

As You see It, Nov. 19, 2010: Now is the time to learn about hospice care

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Every November, Hospice of Santa Cruz County reaches out to our community to raise awareness about the compassionate care that hospice provides patients and families coping with serious and life-limiting illness. This month of awareness provides an opportunity for us to remind people that hospice care helps patients and families focus on living. This surprises some people.

Those of us who have worked in the field have seen firsthand how hospice care may improve the quality of life. And research shows that families report a better quality of life under hospice care. To further the surprise, there's a growing body of research showing that hospice care may prolong the lives of some people who receive care.

The hospice team provides expert medical care to keep patients comfortable. The hospice team answers questions, offers advice on what to expect and helps families with the duties of being a caregiver. The team also provides emotional and spiritual support for the entire family. With the help of hospice, patients and families alike can focus on what's most important -- living as fully as possible, in comfort and with dignity.

This important message lasts beyond the month of November and is important all year round. If you or a loved one is facing a serious or life-limiting illness, the time to find out more about hospice care is right now. There is more that can be done.

Ann Carney Pomper,

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