

Lakeland Palliative Care and Hospice Completes Oncology Continuum of Care

Lakeland's oncology program now offers end-of-life services that include multidisciplinary palliative care and hospice to complete the continuum of care for patients and families.

Jann Totzke, RN, Director of Oncology at Lakeland, comments,

"Patients requiring palliative care include more than those with cancer. Patients with chronic conditions, such as congestive heart failure and renal failure, often have the same needs for end-of-life comfort and support. By offering hospice, our patients benefit by continuing with the same care team as their medical needs change. We can provide this care in whatever setting is appropriate—inpatient, nursing home, at home. Our program also supports the family after the patient passes on."

Beth Keultjes, Lakeland's Director for Home Care Services, notes that the acceptance of palliative



care and hospice nationally reflects the benefits realized by patients and their families. "Once you manage a patient's pain, he or she can concentrate on the spiritual or emotional issues that are important at this time. Patients' expectations are significant in this arena. Lakeland has set a high standard for its hospice program."

In addition to vigorous pain management, Lakeland's hospice program creates an exceptional experience for the patient and the family. The hospice team, along with the family and patient, will develop a plan that addresses individual needs and desires, including the spectrum of clinical, emotional and spiritual services. "Hospice allows us to bring in a social worker, should the patient or family be concerned about finances," Keultjes continues. "And we support the family in their grief for 12 months after the patient passes on, since they may need counseling, too."

For more information, contact Beth Keultjes at (269) 985-4401.