

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free symposium an ideal way to kick off National Hospice and Palliative Care Month

(PASADENA, MD, Oct. 22, 2018) — Each year in November, organizations across the nation celebrate National Hospice and Palliative Care Month, an opportunity to help the community understand how important hospice and palliative care is to all ages.

Hospice of the Chesapeake has chosen 2018 to launch a revolutionary idea of offering a free day of learning to anyone who wants to be more informed and better prepared in the event of serious illness or loss. The *Caring for the Continuum of Life: A 2018 Healthcare Symposium* will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 3 at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland.

Hosted by the Chesapeake Life Center, Hospice of the Chesapeake and Chesapeake Palliative Medicine and sponsored by University of Maryland Capital Region Health and Liquified Creative, the symposium will feature more than 20 expert presenters in the fields of hospice and palliative care, grief counseling and aging in 14 different sessions. Five of the sessions offer free continuing education units for Maryland social workers, while all will offer insight into important end-of-life topics that should be part of the vocabulary of every health professional and family.

“It is essential that people understand that hospice and palliative care is not giving up, it is not the abandonment of care, it is not reserved for the imminently dying,” said Edo Banach, president and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. “Hospice is a successful model of person-centered care that brings hope, dignity and compassion when they are most needed.” The symposium seeks to empower professionals and the community with information and understanding that can change the way families experience advanced illness and end of life, as well as recover from the loss of a loved one whether that loss be from illness or trauma.

Duke Medical Center bioethicist Dr. Richard Payne will open the symposium by discussing what it takes to ensure quality hospice and palliative care is available for anyone facing serious illness. This will be followed by a series of breakout sessions in three different tracks.

The first track for caregivers offers four learning sessions that support the role of caregivers regarding accessing care for an aging parent, planning a legacy, self-care and helping children cope with the grief of losing someone dear.

A second track for healthcare professionals focuses on enhancing their understanding of end-of-life choices and the impact on families. Topics range from exploring grief in older adults to how to create a dignified dialogue with patients.

The third track seeks to educate both professionals and community members on subject matter unique to the hospice and palliative care specialty, including the role of faith in end of life, the importance of documenting your healthcare decisions, navigating traumatic grief and caring for veterans at the end of life.

The closing session includes a Q&A session with a panel of local physicians to answer questions about making critical choices while living with advanced illness.

The symposium is supported in part by a grant from the Hospice Care Connection.

For details and to register, visit www.caringforlifemd.org.

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Caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss is the mission of **Hospice of the**

Chesapeake. For more information, please visit www.hospicechesapeake.org.