

# Valor Hospice News

Current News from Valor HospiceCare & The Valor Institute for Palliative Medicine



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## New Report Released on Hospice Facts and Figures

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's (NHPCO) annual report, **Facts and Figures: Hospice Care in America**, shows the number patients served remains fairly constant, yet a statistic of concern to professionals is the drop in both median and average length of time on service. The median length of service in the U.S. decreased to 19.7 days in 2010, and the average length of service dropped to 67.4 days. Arizona statistics show an even further decrease in average length of service in many communities. "What's important to recognize here is that half of hospice patients received care for less than twenty days," said J. Donald Schumacher, NHPCO president and CEO. "With drops in both the median and average length of service, there is concern that hospice providers are not reaching the patients and family caregivers who need hospice support in a timely manner." Shumacher added, "We don't want appropriate access of hospice care to drop particularly with our aging population where people are dying with complex, multiple illnesses."

In previous decades, hospice overwhelmingly cared for people with cancer. In 2010, cancer diagnosis dropped to 35.6 percent. At 14.3 percent, heart disease, the leading cause of death in the U.S., is the leading non-cancer diagnosis among hospice patients. In 2010, approximately 35.3 percent of patients died or were discharged within seven days of admission. It is very difficult for patients and families to take full advantage of the range of services hospices offer when they are under care for only a few days. The report is available from NHPCO, our Valor HospiceCare website or in printed copy from our Community Liaisons and clinicians.

## Valor Celebrates Seven Years of Exemplary Care

On February 1st, Valor HospiceCare celebrated its seven-year anniversary. The theme for this year's festivities included an associate recognition event at each location. Everyone received wearable pins, each designed in a special color and puzzle shape to recognize each of their specialties. Each pin signifies a piece of the puzzle that connects and bonds each other through team work. Valor Community Liaisons have also provided anniversary flower vases to healthcare providers as an appreciation for the trust in our services.



## Associate Announcements

**Melissa Phillips, BSN, RN**, has been appointed Program Director & Administrator of our Tucson Metro and Green Valley programs. Melissa brings over 18 years of nursing experiences, with 15 years as a Hospice Admissions Coordinator, Case Manager and Executive Director. Melissa has been pursuing her masters of nursing and nurse practitioner certification, focused on geriatrics.

**Jewell Livers, RN**, has joined our Green Valley office as Clinical Coordinator. Jewell, serving in various positions in healthcare, including eight years in hospice, leads our Green Valley clinical team.

**Tamie Olson, BBA**, was appointed Accounting Manager, joining our Corporate Administration team for oversight of finance and various operations initiatives. Tamie brings extensive experience in areas of healthcare accounting.

## Updated Hospice Eligibility Resources Available

Valor HospiceCare now offers two guides to help healthcare professionals and the general public with decisions for choosing hospice care.

The **Hospice Referral Reference Guide** provides hospice admissions criteria written in clinical terms to assist with diagnosis information for professionals serving patients. The **General Hospice Eligibility Symptoms** chart is written in general indications terms to assist patients and families in understanding eligibility for hospice care. Both resources are available on the Valor HospiceCare website or in print format from our Community Liaisons and clinicians.

Valor HospiceCare & The Valor Institute for Palliative Medicine provides compassionate, medically-directed holistic care for patients with advanced chronic and terminal illness and support for their families and loved ones. With a focus on exemplary service and a dedication to making the most of every day, join us as we commit to improving end-of-life home care, reducing costs to our healthcare system and expanding access to hospice and palliative care in the communities we serve. Valor is State Licensed, Medicare & Medicaid/AHCCCS Certified, CHAP Accredited (Sierra Vista) and affiliates with Tricare, VA and most commercial insurance plans. As the largest hospice network in southern Arizona, serving over 25 communities, our teams currently support Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz & Cochise Counties.

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Valor Hospice News is produced to provide the healthcare community and general public with industry information about hospice and palliative care programs and services. Questions or comments? Please e-mail us at [info@valorhospicecare.com](mailto:info@valorhospicecare.com) or call 877.615.3996. Valor Hospice News is published quarterly by Valor HospiceCare, LLC. Any articles are used by permission. All rights reserved.