

Atrium Health Navicent Observes Home Care and Hospice Month
Atrium Health Navicent Hospice Pine Pointe has served central Georgia for 40 years

MACON, Ga., Nov. 18, 2022 – Each November, the home care and hospice community honors the millions of nurses, home care aides, therapists and social workers who make a remarkable difference for the patients and families they serve. To recognize their efforts, Atrium Health Navicent Hospice Pine Pointe joins the National Association for Home Care & Hospice in observing National Home Care and Hospice Month.

With 10,000 Americans turning 65 every day, the need for end-of-life care for aging loved ones will continue to rise. Hospice is a program designed to care for the dying and their special needs. Hospice programs include control of pain and other symptoms through medication, emotional support for the patient and their family, and help from specially trained personnel.

“Whether a patient remains at home or receives care in our in-patient facility, Atrium Health Navicent Hospice Pine Pointe provides specialized care in an environment where death can be prepared for with dignity, and in an atmosphere of care and love,” said Elbert McQueen, senior vice president of Atrium Health Navicent Post Acute Services.

Hospice care is for people of all ages and for patients whose illnesses are no longer responding to cure-oriented treatments. Families also choose hospice for loved ones when there is a need for pain relief and management of physical symptoms. Hospice patients are typically in their last six months of life.

Hospice care focuses on maintaining patients' quality of life, as opposed to aggressively treating their illnesses. Psychological, emotional and spiritual support help patients and their families cope with the dying process.

For many families, choosing to apply for hospice care can be a heartbreaking decision. So how do you know if hospice is the best option for your loved one? Consider these care requirements:

- Pain or symptoms are not being managed appropriately by changes in treatment
- Pain medication requires frequent adjustment and monitoring
- Intractable nausea or vomiting
- Advanced open wounds require changes in treatment and close monitoring
- Unmanageable respiratory distress
- Delirium with behavioral issues
- Sudden decline necessitating intensive nursing intervention

Admission to Pine Pointe is made based on the recommendation of the patient's physician and the patient's needs. Normally, people with a life expectancy of six months or less, who want to stay at home as long as possible, and have a primary care person if they are unable to stay alone, are eligible for hospice services.

Pine Pointe also offers support services for caregivers, including:

- Hospice volunteers sit with a patient, reading to them or interacting with them, so a caregiver can run errands. Volunteers also are available to run errands for family members who would prefer to stay with their loved one.
- If medical equipment such as a hospital bed or wheelchair is necessary, hospice provides these items so the caregiver doesn't have to worry about what's needed.
- Medications that are needed to manage symptoms are covered by the hospice program.
- Registered nurses are available 24-hours-a-day, every day, to help ease caregivers' anxiety about what to do in a panic situation.

- Certified nursing assistants are available to help with bathing, hair care, shaving, skin care, dressing and linen changes.
- Bereavement support is available for family or surviving caregivers up to 13 months after the patient's death.

In addition to in-home services, Pine Pointe operates a free-standing hospice house located at 6261 Peake Road. The facility is available for 10- to 14-day stays to help control distressing symptoms like pain and shortness of breath. The facility has spacious patient rooms with accommodations for one family member. Temporary five-day respite care is also available.

Pine Pointe opened in 1982. The first hospice organization to serve central Georgia, Pine Pointe remains the only not-for-profit hospice located in Macon-Bibb County. If you know of someone who may benefit from hospice services, call 478-633-5678.

About Atrium Health Navicent

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of healthcare in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation's leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit www.NavicentHealth.org.

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