

# Hospice of Anchorage

A caring community of help, hope and comfort.



## NEW HOURS:

VISITORS TO THE RESOURCE CENTER, COMMUNITY WALK-INS, & REFERRALS FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
MON - THURS: 11AM - 4PM

CURRENTLY REGISTERED CLIENTS AND TEAMS  
SUPPORTING THEIR CARE  
MON - FRI: 8AM - 4PM

## Letter from the Executive Director

Friends of Hospice Anchorage-

Great things are brewing at HOA! We are thrilled to roll out the first installment of our new quarterly newsletter. We will use this medium to update you in the future on the organization we all care for so deeply! In order to keep costs to a minimum so we can help more Alaskans, we would like to deliver this to you via email, if possible. Please provide your email address to us if you haven't already, or if you'd still prefer a hard copy, just let us know.



I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and further into our newsletter, I will introduce our new team members at the HOA office. My name is Susie Smith. In January of 2023, I was hired as the Executive Director by our Board of Directors. I have a 25-year professional background in executive leadership and organizational management. I am a small business owner and a proud Alaska Air National Guardsman. My family has lived in Alaska for 14 years and from the minute we set foot here, we knew this where we wanted to put down roots. We are passionate servant-leaders throughout the Anchorage community. This is such a special place to live and what a privilege it is to serve Hospice of Anchorage!

My call to Hospice was a multi-year journey. My mother was given a cancer diagnosis in 2018. She lived far away and desperately wished to peacefully resign to the disease, living a full life in the comforts of her own home. This was made possible only by the beautiful people of Hospice. Some days, that team of loving individuals was the only reason I stayed upright. I will forever be grateful to them for their service to my family and decided after her passing, I must pay that kindness forward. My journey continued as a volunteer with Hospice of Anchorage, which eventually led me to a position on the Board of Directors and ultimately now, to the Executive Director position.

These are challenging days for social service nonprofits who feel the call now, more than ever, to support our community at such a time of great need. It is in this light that I must say a personal thank you to each of you for the role you play in helping HOA serve those who need us most throughout our community. I hope for your continued support, and I feel profoundly grateful for this opportunity to serve you and our incredible community! I look forward to meeting you all. Please reach out via phone or email, 907.561.5322 / [susie@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:susie@hospiceofanchorage.org) if I can be of assistance or better yet, stop in to meet your new team! We would love to see you.

With Gratitude,

*Susie*

IN-HOME CARE



GRIEF SUPPORT



END OF LIFE PLANNING

# Operations Update

Hospice of Anchorage has served the greater Anchorage community for over 42 years. It is our mission to help individuals and families prepare for and live well with serious, life-limiting illness, dying and grief. It is our privilege to be able to truly know the people we care for, learning what is important, and honoring the path each person chooses to take at the end of their lives. Our Hospice of Anchorage team is proud to support and guide our clients and their families in a way that honors and engages the richness of their lives. We focus our efforts on a spirit of service as we work to help people understand the unknowns of this chapter of life. We are humbled to partner with you, as we bring our fellow Alaskans purpose, meaning and hope.

Many of you have supported us for a long time but for the purposes of those who have not, we want to take a moment to explain what makes us different. Hospice of Anchorage is licensed as a Volunteer Hospice. This is quite different than that of a Medicare-certified Hospice and it is important to understand why. Here are some important differences between the two:

## Volunteer Hospice:

- We respond to any request for assistance but can best help when we are asked to provide guidance and support earlier in the course of a progressive life-limiting illness.
- Care is provided by a team of professionals and trained volunteers, and includes emotional-spiritual support, information, education, in-home practical assistance and companionship, assessment, and coordination of community resources.
- The team provides consultation, education, and support visits during regular working hours M-F. We make referrals to Medicare Hospice or other home care providers and provide volunteers when needs increase.
- Supervision of medical care remains with the client's provider.
- A referral/admission order from a health care provider is not needed.
- There is no fee for care.

## Medicare-Certified Hospice:

- Generally, the person is no longer pursuing curative treatment, does not want to return to the hospital, and most likely has 6 months to live.
- Care is provided in the person's place of residence by RCN Case Managers, Chaplain, Medical Director, etc.
- Supervision of medical care can remain with the client's provider or can transfer to the Hospice's Medical Director.
- Medicare does have specific medical indicators/criteria that must be present to qualify for the Medicare Hospice Benefit (A physician must sign a "Certification of Terminal Illness").
- A referral order is needed from a healthcare provider.
- Generally, requires a payment source.

Given these differences, one can see how we can serve our clients in many ways that a Medicare Hospice cannot, and we are the only Volunteer Hospice to be able to do so in the Anchorage Municipality. The rules and regulations that govern a Volunteer Hospice are much different and somewhat less stringent than those that govern a Medicare Hospice which in turn, allows us to be more creative in the ways in which we meet our client's needs.

Many factors have forced us to rethink the way that we do business at HOA, the pandemic being one of the most compelling. The COVID 19 pandemic caused many organizations to reassess their business models given an even more fiscally constrained environment. There are some great changes being made at our nonprofit as we shift our business strategies to best serve our community in these post-pandemic days. As such, you will see that our new team of Board of Directors and HOA employees have been working fervently to create a strategic plan that postures us for growth. We are transforming the way we serve our clients and are pivoting to a business model that greater aligns with our Volunteer Hospice licensure. To this end, we created a core duo of two full-time employees that will equally represent the clinical and administrative responsibilities of our organization. We will bolster this core with a highly augmented volunteer base, coupled with contract and part-time employees in order to increase the number of clients we serve throughout the Anchorage community while we attempt to keep costs to a minimum. We will increase the number of bereavement, grief, and outreach programs made available to the community this year and will expand our Resource Center which is comprised of a Durable Medical Equipment closet, a Dementia Care Center, Advanced Directives and Education, a Lending Library, a collection of current community resources that support end-of-life and beyond, and miscellaneous comfort care items.

We must make changes to our organizational structure and model of service delivery to meet these objectives. One of the first changes you may have seen, effective June 5, 2023, was a change of hours. We adjusted our hours open for visitors to the Resource Center, for community walk-ins and from our community partners to 11 AM – 4 PM Monday – Thursday. We will continue to support our currently-registered Hospice of Anchorage clients 40 hours per week, Monday – Friday from 8 AM – 4 PM. Our full-time Operations Manager and Clinical Program Manager will be available 40 hours per week as the backbone of our HOA operations. This construct will be supplemented by a team of part-time employees, contractors, and volunteers that can wax and wane as the needs of our community dictate.

# Volunteer Update

Hospice of Anchorage has a new Volunteer Coordinator! In late May, Ann Corbett, our Operations Manager, took over the HOA volunteer program. In very short order, she has reinvigorated our program based on our recent organizational changes. With this new organizational design, it is our volunteers who are the heartbeat of Hospice of Anchorage.

A huge thank you goes out to our volunteers who have stepped up to assist HOA both as new Compassionate Companions and as general HOA volunteers at-large supporting our community each week. We would also like to welcome our new volunteers who went through our bi-annual Compassionate Companion training on February 18, 2023 and are excited for those who signed up for our training on September 9, 2023. We are so grateful for the heartfelt commitment that you provide our clients and organization.

## Immediate Volunteer Opportunities:

Office Volunteers and Delivery Drivers

- Community Greeters at the office: volunteers who would be willing to come in and help answer phones and the doors as a way to help community members who stop by between the hours of 11-4, Monday-Thursday.
- Delivery Drivers: volunteers who are willing to drop off Spark of Joy packages for our clients.

## Additional Volunteer Opportunities:

We recently rolled out what we call a Volunteer Potpourri Basket which is a basket that sits in the office at our volunteer station. It holds a multitude of index cards, each with a desired volunteer support activity written on them.

Here is the list of current needs, should you have interest in offering support in the following ways:

- Organize our filing system
- Write an article on behalf of HOA for the Senior Voice publication
- Event Planning for Older Person Action Group HOA-sponsored breakfast meet and greet scheduled for Nov 23
- Inventory newly donated equipment to our Durable Medical Equipment closet
- Create packages for caregivers
- Create and send out "Spark of Joy" deliveries to our current clients. These are packages of love for our clients telling them that we are thinking of them.
- Green thumb needed to bring new life to our office plants.
- Help HOA with DonorPerfect, our donor database: data entry and thank you letters
- Decorate HOA for the seasons
- Help us with fundraising events/planning
- Grant solicitation
- Staff appreciation boxes
- Volunteer appreciation event planning
- Organize our bookshelves in our Resource Center Lending Library
- Build our children's grief programming
- Bereavement support
- Help plan the HOA Navigating the Holidays event on November 3rd from 6-8 PM. This event supports bereaved community members as they face the holiday season
- Social media support
- Marketing support
- New website design

Do you have a great idea regarding how HOA can better utilize our volunteers? We are all ears! Please reach out to Ann by phone or e-mail: 907.561.5322 / [ann@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:ann@hospiceofanchorage.org).



# Calendar of Events

## August

**ONGOING 5X5 Campaign:** HOA is in the middle of an ongoing 5x5 fundraising campaign. It is a quick and easy way to donate to our beloved organization. You simply click on the link below, donate \$5 to HOA, and share the link with five of your friends. We have earned over \$700 since May 10th. Please consider helping us get to our goal of \$10,000 by the end of fall! Your support could make all the difference in helping Hospice of Anchorage continue our important work. Thank you.  
<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/ba0f4f88-adf4-48de-b66f-e07aef1ddd41>

**August 9th 12:00 PM – 12:30 PM HOA Remembrance Event:** Team Hospice gathers once per year at the lakeside to memorialize the clients we have lost over the course of the last year with love and compassion.

**August 12th 9:00 AM-11:00 AM Walk to Remember:** Join us as we walk to remember lives lost during pregnancy, infancy, and childhood.

Meet at Providence Medical Center, Day Surgery Gallery, 3200 Providence Drive (Entrance 2)

The Walk to Remember is sponsored by Providence Alaska Children's Hospital Bereavement Council and partnered by Hospice of Anchorage

**August 24th 6:30 PM- 8:15 PM Grief Support Event:** Gentle Chair Yoga with Sandy Walters from Namaste North Yoga! (Free to the public): Are you grieving or bereaved? Please join us for a wonderful class on meditation, breathing, and gentle yoga. Learn how yoga can help with feelings of loss and grief.

2612 E. Northern Lights

Limited to 10 people. RSVP to [Ann@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:Ann@hospiceofanchorage.org) / 907.561.5322 to reserve your spot today!

## September

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### September 9th 9:30 AM-4:00 PM HOA Compassionate Companion Volunteer Training

A Compassionate Companion volunteer offers friendship, socialization, respite care and non-medical support to individuals and to their caregiver and other family members in accordance with the client's plan of care through life-limiting illness, death, and grief. As a member of the Hospice of Anchorage team, the volunteer supplements the professional caregivers and provides additional services, thereby enhancing the hospice concept of care.

2612 E. Northern Lights

**September 10th 5 PM Trick Or Treat in The Heat:** HOA partners with TOTITH each year in memory of Ian, to celebrate Halloween in the summer months before the weather turns. The excitement is building up and we cannot wait to see you all there! Get your costumes ready and let's make this an extraordinary celebration! There will be events in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and Eagle River. Wristbands are on sale now. All proceeds are shared between HOA and two other non-profits. Please check [www.totith.org](http://www.totith.org) for details and updates.

## Sept. cont'

**September 14th 12 PM-2 PM Good Grief:** Gather with other volunteers and community members for our new, informal grief support group, "Good Grief." This is an opportunity to meet with others from our community who have experienced loss and are looking for a safe place to share memories and make new friends at an informal gathering of remembrance. This group is volunteer/peer lead.

Light refreshments will be served. Please call Ann at Hospice of Anchorage if you have questions, 907.561.5322 ex. 206 or email [ann@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:ann@hospiceofanchorage.org)

### September 21, 2023, 6:30 PM-8:30 PM End-Of-Life Planning Information Night:

Learn more about End-Of-Life Planning and about the documents that are helpful when making these difficult decisions or broaching these important talks. Learn how to access forms like Five Wishes, POLST, Power of Attorney, Advanced Healthcare Directives, and A Living Will for Dementia, among other forms. This group is volunteer/peer lead. Please call Ann at Hospice of Anchorage if you have questions, 907.561.5322 ex. 206 or email [ann@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:ann@hospiceofanchorage.org) to register for this free event.

## October

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**October 26th, 2023 6:30 PM- 8 PM The Dying Experience:** An experiential End-of-Life Training: Join volunteer Kim Reynolds as she walks you through a story of discovery. It is a chance to better understand how we grieve for what is lost; for relationships built up over time, for possessions and pieces of the world around us that are taken without permission as we progress through the end-of-life journey. It is a powerful reminder that now is the time to live life to its fullest, to embrace the things and people who are most important to you.

Please call Ann at Hospice of Anchorage if you have questions, 907.561.5322 ex. 206 or email [ann@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:ann@hospiceofanchorage.org)



## Calendar of Events cont. & Board Update

Thank you to our Board of Directors for their incredible efforts these last three months! They have been busy creating a new strategic plan for FY24, a budget for FY24 and they have taken over fundraising responsibilities for the organization.

**Farewell and Thank You:** Our heartfelt thanks go out to you Arianna Haines, Courtnie Husmann, and Ilona Besseney for the many years of service you gave to Hospice of Anchorage. You took us to new heights, and we deeply appreciate your service. Best of luck to you both and thank you!

HOA is currently looking for new Board members with the following skillsets:

- IT specialist
- Elder law/legal specialist
- Palliative/hospice experience
- Established network throughout the medical and business communities in the Anchorage Municipality.

Do you have these attributes and a heart to serve? Please come and join us! Contact our Executive Director, Susie Smith for more details: [Susie@hospiceofanchorage.org](mailto:Susie@hospiceofanchorage.org) or call 907.561.5322.

### *Welcome to our new Board members!*

We have a new President of the Board, Ariel Burr. She is the senior manager of government programs and business development with Quintillion. She is thrilled to serve HOA because she believes that everyone has some experience with Hospice, whether it be direct or indirect. Her husband's mother was supported by Hospice and this experience had a profound impact on Ariel's life. She is so pleased to give back. Ariel was born and raised in Alaska and has a husband and very large family. She has been a board member for some time but is new to the position of President. She will be with us in this light through May of 2025. Welcome Ariel!

Nichole Kennedy is our new Board Treasurer. She comes to us with over 30 years of experience in the investment, trust and estate industry. She is currently a Wealth Management Officer for First National Bank of Alaska. Throughout her years in the business, Kennedy has helped clients retire successfully, take their dream vacations and send their children to college. She immediately rolled up her sleeves to help craft our FY 24 HOA budget within the first two weeks of her arrival. We can't thank you enough for your energy and willingness Nichole. Welcome on board!

We'd also like to welcome two new members at-large: Kristina Beckstead and Jessica Giesey. Kristina has worked at GCI for 14 years. She is currently the manager for Network & Systems Delivery in charge of our Healthcare and Education Network sites. She was born and raised in Alaska and enjoys camping, fishing, and hiking. Her father-in-law recently passed away and her eyes were opened to the end stages of life. She knew she had to give back and is thrilled to do so with HOA! Welcome Kristina! Jessica is an optometrist who has been practicing in Anchorage since 2014. She enjoys hiking, camping, skiing, and travel. She joined the Board of HOA because she believes in the mission of supporting members of our community through difficult times and the work HOA does with those with serious illness and also the support they provide for their families. We are so very grateful to you all for stepping up with such a willingness to serve in this capacity.

Thank you from all of us at Team Hospice of Anchorage!

## *Team Member Update*



### *Welcome to our new HOA Team members in the office*

We welcome our new Operations Manager, Ann Corbett. Ann is responsible for HOA program management to include grant writing and reporting, HR functions, community outreach and campaign management, business licensing and audit requirements, and day-to-day overall administrative management. She and I work together to implement our strategic plan and development programs for the long-term growth of Hospice of Anchorage. She keeps the pulse of day-to-day operations at HOA on the administrative side of the house. Before joining the Hospice of Anchorage team, Ann worked as a substitute teacher for the Anchorage School District for 10 years. She loves to read, enjoys the outdoors in any capacity, and loves to spend time with her family and friends. She joined our Hospice team because she wanted to challenge herself and grow in new ways. Watching the seasons of life change for her own loved ones made her want to support and advocate for others needing help in her community. Welcome to Hospice, Ann. We are thrilled to have you with us and have already been so impressed by what you have to offer our incredible Hospice of Anchorage community!

We welcome Stefanie LeBarre as our Hospice of Anchorage full-time Clinical Program Manager. She will be running the clinical arm of our HOA operations and comes to us as an LCSW from Tampa, FL. She has over ten years of hospice experience including vast supervisory experience and the leadership of social worker interns. We look forward to seeing how she helps us grow our team, our community outreach programs, and our ability to augment HOA services available to our Anchorage community.

We welcome Julie McDonald as our new part-time Case Management. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and comes to us with vast case management experience. She is very excited to be joining the Hospice of Anchorage team. because she is passionate about supporting individuals and their loved ones in any way she can! Autonomy and individuality are so important to her, and she wants to help others in maintaining those aspects of themselves as much as she can. She has 2 dogs and spends most of her free time with her Husband, Mike, and their dogs exploring Alaska. She loves to crochet/knit, paint, and Kayak. She is also a wildlife and nature photographer who loves to be in the Alaskan Wilderness. She was born and raised in Alaska and grew up in Anchorage playing hockey with her brothers.

Lastly for our introductions, we are so happy to have Hannah DeLoach on board who is our newest contract employee charged with all accounting services for Hospice of Anchorage. Hannah comes to us with a plethora of financial experience, and we are thrilled to have her on board. Welcome, Hannah. We truly appreciate your guidance, counsel, and commitment to Hospice of Anchorage!

*Thank You!*



*A huge thank you to our Corporate Donors*

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*Thank you to all our monthly donors for your continued support! Your loyalty and trust in the work we do for our community means so much to us all. We could not do this without you!*



A caring community of help, hope and comfort.

2612 E. NORTHERN LIGHTS BLVD.  
ANCHORAGE, AK 99508

### *How You Can Help Hospice of Anchorage*

All the services we provide at Hospice of Anchorage are completely free of charge. Please consider making an investment in our community through Hospice of Anchorage today so together, we can continue to help individuals and families prepare for and live well with serious, life-limiting illness, dying, and grief throughout the Anchorage community.

### *Ways to Serve:*

Become a Hospice of Anchorage volunteer on our website:

[www.hospiceofanchorage.org](http://www.hospiceofanchorage.org) under the 'Volunteer' tab, choose 'Apply Now.'

### *Ways to Donate:*

1. Scan the QR Code and donate.
2. Donate at [www.hospiceofanchorage.org](http://www.hospiceofanchorage.org)
3. Send a check to Hospice of Anchorage: 2612 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Anchorage/AK 99508

