

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteer with a nonprofit with a 40-year tradition of caring for life

(PASADENA, MD, July 9, 2019) — Forty years ago, Hospice of the Chesapeake began its journey of caring for life with four volunteers serving four patients. Four decades later, more than 42,000 hospice patients have been served by more than 5,200 volunteers in Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties.

The need for volunteers is constant for this nonprofit organization. Volunteers play a vital role on the hospice team by visiting and providing comfort to patients, performing honor salutes, supporting caregivers, serving as counselors and facilitators in grief programs, acting as advocates at community events and assisting in our offices and inpatient care centers.

There is an immediate need for **military personnel** – active or veteran – to perform Honor Salutes for veteran patients. More than 25 percent of hospice patients are veterans, which is why Hospice of the Chesapeake has focused much energy on addressing their unique needs. Each year, more than 150 of these brief yet powerful ceremonies are performed at the homes and bedsides of dying veterans, leaving a lasting impact on not only the patient, but their family and friends. Minimal training and an authorized military dress uniform is required to serve in this position.

The organization has been intensifying its outreach effort to educate the community on the importance of end-of-life and advanced illness planning, resulting in an increased need for **community outreach volunteers** to advocate for hospice, palliative and bereavement care at healthcare fairs, senior fairs and other public events.

Music plays an important role in the care of hospice patients and there is a need for **musicians** to supplement the therapeutic music program. Therapeutic certification or experience is not required as basic training will be provided.

Other areas of need include:

- **Patient Visitors** provide companionship and a supportive presence for our patients and respite for caregivers. They offer a listening ear, open mind and loving heart to those in our care.
- **Veteran-to-Veteran Volunteers:** These are patient visitors with a military background assigned to visit patients who are veterans.
- **Vigil volunteers:** Available upon request to support patients and families during the final days and hours of life. Additional training is provided.

- **Licensed cosmetologists:** Provide haircuts and other grooming to our patients in their homes.
- **Healing arts:** Aromatherapy, Comfort Touch and reiki practitioners (free training is provided), therapeutic musicians, artists and pet therapy animals with their owners.
- **Grief support:** Provide a caring presence either by phone or in person to support grieving individuals.
- **Four-wheel drivers:** Volunteers with four-wheel drive vehicles are needed to assist patients and staff in inclement weather.

Become a hospice volunteer if you are age 18 or older and willing to complete volunteer training. Opportunities also exist for high school students and internships are available. Free training is provided; in fact, many enjoy taking advantage of the variety of complimentary learning opportunities offered to volunteers and staff. Contact joinus@hospicechesapeake.org, 443-837-1508 or visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/volunteer for more information.

High resolution photos are available upon request.



(March 25, 2017) Dennis Lorentz receives a handshake from Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Jake Higginbotham during an Honor Salute held performed for veterans at Atria Manresa in Annapolis. Hospice of the Chesapeake is always in need of volunteers like Higginbotham to perform these brief but powerful ceremonies for veterans who are hospice patients. Photo by Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake.

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For 40 years, **Hospice of the Chesapeake** has been caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss. For more information, please visit www.hospicechesapeake.org.