

Redstone Highlands Offers Eventide Hospice Program

By Ron Cichowicz

Redstone Highlands—a continuing care retirement community with three locations in Westmoreland County—recently unveiled its Eventide program to offer a more comprehensive focus on the end-of-life experience for both residents and their family members.

According to Geoff Gehring, nursing home administrator for Redstone, Eventide is a partnership with Family Hospice and Palliative Care, honoring choice and promoting dignity in a comforting atmosphere.

“This partnership is in line with our mission to provide living alternatives and high quality services for older adults, while helping to meet the changing needs of the community,” he said. “It’s all part of our commitment to a ‘people first’ culture.”

Gehring said Redstone always has had hospice available to its residents but in recent years the administration began to ask, “How can we do this better?”

“We interviewed the hospice providers we work with and stressed one criteria: Who would best help to maintain the high level expectations of care our residents provided to our residents?” Gehring said. “After a series of interviews, we chose Family Hospice and Palliative Care.”

Redstone renovated an 11-bed unit—not reserved solely for hospice patients—and launched Eventide in the summer of 2008.

Family Hospice and Palliative Care provides Redstone Highlands with dedicated staff devoted to end-of-life assessment and issues. When it has been decided to place a resident on palliative or comfort care, Family Hospice and Palliative Care provides services such as volunteers to sit with the resident

and help document his or her life. It is ensured that the final days of a resident’s life are comfortable and reflective in nature, and that is why Redstone Highlands has chosen this like-minded partner that puts people first.

The program provides extensive end-of-life care, including symptom management, expressive art and music, massage therapy, spiritual care (if requested), volunteer candlelight visits, and quality of life services such as scrapbooking and video projects with and for loved ones.

“It’s more than just nursing care and social services,” Gehring said. “Eventide is a well-rounded program that focuses on dying with dignity.”

Although a contract was signed with only one hospice provider, residents are still able to choose a different provider if they wish. Redstone has three providers it works with (down from nine in the past). When asked if there is a preferred provider, Redstone staff direct family members to Family Hospice and Palliative Care.

“We allow for choice, but indicate that we have a preferred provider,” Gehring said. “Most of the time, they choose Family Hospice. Because they have dedicated personnel to work with our staff, this makes it more convenient for everyone.”

Gehring said the reaction has been positive so far. “Once we unveiled the new process it was immediately accepted by the majority of our staff, residents

and family members,” Gehring said. “In my experience, the Eventide program has gotten more publicity from the families who have chosen it for their loved ones. More and more people are choosing it by name.”



(from left to right; back row first) Hal Lederman, MSW, FHPC Social Worker, Marty Howell, RN, FHPC Manager of Patient Care Services, Ruth Palmer, RN, FHPC Case Manager, Ed Pehanich, D. Min., FHPC Spiritual Care Specialist, Kathy Little, FHPC Senior Liaison, Paula Clawson, FHPC Hospice Aide, Patty Liebegott, FHPC Hospice Aide

“This program is successful because it is a true partnership; it really aids in this process because it provides a familiar face at a difficult time.”

For more information on Redstone Highlands or the Eventide program, contact Geoff Gehring at 724-832-8400 x367 or ggehring@redstonehighlands.org.



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