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**Optimal Hospice Care informs public with award-winning video**

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**Optimal Hospice Care informs public with award-winning video**

By: Patrick Loschke

Description: Only one-third of Californians have deep understanding of hospice

Topics: hospice

Posted by editor Thu Apr 5, 2007 16:03:29 PDT

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Optimal Hospice Care released its award-winning video about care for terminally-ill patients and their families, giving medical professionals a method to dispel fears and misunderstandings about hospice care and to encourage eligible patients to not delay receiving this covered service.

The 13th Annual Communicator Awards recognized Optimal Hospice Care's new video, "Hospice... It's About Living," with an Award of Distinction for an educational, medical video that exceeds the industry standard for quality of communication and production. Founded by communication professionals over a decade ago, the Communicator Awards receive entries from across the country and numerous foreign countries.

Created by Optimal Hospice Care, the ten- minute video explains the philosophy and benefits of hospice care and what services a patient may receive. The informative video is illustrated through personal interactions of current Optimal Hospice patients, volunteers and medical professionals throughout central California. All participants gave consent to take part in the project.

According to a 2006 survey of California residents by the California Healthcare Foundation, most people had heard the term hospice but only 32 percent of people said they knew a lot about how care is provided.

Patrick Loschke, vice president of Optimal Health Services said, "The problem is that familiarity with the word 'hospice' is not enough. Our prayer for terminally-ill patients and their families is that this video will bridge the information gap between knowing a term and knowing that hospice services can alleviate pain and provide support for months, not to

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mention are a fully covered benefit by most insurances.”

Optimal Hospice Care provides the video, available in English and Spanish, free to the community. Any member of the community can request a free DVD or VHS version by contacting their local Optimal Hospice Care office. It can also be viewed on the Optimal Hospice website: [www.optimalcares.com](http://www.optimalcares.com)

“Healthcare providers have little time and even fewer tools to communicate sensitive end-of-life issues. Some local physicians now use this video to start that conversation. We encourage every person facing life limiting conditions to speak to their family and physician about their wishes for care at the end of life care,” said Loschke.

According to the California Healthcare Foundation survey, 67 percent of patients would prefer to die at home, yet 68 percent die in hospitals or skilled nursing facilities.

Hospice expands the scope of medical care beyond curative treatment by supporting people through the end stages of life in the comfort of their own home. The team approach of hospice provides expert medical care, pain and symptom management and support for the emotional and spiritual needs of the patient, as well as their loved ones.

As a team, Optimal aims to combine compassion and medicine to help patients and families in the Tehachapi area enjoy life to its fullest. Optimal Hospice Care is a subsidiary of Optimal Health Services. A community-based organization, Optimal Health Services has pursued improving quality of life for Central California residents since 1984.

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