

Silverado Hospice Los Angeles Silverado Hospice Newsletter



Author: Nancy Garcia & Juliet Laschiazza

2021 Walk To End Alzheimer's

Silverado started out 25 years ago as a provider of memory care dedicated to dignity for those living with Alzheimer's. Silverado Hospice began when memory care nurses believed the company's expertise could be used to provide a higher level of comfort and dignity to residents.

Loren Shook, founder and CEO of Silverado Hospice, has been managing a transformative industry and community around the idea of his ideals of patient care specifically dealing with memory impairment and spiritual well-being.

"The staff at Silverado knows that the human spirit glows until we take our last breath. While memory-impairment erodes the spirit's ability to express itself through what is considered normal words and actions, it doesn't mean the spirit is not present; it still shines, but "speaks" differently. By devoting time, effort, and love to accepting the memory-impaired as they are and by discovering new ways to communicate, we can build new relationships with them. It's like learning a new language.

This is the vision of Silverado.

We all have a need to love and be loved; a need to be understood and appreciated, to surge through the day with purpose. A need to enjoy simple pleasures: to bask in the warmth of sunshine and to connect with animals, children, and flowers. These needs never change, regardless of the effects of memory disorders."

- *New Possibilities in Memory Care The Silverado Story* by Loren Shook & Stephen Winner

The Los Angeles Hospice team participated in the 2021 Walk to End Alzheimer's, they were proud and thankful to help bring not only Loren's goal to life, but also the global need to end Alzheimer's with every step they took.

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Left to right: Juliet (Volunteer Manager), April (Social Worker) & her daughter, Zitlaly (Director of Family Support)

**"I AM SEEKING,
I AM NOT LOST,
I AM FORGETFUL,
I AM NOT GONE."**

- Koenig Coste





In our line of work, we experience beautiful moments such as this from our nurse Mario,

"After a long shift I decided to pick up a few items from a farmers market in Torrance.

I forgot to take off my name tag, I approached the entrance gate and a lady in her late 40's/early 50's attended to me for entry clearance.

Immediately she saw my name tag, she said *(with a pleasant smile on her face)*

"Silverado!, You guys are amazing, you took care of my mom and family for respite care, we are blessed by you. You guys are amazing!"

I acknowledged and appreciated her recognition of Silverado."

How we help our hospice families

To be a supportive, caring presence in you, or your loved one's end of life care is truly an honor. Recently, we had the privilege of meeting a patient's daughter, who expressed great gratitude in our team's care level. Her mother was in the hospital, and her ultimate goal was to get her mother back home to say her final goodbyes. She said Silverado's Registered Nurse empowered her and showed patience while explaining how to distribute medications and expectations for her mother's health. The daughter stated that she is not familiar with clinical terms, but the clinical team was very informative.

The daughter was pleased with the spiritual support provided by our very own Jesus P., one of our spiritual counselors. She began by saying he "connected with her at an entirely different level." They had just met, but she said she had felt as if she had known him for years. She became very quiet and stated "he will never know what he did for me."

She has begun receiving support from our bereavement program to continue her healing journey. She confided that she suffers from a medical condition and put her clinical appointments on hold while caring for her mother. She stated she is just beginning to process this hospice experience mentally. She mentioned feeling waves of silence, loneliness, grief, and disbelief.

It empowers us to hear stories and feedback such as this and it helps us do what we do. When our in-home services end, we encourage you to complete our CAHPS Survey to share your story with us!

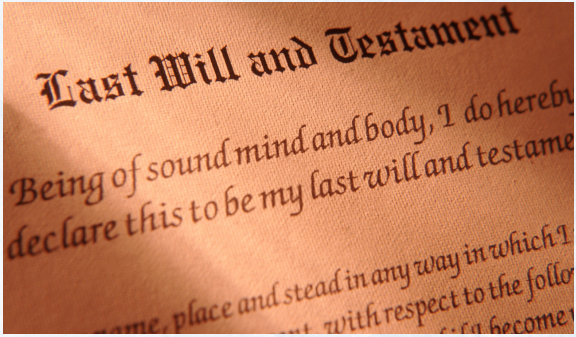
Conversations to have with your Hospice Team

We are pleased to support you and your family with end of life care. Our mission is to enhance our patient's quality of living for those nearing end of life. A painful yet necessary task is to plan. Some families feel overwhelmed and avoid planning because they do not wish to accept their loved one's death right away.

However, the sooner you and your loved ones plan for after death, the easier it is to transition back to everyday life. Talk to your health care team about these things.



Making Legal Arrangements



As part of making after death arrangements, patients should seek legal assistance to prepare any agreements, such as assets, life insurance claims, and anything within an institutional agency. After death, pre-planned arrangements help avoid frustrations during grief and make the grieving process a little lighter. We encourage that these conversations remain private, only to be discussed with trusted professionals and not strangers.

Institutional agencies require a death certificate for beneficiaries to collect any assets. If the patient served in the military, they might be eligible for military funeral honors.

Another conversation worth noting is the plans for the body. Know the available options, such as eye and body donations, casket burial, or cremation. Check-in with your hospice team to learn more about each one.

At the time of death

We want you to ALWAYS feel that you are prepared! We especially want you to feel that you understand what to expect as your loved one is passing. Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of death. If you wish, you may call us to assist when you begin to recognize these symptoms. We do not recommend that you call 911, as it can cause unnecessary anxiety to an already difficult time. When you call us, we help attend to the death and contact the funeral home and primary physician. If prior arrangements were not made, we will need to make quick decisions on where and how your loved one will rest.

Common symptoms that death is near are:

- A sense of confusion or disorientation
- Loss of bladder and bowel control
- Loss of interest in consuming food
- Restlessness and agitation
- Seeing or hearing things that you do not



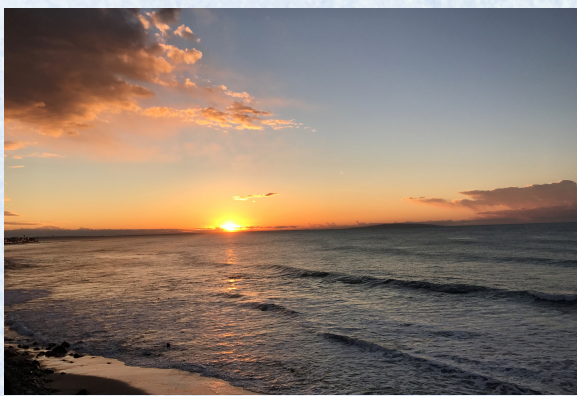
As you notice these symptoms, do what you can to ease them from the patient. It can help if you speak in a calm voice and hold their hand. Some people nearing end of life have been known to prolong their own discomfort until they are reassured that their loved ones will be all right after they are gone. Say your final words.

Important conversations before your loved one passes

Dr. Ira Byock, a passionate advocate for palliative care writes in his book "The Four Things That Matter Most", that dying people want to hear these four things before they pass:

- Please forgive me
- I forgive you
- Thank you
- I love you

A fifth important thing may be goodbye. Think about having these conversations, and have meaningful conversations you'd like to express.



How will you know your loved one has passed?

Signs a death has occurred:

- No heartbeat.
- No breathing.
- No response to verbal or physical stimuli.
- Eyelids may be slightly open or eyes fixed on a certain spot.
- Jaw is relaxed and mouth may be slightly open.
- Loss of control of bowel or bladder.

Care for the caregiver

No matter how prepared you are, a loss can still be overwhelming. Your emotions and feelings are valid, and grieving is a natural process that everyone experiences differently. Remember, we have emotional care available through our bereavement program that can help you through your grief journey. You are not alone. Bereavement services are available by calling (888) 328-6622.

"All deaths are sudden, no matter how gradual the dying may be."

- Michael McDowell

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- Fill medications early, before the last dose
- Call us if there are any changes in health, medication, or any concerns
- Check Smoke Alarms regularly and adhere to fire safety rules
- Stay informed on COVID-19 public safety regulations

Daily Reflection

"When someone dies, the first thing to do is nothing. Don't run out and call the nurse. Don't pick up the phone.

Take a deep breath and be present to the magnitude of the moment.

There's a grace to being at the bedside of someone you love as they make their transition out of this world. At the moment they take their last breath, there's an incredible sacredness in the space. The veil between the worlds opens.

We're so unprepared and untrained in how to deal with death that sometimes a kind of panic response kicks in.

"They're dead!"

We knew they were going to die, so their being dead is not a surprise. It's not a problem to be solved. It's very sad, but it's not cause to panic.

If anything, their death is cause to take a deep breath, to stop, and be really present to what's happening. If you're at home, maybe put on the kettle and make a cup of tea.

Sit at the bedside and just be present to the experience in the room. What's happening for you? What might be happening for them? What other presences are here that might be supporting them on their way? Tune into all the beauty and magic.

Pausing gives your soul a chance to adjust, because no matter how prepared we are, a death is still a shock. If we kick right into "do" mode, and call 911, or call the hospice, we never get a chance to absorb the enormity of the event.

Give yourself five minutes or 10 minutes, or 15 minutes just to be. You'll never get that time back again if you don't take it now.

After that, do the smallest thing you can. Call the one person who needs to be called. Engage whatever systems need to be engaged, but engage them at the very most minimal level. Move really, really, really, slowly, because this is a period where it's easy for body and soul to get separated.

Our bodies can gallop forwards, but sometimes our souls haven't caught up. If you have an opportunity to be quiet and be present, take it. Accept and acclimatize and adjust to what's happening. Then, as the train starts rolling, and all the things that happen after a death kick in, you'll be better prepared.

You won't get a chance to catch your breath later on. You need to do it now.

Being present in the moments after death is an incredible gift to yourself, it's a gift to the people you're with, and it's a gift to the person who's just died. They're just a hair's breath away. They're just starting their new journey in the world without a body. If you keep a calm space around their body, and in the room, they're launched in a more beautiful way. It's a service to both sides of the veil."

Credit for the beautiful words:

Sarah Kerr, Ritual Healing Practitioner and Death Doula , Death doula



A Personal Experience

Our Volunteer, Romina, has personal experience.

" My aunt (2nd mom) just passed a few months back, and my work with hospice greatly helped me be a rockstar for her as she made her transition...

which took place over weeks and months --- but those last precious moments with her--

those are really incredible and I got to lean into it all, instead of panic-away.

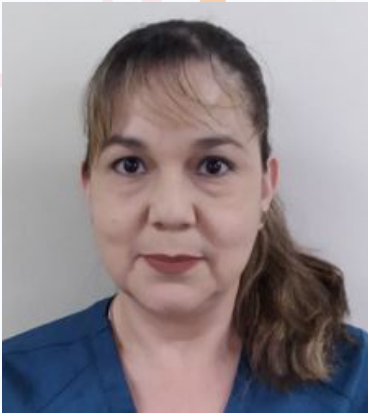
That's hospice volunteering for you! "



Spotlight On!



Meet America, LVN



America was selected by her peers through voting. Her peers said "She's compassionate with patients and families. She's a wonderful team player." And "Always has a positive attitude when working."

Let us know how we're doing!

Leave us a review, click the icons to get started!

Like us on Facebook!



Review us on YELP!



Silverado Hospice
Los Angeles

Your feedback is important to us. If you have a concern, please contact our Administrator, Richard Jenik, directly at (888) 328- 6622

Meet Jessica, Clinical Liaison



"She's awesome, hardworking and detail oriented."
"Goes above and beyond for all patients."