

NEWS NOW

Fall 2011

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It's Time... to Consider the Conversation

Motivated by their personal experiences with loss, two long-time friends – one a hospice employee from Waukesha, Mike Bernhagen, and the other, a documentary filmmaker and fourth grade teacher from Oconomowoc, Terry Kaldhusdal – have produced a powerful and inspiring film based on their collection of 70 hours of interviews with terminally ill patients, family members, doctors, nurses, clergy, social workers and national experts from around the country. The project has been entirely funded by donations.

This is a beautiful film about a very difficult subject. It explores the need to think and talk about how we want to live before we die and is designed to provoke discussion.

Throughout the film, there are intimate accounts of the emotional, spiritual, physical and social burdens associated with the historical shift that has occurred with dying. Forty years ago, most people experienced a sudden death. Today that is no longer true. Because of modern medical care, it is more common to live a longer life and die a slow, incremental death.

Although 80% of us say, when our own time comes, we prefer to die at home surrounded by those we love and not in a healthcare facility, currently about 75% of us actually die in a hospital or nursing home. There are often difficult health care decisions that need to be made and the more our loved ones know our values, the more empowered they will be to know they are honoring our personal wishes if they need to make decisions on our behalf. As health care professionals, you often have a role in assisting families in crisis. By encouraging these


By encouraging these discussions prior to a crisis, you can help ease the burden for all involved when/if a crisis occurs.



discussions prior to a crisis, you can help ease the burden for all involved when/if a crisis occurs.

On behalf of a collaboration* of community agencies and organizations we would like to invite you to a viewing of the film, along with a musical prelude and refreshments. Also, the producers will be present for discussion following the screening.

Check out their website for more information, including trailers for the film. www.ConsiderTheConversation.org

This event is free thanks to sponsors, but space is limited and we do require prior registration by calling **715-464-5990**. 

*Special thanks to these organizations for their ongoing collaboration

Chippewa Valley CARE Coalition
Chippewa Valley Family Caregiving Alliance
Grace Lutheran Foundation
Harbor House Memory Care
Home Instead Senior Care
Marshfield Clinic
Mayo Clinic Health System
Sacred Heart Hospital
Tri-County Medical Society
UWEC Continuing Education

G.E.M. Award Winner!

This year, Mayo Clinic Health System- Eau Claire began a new endeavor to acknowledge those staff that Go Extra Mile (G.E.M.) for patients and their peers. No surprise that our own **Dale Freberg, Spiritual Counselor**, was nominated, and WON! Throughout the system there were over 84+ nominations, and only 6 were selected to be awarded the G.E.M. Award.



Pat Pope, Dale Freberg, Bonnie Basket-Harvey and Sandy Moore

Dale's supervisor, Bonnie Basket-Harvey nominated Dale. Dale received his award from Sandy Moore, MCHS HR Director during the Employee Forum.

Bonnie shared several examples of what a G.E.M. Dale is. Dale generously shares his musical talents as well as his professional and public speaking abilities. Dale has been known to research a special song for his patients, "bringing an extra bit of joy and comfort".

Dale will play his guitar and sing songs that allow patients to share their memories and life experiences. Bonnie noted she has been with Dale on a visit and witnessed the extra sparkle in the patients eyes when they know he is going to play for them. In addition to sharing this talent with his patients, Dale also is involved in the planning and playing at our Remembrance Services.

Bonnie quoted a comment from a hospice patient's physician that stated that "Dale and his guitar did more to relieve the anxiety and pain than our medications did."

His humor, insightfulness, and relaxed way of interacting and speaking is a natural ability that impacts all who interact with him.

Well done, Dale! Thank you for the care and commitment you have demonstrated to our patients and MCHS-Home Health & Hospice. 🏠



A taboo subject

by Dr. James Roberts, Hospice Medical Director

The primary focus in medicine has always been to help people live longer, more healthy lives. It is inevitable though that we will all face death. In fact, death is a very natural part of our life experience. Unfortunately, Physicians and our healthcare system are often not good at helping us "die well."

Perhaps this relates to our own personal

This film will help us to be better Physicians, better nurses, better patients and better people.

struggles with the concept of death and dying.

"Consider The Conversation" is a remarkable, thought-provoking film that looks

at many of the issues that we will all face at the end of life. It opens the floodgates of thought and conversation on this most difficult and often taboo subject. It helps to illustrate many areas for improvement in our healthcare system.

I would encourage everyone to watch this



Dr. James Roberts
Mayo Clinic Health System-Home Health & Hospice , Hospice Medical Director

important film including Physicians, healthcare workers, patients and families. This film will help us to be better Physicians, better nurses, better patients and better people. 🏠

I like working for Mayo Clinic Health System-Home Health & Hospice because nobody is ever grumpy here.

It is a very happy place to work.

Jeannie W.
Registered Nurse
Support Nurse



**Mayo Clinic Health System
Home Health & Hospice**

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Join us for a **FREE** community presentation

Consider the Conversation



A documentary on a taboo subject

**Saturday, Oct. 15, 2011
6-9 p.m.**

**Mayo Clinic
Health System Auditorium**
1221 Whipple St., Eau Claire, WI
Free parking in ramp

**FREE Community Event—Registration required. Seating is limited
Call 715.464.5990 to register.**

See page one for more information

www.northwestwisconsinhomecare.org

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