

Visiting Hours

November Is National Hospice And Palliative Care Month

BY MARY PISTULKA, RN

Avera Sacred Heart Hospice Program

Hospice care provides expert pain management, symptom control, emotional support and spiritual care to patients and family caregivers when a cure is not possible. Hospice makes sure that people receive comfort, love and respect during one of life's most significant experiences - the journey at life's end. The compassionate way hospice helps maximize the quality of life is at the center of this year's hospice month theme.

More than 1.58 million people with a life-limiting illness received help from the nation's hospice and palliative care providers last year. Avera Sacred Heart has been providing Hospice Care for over 20 years. The experienced staff and volunteers know comfort and quality of life are critical needs and provide patients and families with an extra layer of support. With the help of hospice and palliative care, patients and families can focus on what's most important: living as fully as possible in spite of illness.

Research indicates that 94 percent of families who had a loved one cared for by hospice rated the care as very good to excellent.

Most hospice care in the U.S. is provided in the home - allowing people to be with their families and loved ones in comfortable surroundings as life comes peacefully to a close.

Unfortunately, there are misconceptions about hospice care. You should know hospice is not brink-of-death care intended for the last days of life only. Hospice care is most effective for patients and families in the final months of life when families can take full advantage of the range of services hospice provides.

Six important points to know about hospice:

1. Hospice care is usually provided in the home - wherever the patient calls home.
2. Hospice cares for people

with any kind of life-limiting illness.

3. Hospice is fully covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and most private health plans and HMOs.

4. Hospice is not limited to six months of care.

5. Hospice is not "giving up"; rather the focus is on caring, not curing.

6. Anyone can contact hospice - call us to learn if hospice is right for you or your loved one.

Palliative care brings the same interdisciplinary team approach earlier in the course of a serious illness. Hospices are the largest providers of palliative care services in the country with many organizations working to offer a seamless continuum of care through the course of a serious illness, and can be provided along with other treatments a patient may want to pursue. The palliative care team works with the patient's regular physician and other health care providers to anticipate, prevent and treat suffering while providing access to information, and facilitating personal choices which results in care that is patient- and family-centered and focused on optimizing quality of life.

The Avera Sacred Heart Hospital Hospice Team will provide a free "To Be Well..." community forum on coping with serious or life-limiting illness on Wednesday, November 28th 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Avera Professional Office Pavilion. A light lunch will be served. This event is free and open to the public, but reservations are requested. For reservations call 605-668-8080.

For more information, contact Avera Sacred Heart's Hospice Clinical Coordinator, Mary Pistulka, RN, at (605) 668-8309. Additional information about hospice, palliative care and advance care planning is available from NHPCO's Caring Connections at CaringInfo.org, or by calling the HelpLine at 800-658-8898.

Farmers' Health Impacts Herd Health

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

Farmers' behavioral health affects the animals they raise. Dog owners are well aware their pets sense how they feel.

Practitioners of artificial insemination of livestock have long known their stress levels affect the conception rate of the animals they are breeding. Animals detect the tension of the people working with them. Reproductive success diminishes when the AI technician is stressed out.

Animals can sense when their handler is upset or relaxed and calm. I know from my own experiences when I raised cattle that if I felt the need to hurry as I artificially inseminated a cow, she usually didn't cooperate. If I took my time, the cow relaxed and the job usually went faster.

Stress increases the risk of farming-related injuries. An analysis of injuries to North Dakota farmers during the Farm Crisis of the 1980s by Jack Geller, Richard Ludtke and Terry Stratton, published in 1990 in the Journal of Rural Health, indicated that stress, especially financial difficulties, increased their chances of injury.

Using data from the Iowa Farm Family Health and Hazard Survey (1994) and the Iowa Farm Poll (1989), Kendall Thu, Paul Lasley and other colleagues determined that stress was a risk factor for agricultural injuries. Their research was reported in the Journal of Agromedicine in 1997.

Farmers' stress levels also can affect the health of their animals. Christina Lunner Kolstrup and Jan Hultgren examined the relationship of symptoms reported by 41 owners or managers and 20 employed workers on Swedish dairy farms to the physical health of their cows. Their study was published in the Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health in 2011.

The study confirmed that stressful working conditions and behavioral health symptoms "are not uncommon" among owners/managers and employed workers. The owners/managers and dairy farm workers reported their perceived stressors and symptoms on questionnaires. Generally, the



Dr. Mike
ROSMANN

workers reported more symptoms than the owners/managers.

Reported stressors included these: having to work very fast, having little influence over decisions and workloads, low sense of meaningfulness of the work and low sense of staff coherence. These stressors were associated with the following symptoms: feelings of irritation, fatigue, insomnia, headaches, nervousness and abdominal pain. Workers who felt their contributions to the dairy farm operation were valued by the owners/managers reported fewer symptoms and greater pleasure from their work.

The study found that the incidence of behavioral health symptoms of the owners/managers and employed workers was positively correlated with the incidence of mastitis in cows and the total number of cow diseases that were reported in the dairy veterinary records. It should be emphasized that, by design, the study yielded findings that are correlations, not cause-effect outcomes.

Happy cows are likely to have happy handlers. In spite of the commercial that says happy cows live in California, how their caretakers feel and treat their cows are more important. It is probably also the case that healthy animals make their caretakers feel better too.

The health of farm animals and the condition of farm buildings, machinery and fences may be indicators of the stress level of the persons who work on the farm. A veterinarian friend mentioned to me that the somatic cell count in milk samples from dairy cows and the body condition scores of beef cattle often reflect how stressed their owners are.

It helps if supervisors promote regular communication with their workers and demonstrate leadership in maintaining a be-

haviorally healthy working environment. Regularly scheduled meetings of the owners, managers and the farm workers helps the employees to feel their perceptions are valued.

Some supervisors reward valuable suggestions of employees with bonuses. Another beneficial management practice is to make sure all employees, including the owners, have sufficient time to sleep, recreate, exercise, and associate with family and friends. These are investments in employees that improve production and safety.

Fatigue is a common problem of farm workers. We accumulate sleep debt whenever we obtain less than our bodies need. Most persons require about eight hours of sleep daily but the normal range varies from six to ten hours.

If we accumulate ten hours of sleep debt, we behave similarly to when we have .08 percent alcohol in our blood, which is the legal minimum for inebriation in most states and provinces. Ten hours of sleep debt slows our reaction time, reduces the accuracy of motor movements and memory, makes us more emotionally impulsive and compromises judgment. In short, insufficient sleep increases the risk of injuries.

When we are tired we are more likely to incur injuries when working with animals. Livestock can detect when "we aren't our usual selves." The annual reports by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, entitled Injuries among Farm Workers in the United States, routinely indicate animals are the leading cause of nonfatal farming-related injuries.

It is important that farmers who work with livestock recognize healthy working conditions and good behavioral health of the workers increase productivity.

Dr. Rosmann is a Harlan, Iowa psychologist who raised crops and livestock for many years. Contact him at: www.agbehavioral-health.com.

SPONSORED BY LEWIS AND CLARK BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Governor: Make Safety A Priority This Holiday

PIERRE — Gov. Dennis Daugaard is asking South Dakotans to make safety a priority as they travel during the Thanksgiving period and upcoming holiday season.

"Thanksgiving is a wonderful time for family members to gather, enjoy each other's company and share the blessings of the holiday," the Governor said.

"It's also imperative for each of us to keep safety in mind as we travel to those happy get-togethers."

Traffic is heavier than normal during holiday periods, presenting drivers with numerous distractions, Gov. Daugaard said.

"Motorists should carefully obey posted speed limits, wear seatbelts on every trip, and al-

ways designate a sober driver. Those are simple, life-saving steps."

Weather this time of year can change rapidly. The Governor advises motorists to carry winter survival kits, tell friends or family about travel plans and check safetravelusa.com prior to leaving for holiday gatherings.

South Dakota recorded more

than 200 highway crashes, with one death and more than 30 injuries, in each of the past two Thanksgiving holiday reporting periods.

The national Thanksgiving Day holiday fatality reporting period runs from 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 21, through 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 25.

20 Years of Bliss

Nov 21, 1982 - Nov 21, 2012



Happy Anniversary
Kerry!
Love Toby

