

# Above & Beyond...

Your source for news and information to take our collective care to the next level

## Caring for Patient Families

In the summer of 2020, Hospice & Community Care's staff cared for a patient with dementia in a local nursing care facility. Due to the facility's Covid-19 restrictions, Hospice's team members were unable to make in-person visits to the patient. The patient's daughter was also not permitted to visit. During phone calls with Hospice's Social Worker Ann Pilarte and Chaplain Melissa Kreider, the daughter voiced her concern about being kept apart from her mother, who she knew was likely in her last months of life.



*Melissa Kreider*



*Ann Pilarte*

Hospice staff had been encouraged to think outside the box in providing support to patients and families during these unusual times. Since they could not visit the patient, Ann and Melissa used their time instead to visit the patient's daughter on her porch or patio, or even in the garage if it rained. They acknowledged the great weight the daughter was experiencing. Not only was she losing her Mom, but she could not see her during this precious time. At the same time, she experienced the added stresses of being a Mom herself during the pandemic, grieving the loss of normalcy in her kids' lives.

Ann and Melissa encouraged the daughter to deepen her existing self-care practices: keeping a gratitude journal, taking a few days away with her family, and talking with the supportive people in her life. Once, they even had a walking visit to encourage the daughter's practice of walking. They encouraged the daughter to focus on memories with her mother and family. This gave her a chance to express her gratitude for the unconditional love her parents had given her. Each visit, Melissa prayed with her, asking to give her hope and strength, and affirming the resilient strength she perceived in her.

Once restrictions loosened at her Mom's facility, Melissa and Ann had already developed a relationship with the daughter. Much healing resulted when she was permitted compassionate visits in the final weeks of her Mom's life. Because they had already laid the foundation of a counseling relationship, Hospice's entire care team was accepted as a more integral part of the patient and family's end-of-life journey. A Hospice & Community Care RN and Melissa offered support to the patient's family just after her time of death, and they thanked them for all the team had done. Melissa and Ann helped them on their path toward finding peace as they said a long and Covid-19-complicated goodbye to their Mom.

## A Message from Hospice & Community Care's Director of Home Hospice

The healthcare industry has a lot to celebrate during the first three months of 2021. Local healthcare facilities, like yours and



*Paige Payne*

Hospice & Community Care, were given access to the Covid-19 vaccine for their staff and residents. Hospice is pleased to share that more than 75% of its staff have received both vaccine doses. You, your residents, and our team members' health and safety continue to be our utmost priority. Hospice & Community Care is grateful for your continued trust in us.

March is Social Work Month and Doctors' Day is celebrated on March 30th, and, like all staff, social workers and physicians play a critical role in resident, patient, and family care. Social workers and physicians continue to go above and beyond with how they deliver support safely, while helping patients and families connect differently due to the pandemic.

Thank you to your social workers, physicians, and all of your staff for your dedication to continue to deliver the best care possible during the pandemic. It is a privilege to work with you and your team to help make a meaningful difference.



Paige Payne, SW

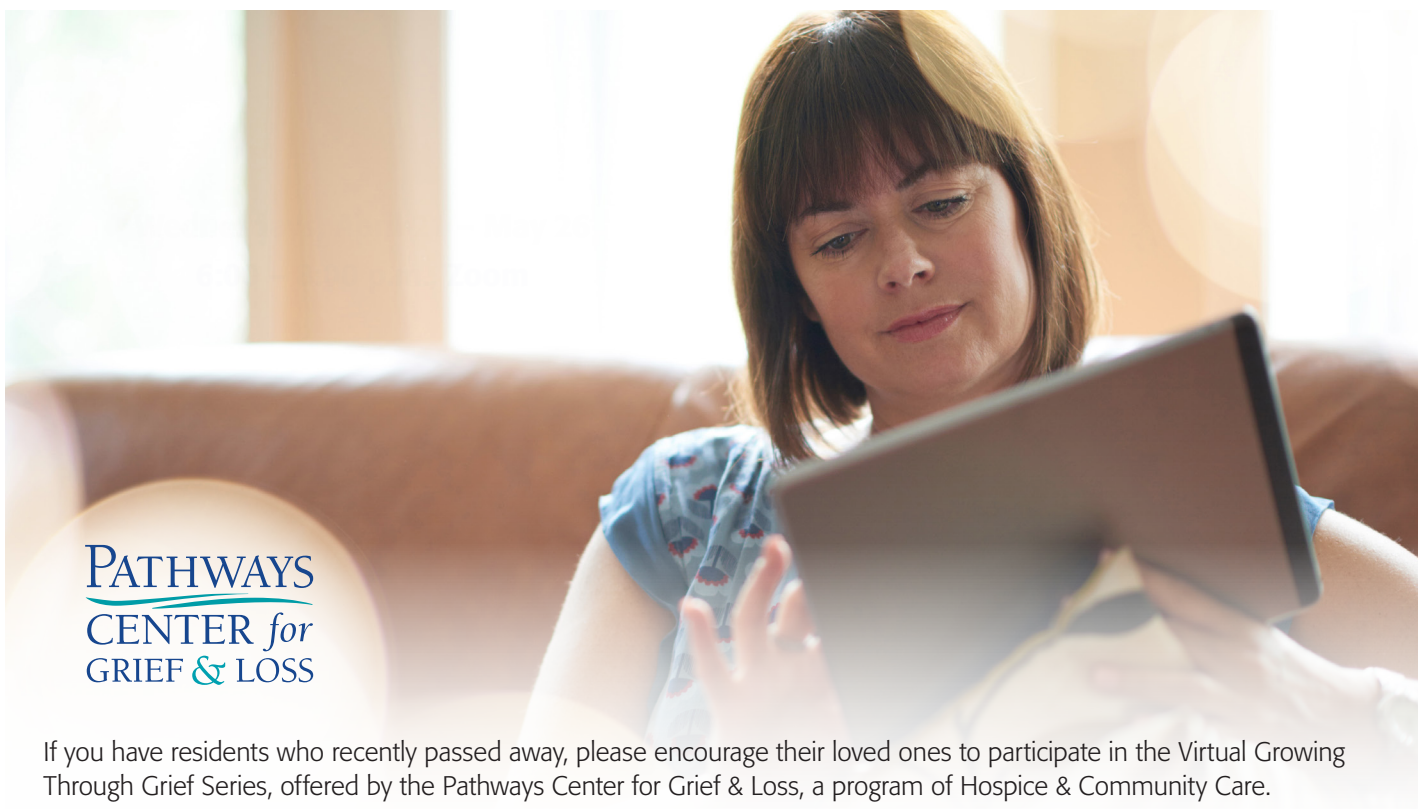


## Covid-19 Testing for Staff in Your Building

Hospice & Community Care is committed to ensuring that your facilities' policies are being adhered to by our team members. **We perform staff Covid-19 screenings per request from your facility** since Hospice & Community Care is a contracted provider of hospice care for you. Please contact Hospice's Director of Quality and Compliance, Deb Bortle, with any questions or changes to screening frequencies at (717) 295-3900.

All Hospice team members will continue to wear N95 masks and personal protective equipment when caring for your residents.

We are in this together and will continue to deliver personalized care and comfort to your residents safely. Thank you for all that you are doing to make our community and your residents safe.



**PATHWAYS**  
CENTER for  
GRIEF & LOSS

If you have residents who recently passed away, please encourage their loved ones to participate in the Virtual Growing Through Grief Series, offered by the Pathways Center for Grief & Loss, a program of Hospice & Community Care.

This complimentary six-week series is for adults grieving a death that occurred at least nine months ago. The group provides a safe place for participants to explore how they have been impacted by their loss, who they are apart from their loved one, and how they continue to reorganize their life.

**Attendees should call (717) 391-2413 by April 14  
to speak with a counselor and to connect to this free virtual group.**

## We Want to Hear from You!

Interested in additional information about what you read in Above & Beyond? Do you have thoughts and feedback about what you'd like to read in this publication? Would you like to start receiving this publication in a digital format? If so, please contact Colleen Steinmetz, Liaison Manager, at [csteinmetz@hospicecommunity.org](mailto:csteinmetz@hospicecommunity.org).



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