



Sunset Palliative Care

Portage la Prairie, Manitoba

*Living fully until the very end of life,
with dignity and in comfort,
surrounded by a circle of support.*



Sunset Palliative Care, Inc. is a non-profit charitable organization committed to providing compassionate care to individuals living with a life-threatening or terminal illness when hope of a cure is no longer medically possible.

Palliative care is about *living life fully*, to the very end of life, with dignity and comfort. The goal of care is to provide support and comfort to the patient and their family, whether in hospital, personal care home, or at home.

At some time, in some way, we must all face the end of life. And most of us share in a common hope – that when death comes to us or to a loved one, it will be peaceful and free of pain. We hope to be surrounded by those we love, feeling safe, comfortable and cared for. The palliative care program has been designed to help make these hopes a reality.

Dignity

*We never stop being human through the last stages of life.
We never stop experiencing the full range of human emotions. Palliative care is about dignity and respect. It is about quality of life in the final stages.*

Source unknown

Palliative care focuses on meeting the needs of individuals and families who are faced with a life-threatening illness. Palliative care is based on a philosophy of HOPE, DIGNITY, CHOICE and CONTROL.

Choosing to receive palliative care does not mean that you have to remain in hospital. Whenever possible care will be provided at home. You and your family decide how much care and support is needed and who can provide the care and support.

Referrals can be made by anyone. It is best to talk to your doctor as he/she can help answer questions regarding your health and the stage of your illness. Having accurate information helps you make the choices about your care that are right for you and your family.

We are here to listen, to provide information, to answer questions and help arrange for the care that you need to make you comfortable.

Sunset Palliative Care can offer:

- volunteer support
- respite for family
- right to choice & respect for individual choices
- acknowledgement that living well continues in the midst of dying
- respect for cultural and religious differences, and confidentiality of client and family
- information regarding the Palliative Care Drug Access and Home Oxygen Programs for patients living at home
- information for family members regarding the Compassionate Care Benefits with Employment Income
- bereavement follow up & referral to grief support groups

Choice

We all have the right to choose. We have the right to select our own care setting and treatment.

Source unknown

Volunteers

Volunteers are carefully screened and receive training in palliative care.

Volunteers provide emotional and practical support at home, in the hospital or at the personal care home.

They can provide companionship and offer short respite for the family or caregiver.

The Coordinator for Sunset Palliative Care meets with individuals and families, at their request, to help set up a plan that meets the needs of both the patient and the family.

Some ways that volunteers can help are by:

- providing relief for spouse or caregiver
- reading the newspaper to clients
- visiting/chatting/ reminiscing
- playing cards
- writing letters/helping client keep in touch with relatives and friends
- holding a hand
- being a caring companion
- and just being there!!

Compassion

No one has to face the last stages of life alone. To touch someone with love is compassion. Palliative care provides compassionate care and understanding.

Source unknown

Palliative Care Rooms

Two private rooms at Portage General Hospital are specifically designed and furnished with home-like décor for the added comfort of patients and families. One room is situated on medical and the other on surgical. Two portable, similarly equipped kitchenette units are available to be moved into another room if needed.

The rooms are furnished with a sofa bed, and a comfortable easy chair for family who stay overnight. The room has a private bathroom that is wheelchair accessible. The hospital bed is electric and can be adjusted from the bedside.

A television, radio, video and DVD player help make the patients stay more comfortable. A fridge, microwave, small appliances, dishes and cutlery in the kitchenette in the room, add to the convenience for family. Booklets and videos offer information.

The palliative care room offers a comfortable, quiet and private home-like space for patients and their family and friends who wish to visit more often, or for longer periods.

Comfort

Energies increasingly focus on the relief of suffering, achievement of comfort, and the best quality of life.

Source unknown

Feelings

When someone you care about has a life threatening illness what can you do to help?

- be an active listener. Giving advice is not always necessary; allowing others to express themselves is. There are no magic words to take the pain away.
- understand that each person's response is the "right" one.
- offer practical help such as shopping, meal preparation, or just spend time together.

If you are the caregiver.....

Take some time out for yourself, and remember, "Giving care to someone else takes a lot of energy, emotionally and physically. It's all right to ask for help."

Someone with a life-threatening illness....

May grieve

- for the loss of health and possible side effects on future plans
- for the loss of roles or activities previously enjoyed

May hurt

- physically
- emotionally
- spiritually

May need

- time to reflect
- time to adjust
- time to focus on ordinary activities
- someone to listen if they choose to talk about their illness and life.

Support

There are times when we need emotional strength and practical support. Palliative Care is individualized care that stresses living fully until the very end with dignity and in comfort, surrounded by a circle of friends.

Henri Nouwen

People who are living with a life-threatening illness may.....

- need to express thoughts and feelings
- need to feel “normal” and be treated “normally”
- need to understand limits that illness causes
- have a greater need to balance rest and activity
- fear not recovering
- fear loss of independence
- fear being a burden on others
- fear being abandoned by friends, family and professional caregivers

Visiting

- visit regularly
- make a list of things to discuss
- allow enough time
- sit close
- bring along a surprise
- bring along a child
- touch your loved one ...a hug, a touch on the shoulder, or just holding their hand, can be very reassuring
- go for a walk
- ask about the past
- be yourself

Library

Sunset Palliative Care has a small library of books and pamphlets that are available for loan. We will help find the information you need to help you through this journey with your family and friends. Please ask.

Friends

The friend who can sit and listen with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing, and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

Henri Nouwen

There are many sources of available support in our communities that can help you manage your care.

Palliative Care Volunteer Support

Call Sunset Palliative Care 857-3746

Regional Home Care Program

Requests for homecare services 239-3040

Portage Services For Seniors

Arranges transportation and services for seniors 239- 1453 or 239-6312

Herman Prior Senior Services Center

Some equipment (wheelchairs, walkers, canes, crutches) are available for short term loan of 3 months. 857-6743 or 857-6951

Portage Ambulance

For emergency transportation call 911

Portage & District General Hospital

For 24 hour emergency care 239-2211

Portage Medical Clinic

For medical appointments 857-3445

Social Worker

Call Portage hospital 239-2211

Mental Health Crisis line

239-3000

Central Plains Cancer Care Services

For information/ rides to medical appointments 857-6100

Kids Can Cope Program

Info at cancer services office 857-6100

Portage City Library

Large resource of appropriate books 857-4271

The local palliative care organization started in Portage la Prairie in 1994 for the purpose of establishing a program that would meet the needs of palliative individuals and their families who live within the communities served by Portage and District General Hospital. Sunset Palliative Care is governed by a board of directors which includes a local doctor, nurses, pharmacists, physiotherapist, and clergy member. The Sunset Coordinator of Volunteers trains the volunteers and generally oversees the program.

Sunset Palliative Care is in the geographical area served by Central Regional Health Authority with boundaries which include the City of Portage la Prairie, extending east to Poplar Point, west to Hwy # 305, just north of St Claude, and north to MacDonald. If you live outside these boundaries we can help you find the program in your area.

Goals and Objectives are to provide support for the needs of the dying and their families, always respecting the confidentiality of client and family, and the individual's cultural and religious life.

Financially, the program relies solely on donations and fundraising.

Today

"Today a new sun rises for me; everything lives, everything is animated, everything seems to speak to me of my passion, everything invites me to cherish the moment."

Source unknown

Palliative care is available at no cost to the individual or their family.

Donations are welcomed by Sunset Palliative Care and are used to support the local palliative care program. All donations are tax deductible.

To refer someone, make a contribution, or receive more information about this program, please call or fax:
(204) 857-3746
or write to:

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Email: info@sunsetpalliativecare.org

Registered Charity Number: 88915-5461-RR0001



The tide recedes and leaves behind, bright seashells in the sand; The sun goes down, but the gentle warmth still lingers on the land. The music stops, and yet, it lingers on in sweet refrain, for every joy that passes, something beautiful remains.

Source unknown