



HOSPICE HAWAII MOLOKAI Background Information

Roots of the Organization

Hospice Hawaii Molokai traces its roots to the Compassionate Care Ohana, a group of community members made up of physicians, nurses, social workers, and volunteers, who worked with the island's elderly and homebound during the late 1990s. After group members received hospice care training in 1997, they began discussing the creation of a hospice program on Molokai with Hospice Hawaii. In 1998, the state Health Planning and Development Agency approved the branch program, and in 1999 Medicare granted Hospice Hawaii permission to bring its services as a Medicare-certified hospice to Molokai.

Getting Started

When Hospice Hawaii Molokai opened its doors in the summer of 1999, it was staffed by a medical director (Dr. Emmett Aluli), a nurse (Donna Gamino, RN), a social worker (Punalei Stack, MSW), and a chaplain (Father Jim Callahan). With the support of Molokai General Hospital and Molokai Drugs, the hospice began caring for patients that summer, and thanks to Hospice Hawaii's relationship with The Queen's Medical Center, patients were able to be seen by Oahu staff and return home to Molokai for care.

Hospice Hawaii Molokai's first office was located in a small, shared office in town. Following renovations, the program moved to a larger one-room office at Molokai General hospital, and then later to a room at the Nurses' Hale. The new office, located in the heart of Kaunakakai on Kamoi Street, is larger and more publicly

visible. It provides Hospice Hawaii Molokai with three rooms including a reception area and a multi-purpose room for community workshops, bereavement support groups, and in-house workshops.

Today

Hospice Hawaii Molokai is staffed by six employees and has seven volunteers, all who live on Molokai. Each year, it provides services to 15-20 patients in the setting of each patient's choice, which may be at home or in a hospital; in a couple of cases, the patients lived in boathouses, and Hospice Hawaii Molokai cared for them there. The program tailors its services to meet the needs of each patient to make a difference in that person's end-of-life journey, addressing physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Some patients have wished to pass in a special place, such as on the beach, and Hospice Hawaii Molokai made that possible.

Hospice Hawaii Molokai is active in the community, and has participated in such events as the Visitor Industry Charity Walk and the Disability Resource Fair. Currently, Hospice Hawaii Molokai is working on developing a veteran's program to increase veterans' access to benefits.

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