Leaders in Quality Care

Two Hospice of Michigan regions earned 2023 Hospice Honors recognition, the prestigious annual review that recognizes hospice providers that continuously provide the highest level of quality as measured from the caregiver’s point of view\*.

## NORTHEAST



ALPENA • CHARLEVOIX • GAYLORD  
7TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

ONE OF THREE HOSPICE PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN TO  
EARN HOSPICE HONORS ELITE RECOGNITION

## SOUTHEAST



DEARBORN • OAKLAND NORTH & SOUTH • MACOMB  
4TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

ONE OF FOUR HOSPICE PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN TO  
EARN HOSPICE HONORS RECOGNITION



The Northeast Region has also been recognized by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) as a Five-Star Hospice, the highest designation of quality care. Star ratings are found on the CMS Hospice Compare website and offer a reliable resource to help caregivers identify high-quality hospice providers.

*\*Hospice Honors and Hospice Honors ELITE are based on results of the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®) survey from April 2022 through March 2023. Organizations that earn Hospice Honors recognition have received CAHPS scores above the national average on more than 20 of the survey’s questions over a six-month period. Organizations that earn Hospice Honors ELITE recognition have received CAHPS scores above the national average on all 24 of the survey’s questions over a six-month period.*

# Honoring Our Nation’s Veterans

To honor our Veteran community in 2023, more than 30 Veteran pinning ceremonies were conducted in the week surrounding Veteran’s Day, and during National Hospice & Palliative Care Month. In total, more than 300 Veterans and their families participated in these moving ceremonies.





Jo Elyn Nyman  
**Programs for Children**

Through Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children, 80 children and young adults – and their families – received the specialized care and support needed to navigate the journey no one wants to take.

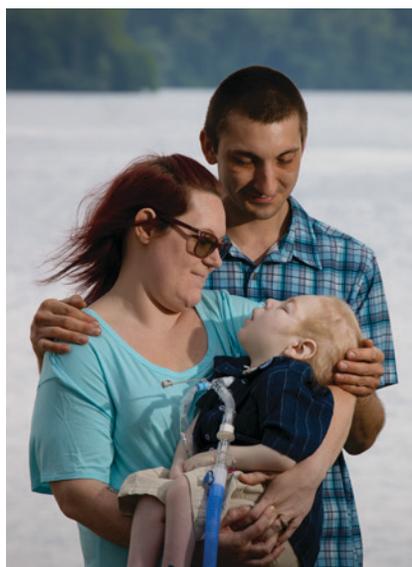
For families living this unexpected – and unwelcome – reality, every moment of every day becomes more meaningful, more treasured, and more cherished.

## When Every Moment is Precious, There’s No Time to Waste

As the nation’s only statewide pediatric hospice program, it is an honor to be there for families who are facing the loss of a beloved child. Thanks to its statewide footprint, *Jo Elyn Nyman Anchors Programs for Children* was ready to support four families across the state who were in crisis.

During a very short period of time, the Anchors team received four urgent referrals to enroll newborn children in hospice care. In fact, each child had been given a pre-natal diagnosis that gave little hope or expectation that they would survive birth. With such tragic diagnoses, the families desperately wanted to bring their newborn children home from the hospital so they could spend their last days – and in some cases hours – in the warmth of their home.

In each case, the Anchors team was present at the hospital within two hours of receiving the referral (or the requested discharge time), ready to facilitate the transition home.



Helping three of these precious infants return home was especially meaningful to the families. Even when one infant died within minutes of arriving home, the family was incredibly grateful for the gift of being able to have the child at home – even for a few minutes – as they had not expected the child to survive delivery.

The Anchors team worked tirelessly to bring two of the infants home the day after their birth. Within a two-hour span, the team made sure that each family had all the needed medications on hand, a nurse at the bedside and social work support on standby. Knowing they were covered with the support they needed, the families could surround their sweet babies – who they thought they’d never meet – with love during their final moments.

Sadly, the parents of one of the infants elected to remain in the hospital as their child began to quickly decline.



# Integrative Therapies: An Extra Dimension in Care & Comfort at End of Life

The use of non-medical options like music and massage therapy to ease the physical and psychological pain and symptoms of terminal illness have become more widely accepted and requested in hospice care. Yet, these holistic approaches to pain management are not covered by the hospice benefit and rely on philanthropic support to fund qualified music and massage therapists.

As demand increases, it is imperative to expand access for these highly-valued therapies to remain true to our mission - *Every Person. Every Time.*

## Music Therapists and Massage Therapists: High Impact and In Demand

**SYMPTOMS ADDRESSED BY MUSIC THERAPY AND MASSAGE THERAPY:  
Pain, Dyspnea, Anxiety, Restlessness, Loneliness, and Depression**

### MUSIC THERAPY

**488** patients

**2,677** hours of care

**3,373** patient visits

.....

#### MOST PLAYED SONGS IN 2023:

Oh! What a Beautiful Morning

Let Me Call You Sweetheart

Edelweiss

All My Lovin'

How Great Thou Art

I Dreamed a Dream

*Thanks to the generosity of the donor community, two new music therapists will be hired in 2024.*

### MASSAGE THERAPY

**176** patients

**522** hours of care

**668** patient visits

*Currently, Massage Therapy is only available to patients served by Arbor Hospice*

## Listening, Learning & Leaving a Legacy

*Listening, Learning, and Leaving a Legacy: Ideas and Implications for Use of Legacy Projects* a research project by board-certified music therapists Allison Buttermore, MT-BC, and Kaitlin Ridgway, MM, MT-BC was published in the **Music Therapies Perspectives** the official journal of the American Music Therapy Association.

Buttermore and Ridgway's expertise was recognized on a national scale with invitations to present at the 2021 Great Lakes Regional and Midwest Regional Joint Music Therapy Conference to share their insights and expertise with other hospice providers.

Kaitlin Ridgway (LEFT) and Allison Buttermore, Music Therapists



## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Whether providing companionship or caregiver relief, raising awareness in the community, or offering administrative support, volunteers provide vital and meaningful support to the delivery of care.

**61%**  
of volunteer hours  
at the bedside



**39%**

of volunteer hours supported  
the Grief Journey Program, office  
work, community outreach and  
fundraising activity



VOLUNTEERS DROVE

**158,836**  
unreimbursed miles



**23,906**  
volunteer hours



**151**  
NEW VOLUNTEERS  
TRAINED IN 2023



**13,757**  
total visits/cards/encounters



**\$788,907**  
total cost savings

## GRIEF JOURNEY PROGRAM

The Grief Journey program provides the bereaved a place where their grief is normalized and supported. Whether participating in a group, seminar or a one-on-one call, NorthStar Care Community grief counselors offer education and validation to help grieving individuals cope with their loss.



BEREAVED  
SUPPORTED



VISITS  
(HOME/VIRTUAL/PHONE VISITS  
AND ASSESSMENTS)



COMMUNITY  
EDUCATION



SUPPORT  
GROUPS



MEMORIAL  
PROGRAMS

### ▶ HELPING YOUNG ADULTS GRIEVE

Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice Grief Support Managers hosted the first-ever Young Adults Grief Support Retreat on June 3rd at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens in Ann Arbor.

An extension of the **Young Adult Griever’s Virtual Support Group**, the retreat offered young adults in their twenties and thirties the opportunity to connect with peers who have experienced the death of a significant person in their life, while focusing on mental and physical wellness.

Activities included group discussion, yoga, music therapy, and massage therapy. One facilitator remarked, “We were so pleased at how readily attendees were opening up to share, implementing self-care, and expressing solidarity with one another.”



The three locations of Camp Good Grief welcomed 35 children in 2023. The camp experience included a variety of activities that included ziplining, canoeing, swimming, and nature along with expressive activities through Music Therapy, Art projects, and grief sharing.

- Camp Newaygo**    **June 12, 2023**
- Camp Ohiyesa**    **July 28, 2023**
- Camp Timbers**    **August 18, 2023**

## ► MEMORIAL AND OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

A variety of memorial events and activities were conducted throughout the state offering unique and meaningful opportunities to honor the lives of loved ones.

### FLY AND REMEMBER ►

This signature event features friends and families creating and flying kites in memory of their loved ones. Year after year, those who attend often arrive in tears, but leave with smiles on their faces. *Fly & Remember* events were held in Royal Oak, Ann Arbor, and Petoskey.



### ◀ SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Hospice of Michigan hosted a dinner and memory-making event in Alpena for family members who lost a loved one within the last year. Held at Art in the Loft, activities included an art station, a journaling activity, live music and a slideshow.



## Special Thanks to the Children's Bereavement Network

For more than 22 years, the Children's Bereavement Network, led by a working board and a group of dedicated volunteers and many donors, hosted hundreds of grieving children throughout Northern Michigan at *Camp Live, Laugh, Love*.

Following the difficult decision to disband, they placed their \$100,000 in assets in the Children's Bereavement Network Fund. These funds have been entrusted to the NorthStar Care Community to continue this legacy of support, expanding *Camp Good Grief* to add a third location to serve grieving children in Northern Michigan.

“ Just wanted to say thank you again. My daughter can't stop talking about camp! She's already planning for next year. Thank you for the work that you do.

— Mother of a camper whose father died suddenly

Research shows that camps are promising venues to help bereaved children develop and build resilience in dealing with loss.

# Transforming Data & Embracing Technology to Work More Efficiently

Data tells the stories that drive decision-making. It helps us understand productivity, improve processes, and identify opportunities. And it drives decisions that improve operations and the delivery of quality care.

Through a thoughtful collaboration of the clinical, data solutions and information technology teams to analyze, package and apply the wealth of data at our disposal, valuable tools were created to help us work smarter and better meet the needs of patients and families.

## ► DASHBOARDS: STREAMLINING CRITICAL INFORMATION

Creating dashboards was a critical step in streamlining a multitude of information and daily reports in an efficient and easy to use format for clinical leaders. Each dashboard provides an at-a-glance view of trends and performance, in addition to the ability to drill down for more specific information.



### ◀ REFERRAL DASHBOARD

Tracks referral, admission, and census trends

### MANAGER AND TEAM TASKS DASHBOARD ►

Increases visibility of census and productivity trends on a team-by-team basis.



## ► PREDICTIVE MODELING: A CRYSTAL BALL TO EFFICIENCY

Using more than 40 years of patient data\*, predictive modeling has been applied in a variety of ways:

- TO HELP STAFF DETERMINE PATIENT ELIGIBILITY
- TO PREDICT PATIENT MORTALITY (*i.e., when a patient has 14 and 7 days left of life*)
- TO PREDICT ANTICIPATED CENSUS - 3 MONTHS AND 6 MONTHS OUT
- TO GAIN INSIGHT ON REFERRAL SOURCE OPPORTUNITIES

*\*Models were built using information captured from the NorthStar Electronic Medical Record (EMR), using 32,000 unique patient's data.*

## ► APPLICATIONS TO BE NIMBLER AND MORE RESPONSIVE

To assist NorthStar Triage nurses as they juggle multiple EMRs, a data application was launched to eliminate the need to log in to each EMR, enabling quicker response.

## ► ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES EXPEDITES PAPERWORK

Shifting from paper forms to electronic forms, via DocuSign, has reduced consent errors, resulting in more efficient reimbursement processing.

# Enhancing Caregiver Support

Offering an additional level of caregiver support, patients and families appreciate the depth of information, resources and accessibility that NorthStar LINC provides.



NORTHSTAR LINC  
DEVICES DEPLOYED



CALLBACK  
REQUESTS



NOTIFICATIONS  
*Kept Care Teams aware of  
patient status between visits*



CHATS INITIATED  
BY PATIENTS OR  
CAREGIVERS



VIRTUAL TEAM  
VISITS



TELEPHONE  
VISITS



TOTAL  
VIRTUAL VISITS



DISPATCH TASKS TO  
TRIAGE TEAM

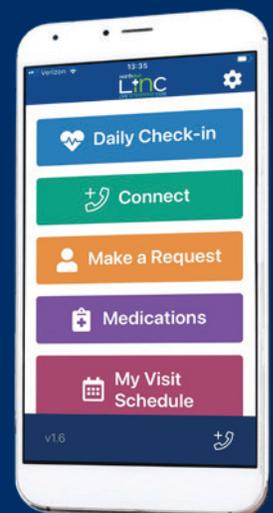
## ▶ THE NEXT GENERATION OF NORTHSTAR LINC

NorthStar LINC technology continues to evolve, adding an embedded video conferencing solution to facilitate virtual face-to-face interaction. Additionally, NorthStar LINC is now an app that caregivers can download from the Apple and Android App stores. Shifting to an accessible app – rather than purchasing and deploying devices – offers the opportunity for more patients and families to utilize this valuable caregiver support tool.

## ▶ OPTIMIZING INTERNAL RESOURCES



The Microsoft Teams suite of resources, now fully deployed across the NorthStar enterprise extends collaboration opportunities offering video, chat, and telephone services. The adoption of the full Microsoft Teams platform reduced the significant maintenance burden required to manage 750 pieces of telephone hardware, resulting in cost savings and more efficient staff disposition.





# The Next Generation of End-of-life Education and Training: NorthStar Hospice Simulation Lab



More than 200 donors, staff, and community members celebrated the grand opening of the NorthStar Institute's state-of-the-art Hospice Simulation Lab at the Ann Arbor home office on May 24, 2023.

The first-of-its-kind in Michigan and one of just a handful in the U.S., the Simulation Lab has quickly become a center of educational excellence. Offering extensive classroom and hands-on training, clinical staff can be assured that they are fully prepared to provide patients and families the highest quality care.

Left to right: Bob Cahill; Linh Song, Song Foundation; Jared Kelley, Qualis; Christiane Anderson, former caregiver and supporter; Kara Wilhelm, Timken Foundation; Sandy Linden, Hospice of Michigan Board of Trustees; and Mary Lindquist, Founder of Arbor Hospice.

Simulation lab training has been integrated into all aspects of the clinical education program, including:

- **NEW HIRE:** How to have the hospice conversation
- **CLINICAL INSIGHTS:** Admissions and overcoming barriers to admission
- **CLINICAL EXCELLENCE:** Fall scenario, medication management scenario, Oxygen safety scenario

## The Path to Becoming a Five Star Hospice

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Five-Star Quality Rating System as a tool that provides a snapshot of the quality care a hospice provider offers patients.

This rating system, featured on [www.medicare.gov/care-compare/](http://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/), allows patients, family members, caregivers, and healthcare providers to compare hospice providers based on important quality metrics, such as the percentage of patients that were screened for pain or difficult or uncomfortable breathing, or whether patients' preferences are being met.

As clinicians of the NorthStar Care Community, we have committed ourselves to an overarching standard of care – **Every Person. Every Time.** This commitment can only be achieved by earning a five-star rating across all locations.

To assure that all sites can achieve and maintain five-star ratings, an extensive training program was rolled out in 2023 that laid a path to this barometer of quality care. At the heart of this training is a standardized visit structure designed to deliver a predictable and consistent experience, so we always leave our patients and their families with a feeling of comfort and assurance.

**160+ RNs**  
COMPLETED FIVE-STAR  
VISIT TRAINING  
*(as of 12/31/23)*



# Educating Hospice Professionals in Michigan and Beyond

The NorthStar Institute launched an interactive SharePoint site in 2023, bringing a host of educational tools and resources to the fingertips of NorthStar Care Community clinicians including a new podcast series, training guides, receptor tools, videos and community education presentations.

In addition, the NorthStar Institute transitioned to a new learning management system – Relias – a leading provider of workforce education that offers more than 1,000 modules. Seeking to continuously improve training programs and empower employees with the necessary skills to excel in their roles, this platform brings tremendous value to the NorthStar Care Community’s learning and development initiatives.

## SPREADING OUR WINGS TO SUPPORT PARTNERS

Hospice of Washington County, with offices in Maryland and southern Pennsylvania, contracted with the NorthStar Institute to provide clinical education to their staff. In addition to in-person training and education, NorthStar Institute staff also provided virtual sessions.

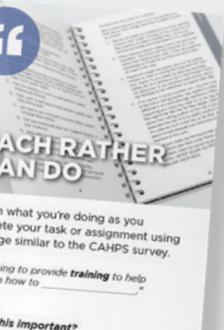
**20 hours**  
In-person education at Hospice of Washington County offices.

**20 hours/month**  
Virtual education and training

## Education by the Numbers

### TEACHING AND TRAINING NORTHSTAR CARE COMMUNITY STAFF

General New Hire Orientation	<b>258</b>
Clinical Fundamentals Training Including 68 CE certificates (986 hours of continuing education)	<b>193</b>
Clinical Insights Training Including 71 CNE certificates (1171.5 hours of continuing nurse education)	<b>82</b>
Clinical Excellence Training Including 48 CNE certificates (480 hours of continuing nurse education)	<b>55</b>
Admission Training – Nurses Training focused on DocuSign Consents and NetSmart Admission framework	<b>111</b>



Hospice organizations of all sizes, from all corners of the country have turned to the resources of the NorthStar Solutions Group to provide critical operational support to help sustain their mission.

## Welcomed Five New NorthStar Triage Partners Representing Hospice Organizations From Across the Nation



NEW PARTNER  
Reports and Data Management



### TRIAGE PARTNERS

ANNUALLY SERVE MORE THAN

**545,000+** total calls

SUPPORTING

**10,000+** ADC

CAREGIVER SUPPORT  
CENTER STAFF

**100+** in  
**30** states

**14**  
MANAGEMENT  
STAFF

**70+**  
TRIAGE RN's

**30+**  
CARE  
COORDINATORS

LICENSED IN

**49** states + D.C.

SUPPORTING

**12** EMR's

**49** triage partners supported

## Strong Preparation Leads to Excellent Customer Service

A calm and confident voice on the phone – especially in the middle of the night – is critical to supporting patients and caregivers when in crisis. To ensure that all NorthStar Triage staff are fully prepared to respond to incoming calls, an enhanced orientation program was launched in August.

The orientation program includes:

- A comprehensive, two-week training period to ensure every NorthStar Triage employee is fluent in the tools and resources needed to meet the needs of patients and caregivers – EMR, Applications, Clinical Protocols, Triage Workflows, and Documentation.
- A Simulation Lab experience for interactive training on how to respond to common clinical situations (pain, shortness of breath, chest pain, falls), as well as crisis management calls.

# A Constant Pursuit of Improvement

To provide exceptional service, there must be a commitment to not just meet expectations, but surpass them. To assure this, the NorthStar Triage team regularly audits performance to track successes as well as to identify and remediate quality service issues.

Through the creation of a comprehensive dashboard, partners receive real-time, transparent information about call volumes, wait times, and categorization of calls - both internal and external. This detailed information is a powerful tool to measure success and to refine practices.

FOLLOWING A STANDARD  
**29 SECOND** INTRODUCTION

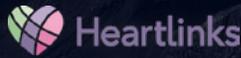
Wait Time:  
**49 seconds**

*Total wait time - half of the wait time goal of 150 seconds*

## Five NorthStar Triage Partners Expanded Their Commitment With the NorthStar Solutions Group, Adding Contracts for EMR Support



MARYLAND



WASHINGTON



CALIFORNIA



GEORGIA



CALIFORNIA

## TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS

ANNUALY ADDRESS

**10,500+**  
support tickets

SUPPORTING

**2,600+**  
users

IT STAFF

**19**

**5**

EMR  
SUPPORT

**4**

PROGRAMMERS/  
ANALYSTS

**10**

INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

SUPPORT

**14**  
custom  
applications

**13**

partners  
supported

NorthStar Solutions Group returned to Boulder, CO for the second annual NorthStar Community Gathering. Senior leadership from 19 partner organizations from across the nation participated in this interactive two-and-a-half-day conference that featured great dialogue, networking opportunities and lively discussions about the challenges we all face in the dynamic world of hospice and palliative care.



## An Unexpected Honor

Our partners from Qualis and Hope Healthcare took the opportunity to honor Bob Cahill's retirement in a most touching way, introducing a special award to honor his 25-year legacy of leadership at the NorthStar Care Community - the *Robert J. Cahill Hospice Aide of the Year Excellence in Service Award*. This was a particularly meaningful gesture knowing that Bob holds a special place in his heart for hospice aides.

"I couldn't have asked for a more meaningful recognition of my career in hospice care. My mother loved her hospice aides. They were the ones who made her hospice experience so dignified and I am grateful for the phenomenal care and compassion they show our patients every day."

Congratulations to Judith Konoff, CNA, the first recipient of the Robert J. Cahill Hospice Aide of the Year Excellence in Service Award.

Judy is an incredible role model to her colleagues, not just in Muskegon, but across the state. Known for her warm and welcoming hugs – which she gives abundantly and authentically – and for her patient-first approach to care, Judy exemplifies the mission *Every Person, Every Time*.

As further testament to her commitment to serve, Judy delayed her social security benefits – “because my team and my community need me.”

## Every Person, Every Time

Her passion is to care for those who turn to Hospice of Michigan so they can live their last days with the respect and compassion they deserve.



## QUALITY & COMPLIANCE

Each year, the Quality and Compliance Team is responsible for overseeing the NorthStar Care Community's quality programs and accreditation standards, as well as driving a culture that values legal and regulatory compliance in all aspects of the organization.

Throughout the year, the Quality and Compliance Team worked tirelessly to address processes and procedures that not only foster the delivery of quality care, but also includes guidance and oversight for strong documentation that leads to more effective Medicare claims submissions.

### Successful CHAP Survey



The Community Health Accreditation Partner (CHAP) Survey, conducted every 3 years, includes a comprehensive review of practices and procedures that affirms the organization is operating to the highest quality standards.

### QAPI Plus Program Growth



Launched the Quality and Performance Improvement Plus (QAPI Plus) platform, a software solution that automates quality and compliance programs to help understand performance in real time and analyze trends in data to quickly drive higher performance and identify opportunities for improvement. Initial utilization focused on Incident Reporting.

### Consent Training for New Election of Benefit and Hospice Election Addendum Forms

Due to regulatory changes in two key consent forms, comprehensive training with clinical staff focused on how complete and accurate documentation on these critical enrollment forms impacts reimbursement.

This important training corresponded with a Targeted Probe & Education (TPE) effort in West Michigan.

### Other Key Quality and Compliance Efforts:

- Ongoing Policy Updating
- Palliative Care Audits and Education
- Provided Quality & Compliance consulting with Hospice of Santa Cruz County, a NorthStar Solutions Group partner.

# Reaching New Heights in Fundraising

TOTAL PHILANTHROPIC FUNDS RAISED:

**\$5.495 Million**

## THE RETURN OF BARLEY, BBQ & BEATS

Following a three-year pandemic pause, *Barley, BBQ & Beats* returned bigger and better than ever! Expanding from three to six locations, this signature event featured hand-crafted cocktails, mouth-watering barbecue, and live music—all to support the Open Access program at Hospice of Michigan and Arbor Hospice.

*Barley, BBQ & Beats* events were held in Detroit, Grand Rapids, Cadillac, Traverse City, Alpena and Ann Arbor

Michigan-native Luke Winslow King performed in Detroit and his hometown, Cadillac.



Grand Rapids featured a special appearance by country-music superstar, Kelsea Ballerini



Volunteers from 5/3 Bank - Mobile Giving Sponsor

All Six Events  
**SOLD OUT!**

  
**4,045**  
GUESTS

  
**205**  
VOLUNTEERS

  
**170**  
SPONSORS

  
**44**  
BBQ VENDORS

  
**41**  
DISTILLERS

## FORGING NEW PHILANTHROPIC RELATIONSHIPS

Inspired by their personal hospice experiences, Alpena-based businessman and Edward Jones financial advisor, Mark K. Ferguson and his wife, Amy, have become passionate advocates for advancing Hospice of Michigan's philanthropic profile in northeast Michigan.

As a champion of philanthropic efforts within the regional Edward Jones organization, Mark and Amy announced a very special matching gift in the weeks leading up to the Alpena Barley, BBQ & Beats event.

Knowing that all donations made at the event would be matched, Mark and Amy committed to amplifying giving by making their own \$10,000 donation. In addition, Edward Jones would match all their northern Michigan employee donations up to \$500 each.

Thanks to generous community response, donations exceeded the goal. In total, \$36,000 was raised to support Hospice of Michigan's mission in northern Michigan.

# Challenge MET!

Thanks to the Steve and Amy Van Anel Foundation's *Make it a Double Matching Gift* challenge and the generosity of the community - the \$250,000 fundraising goal was met!

THE STEVE & AMY  
VAN ANDEL  
FOUNDATION

RAISING  
**\$500,000**  
to support the  
Open Access Program



The Ferguson family at Barley, BBQ & Beats Alpena

The Valley welcomed 500+ guests to Arbor Hospice's first Barley, BBQ & Beats

Following the pandemic pause, many food and beverage vendors returned with creative food and craft cocktails



MAKE IT  
DOUBLE  
MATCHING GIFT  
THE STEVE & AMY  
VAN ANDEL  
FOUNDATION

► ACCOUNTING/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The Accounting/Accounts Payable team continued to successfully meet key benchmarks despite turnover of several key leadership positions in the department. Achievements include:

Completion of the 2022 audit by Crowe LLP resulted in no deficiencies or material weaknesses.	Extensive work with Report Writer software to create improved budget reports.
Ongoing, timely preparation of monthly financial statements, monthly account reconciliations, and quarterly board reports.	Completion of the Single Audit, as required for the CARES funding received during the pandemic.
In conjunction with the Finance Committee, made the decision to use the same investment manager for Arbor Hospice and Hospice of Michigan’s investment funds.	Streamlined the medical claims pricing process by leveraging technology, resulting in considerable time savings for the Accounts Payable team.
Created a template to manage NorthStar Solutions Group’s monthly invoicing and partner correspondence. This helped reduce Accounts Receivable days outstanding from 63 days to 46 days.	

**2023 FINANCIAL - PRELIMINARY**

Twelve months ending December 31, 2023

TOTAL PROGRAM REVENUE	\$ 93,946,277
CARES ACT REVENUE	\$0
PROGRAM EXPENSES	( \$ 91,965,717 )
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 1,980,560</b>
INVESTMENT GAIN (LOSS)	\$ 1,130,397
NET FOUNDATION INCOME	\$ 2,977,002
PHILANTHROPY PROGRAMS OF EXCELLENCE	( \$ 3,728,673 )
<b>TOTAL NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 2,359,286</b>

*Maximized cash flow by maintaining days outstanding in accounts receivables of 40 days or less*

## ► PAYROLL

The Payroll team continues to accommodate the growing number of remote employees across the country supporting NorthStar Triage services. As of December 31, 2023, the team was handling payroll processing and taxes for employees in 31 states.

## ► PATIENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Patient Financial Services team remains committed to providing excellent customer service. Key accomplishments include:

Designed a new Medicare Secondary Payer (MSP) Questionnaire form to better capture the data required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

Assisted in the due diligence of the NetSmart myUnity EMR system and developed a list of critical billing functionalities as part of the evaluation process. The organization plans a mid-2024 transition to this new EMR.

Collaborated with clinical and marketing teams on a new charity bed process to ensure patient's needs are being met.

Developed and enhanced the pre-admit face-to-face (F2F) process to improve efficiency and assure greater compliance with existing regulations. Facilitated training for front-end staff on the new process.

## ► CONTRACT SERVICES

In 2023, the Contract Services Department processed 340 contracts and contract amendments. This total includes:

**155**  
one-time patient care contracts and traveling patient contracts.



**185** standing contracts and contract amendments including:

**32**  
new or updated NorthStar Solutions Group agreements

**4**  
new lease agreements

**29**  
new or updated nursing home agreements

**3**  
new therapy agreements

## ► FACILITIES OPERATIONS

### NEW LOCATION FOR THE CLINTON TOWNSHIP/MACOMB TEAM

Seeking office space that is better configured to meet the needs of the clinical team, the Clinton Township office relocated to a newer and more functional space just one mile south of their previous location. The new office is located on the second floor of a professional building whose tenants are primarily medical practices.



### LONG-TIME GRAND RAPIDS FACILITIES MANAGER RETIRES

Many thanks to long-time Grand Rapids facilities manager, Jeff Russell, for his dedication to our mission and for remaining as a contingent employee to ensure a smooth transition.

◀ Jeff Russell

# NORTHSTAR CARE COMMUNITY SENIOR LEADERSHIP



**ROBERT J. CAHILL**  
President  
Chief Executive Officer



**PATRICK MILLER, RN, MBA, MHSA, FACHE**  
Executive Vice President  
Incoming President & CEO



**LEE ANN MYERS, CPA, CGMA**  
Executive Vice President  
Chief Financial Officer



**MARCIE HILLARY**  
Senior Vice President  
Community Relations



**KRISTA NEWMAN, MBA**  
Vice President  
Chief Operating Officer

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Jane McNamara, *Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer*  
Kurt Ludlow, *Immediate Past Chair*

Lawrence D. Bos, Sr.  
Ruthann Brintnall, PhD  
Robert J. Cahill  
Brian Connolly

Michael Damstra  
Mark Drumheller  
John Evangelista

Gerald Fitzgerald  
Sean Guitar  
Brad Killaly

John Maurer, MD  
Khan J. Nedd, MD  
Mary Sanders

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Ryan Duffy  
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Kathleen Griffiths, MSW, MPA  
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Marcie Hillary  
Jason Hover  
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Patricia Adanti-Joy, APR  
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Michael McCarthy, CPA, CFP®, MST

Patrick Miller  
David Morrison  
Lee Ann Myers  
Nancy Philippart  
Marc Rosenthal  
Deborah Bratkovich Thompson  
Greg Zelski

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Brad Killaly, *Chair*  
Lee Ann Myers, *Treasurer*

Robert J. Cahill  
Kenneth Pituch, MD, FAAP

Mary Jo Smith  
Carolina Typaldos

*\*In Memory Of*

# Remembering a Pioneer

**MAGGIE ALLESEE • 1928-2023**

A prolific and dedicated benefactor for more than 20 years, Maggie died peacefully, in her Bloomfield Hills home on January 26, 2023 under the gentle care of Hospice of Michigan's Oakland North team.

With a personality and energy that defied her diminutive size, Maggie pursued post-graduate work in gerontology at Wayne State University that led her to join Hospice of Michigan's Foundation Board.

Recognizing how education could transform end-of-life care, Maggie made a \$3 million gift in 2001 to establish the Maggie Allesee Center for Quality of Life (MACQOL). This transformational gift significantly strengthened Hospice of Michigan's capacity to improve the quality of life for patients and families facing serious illness and has evolved into the NorthStar Institute, Michigan's premiere center for end-of-life education, training and innovation.

A passionate, energetic and generous champion of our not-for-profit mission, Maggie was a recipient of a 2005 Crystal Rose Award and actively served on the Hospice of Michigan Foundation Board for 18 years.

As Maggie's health began to decline, she received the support of NorthStar Palliative Care and Hospice of Michigan. True to her generous spirit, Maggie and her full-time caregiver regularly expressed their gratitude for the compassionate care she received from her hospice team.

The NorthStar Care Community is forever grateful to Maggie for the legacy she has left this organization. Her ardent advocacy for our not-for-profit hospice mission will continue to inspire us.



# Goodbye to a Dear Friend

**KENNETH DAVID BETZ • 1942-2023**

Ken Betz was known for his generosity and his giving spirit. An avid champion of Hospice of Michigan, Ken left a legacy of tremendous support for end-of-life care that impacted countless patients and families in and around Grand Rapids.

Gentle in spirit, Ken was a force; his enduring charitable support contributed to the organization's fundamental growth and wellness while providing resources to deliver exceptional end-of-life care.

The week before he died, Ken's family invited those close to him to visit him at the bedside, spending time with each person, wanting to know how they were doing.

"In all my years working in hospice care, visiting Ken at his bedside was one of the most special moments I have had the privilege of sharing with someone," said Marcie Hillary, SVP, Community Relations. "Ken had a special place deep within his heart for hospice patients and their families, and you could just feel the grace pouring into that room as life came full circle. Watching his family care for him so beautifully was a lasting gift for us all."

Our hearts go out to Ken's family, to our friends at Betz Industries, and to all who knew him.



# northstar

Care Community



Jo Elyn Nyman  
Programs  
for Children

northstar  
Palliative Care

northstar  
Institute

northstar  
Solutions Group