

Hospice of Southwest Iowa

Joni Vallier, the Program Director, spoke about the collaboration between the visiting Nurses Association, Mercy Hospital, and Jenny Edmundson Hospital to form Hospice of Southwest Iowa. The new organization will serve five counties in Iowa.

Plans are underway to build a hospice house in Council Bluffs to open in 2010. The house will initially have 16 guest rooms, with expansion of 8 additional rooms possible.

Hospice was started by Medicare in 1984. It combines nurses, social workers, home healthcare, chaplains, and bereavement care. It includes need comfort, medical comfort care, and family support. It also includes family bereavement support for 13 months after death. About 60% of patients are for home care.

The requirements for hospice care are the end stages of disease or health. The patient needs to show health decline to stay in hospice. They need an order from a doctor, they need a 24 hour caregiver, and they accept the principles of hospice.

There are four levels of care. They are routine care, temporary respite care in a care facility, general inpatient in a hospital, and continuous care. There are 1.3 million Americans receiving hospice care.
