

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Success of inaugural healthcare symposium promises its return in 2019

(PASADENA, MD, Nov. 28, 2018) — There are many ways one can spend a sunny Saturday in November. The fact that more than 225 professionals and community members chose to spend Nov. 3 at Prince George’s Community College learning about hospice, palliative, elder and bereavement care is a sign to the organizers of the inaugural *Caring for the Continuum of Life: A 2018 Healthcare Symposium* that it was an overwhelming success. The event was so well-received, the nonprofit plans to offer the educational event again in 2019.

Hosted by the Chesapeake Life Center, Hospice of the Chesapeake and Chesapeake Palliative Medicine and sponsored by University of Maryland Capital Region Health, Liquefied Creative, Visiting Angels and Green Point Wellness, the symposium featured 24 expert presenters in the fields of hospice and palliative care, grief counseling and aging in 14 different sessions. It also was supported in part by a grant from the Hospice Care Connection.

“We are part of the world’s most advanced healthcare systems and we still see people struggle to navigate decisions about treatment or gain access to the care that will best meet their needs,” Hospice of the Chesapeake President and CEO Ben Marcantonio said. “What we see most significantly, is that patients and families do not always receive all the information they need to make informed decisions about the care they want.”

Marcantonio said the goal of the symposium was to provide much-needed education to empower patient-centric decision making and begin to change the way families experience advanced illness, end of life, and grief and loss. “We believe that, as community partners, we

have a responsibility to increase awareness and understanding as well as reduce the burden of making these life-changing decisions,” he said.

Judging by the response of many of the participants, that goal was achieved and exemplified by the vibrant “DocTalk Q&A” closing session where a panel of physicians answered questions ranging from when in the care continuum should one refer a patient to hospice care to the efficacy of medical marijuana.

“We believe we have made one big step towards positively impacting how our community experiences illness, end of life and loss,” Marcantonio said. “There is still a lot of work ahead of us. We hope to make another big step when we do this again next November.”

Watch for updates on the symposium’s website at www.caringforlifemd.org.

High resolution photos available on request. Pictures taken on Nov. 3, 2018, at Prince George’s Community College in Largo, Maryland, by Elyzabeth Marcussen of Hospice of the Chesapeake.



Edith Perry, Community Liaison for state District 21 Del. Joseline Peña-Melnyk, delivers an official citation from the Maryland General Assembly congratulating Hospice of the Chesapeake for its inaugural symposium to President and CEO Ben Marcantonio and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Eric Bush.



Duke Medical Center bioethicist Dr. Richard Payne presents the opening session as the keynote speaker. Participants were able to enjoy his expert contributions throughout the day as he interacted with presenters in other learning sessions.

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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.