FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Why should our family choose Hoffmann Hospice?
A. Hoffmann Hospice is the only local non-profit hospice choice in Kern County and the Antelope Valley that cares for pediatric patients. It is operated directly by founders Tom and Beth Hoffmann who work daily with the staff at all branches to develop and improve the highest quality patient care and community resources. Our extensively trained pediatrics team is led by Pediatric Medical Director Dr. Sudhir Patel to ensure the best possible care for the children and adolescents in our program.

Q. Who is eligible for the Starlight Pediatric Program?
A. The Starlight Pediatric Program is for children and adolescents from birth to 20 years of age who have a life-limiting medical condition or illness. Many of our pediatric patients are not expected to reach adulthood and may be in the program for many years. In many cases, families may continue to seek curative treatment (Concurrent Care) or may decide to solely begin comfort and symptom management. The Starlight Pediatric Program cares for children whose illnesses include, but are not limited to:
• Heart diseases
• Lung diseases
• Neurological disorders
• Genetic and metabolic diseases
• Neuromuscular disease
• Cancers and tumors

Q. When is it time for hospice care?
A. It is never too soon to learn about the hospice care options available for your child and family. When your child has a life-limiting illness and your goal is to provide comfort, symptom management and enhanced quality of life, then it may be the right time to call Hoffmann Hospice. Anyone can refer a child and their family to Hoffmann Hospice, including family members, friends or physicians. Hoffmann Hospice works closely with specialists, primary care physicians and children’s hospitals to ensure every child and their family receives the best possible care.

Q. How will Hoffmann Hospice care for my child and family?
A. In addition to your personal nurse caring for your child on a weekly basis, Hoffmann Hospice’s pediatric nurses are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The services provided are located on the inside of this brochure and also include:
• Touch Therapy (massage), Pet Therapy, Music and Art
• Celebrations, including birthdays and special patient wishes
• Education and resources to help care for a child at home
• Buddy Brigade support services for siblings in the home

Q. Can my child continue to see their primary care physician?
A. Yes. Your child may continue to see their primary physician or they may transition completely to our care. In most cases parents have been comfortable transitioning completely to our care.

Q. How is hospice care paid for?
A. Hospice care is covered by most insurance plans including private insurance and Medi-Cal. As a non-profit hospice, Hoffmann Hospice will accept eligible patients regardless of their ability to pay.

Q. Why should our family choose Hoffmann Hospice?
A. Hoffmann Hospice is the only local non-profit hospice choice in Kern County and the Antelope Valley that cares for pediatric patients. To celebrate the sanctity of life, provide compassionate end-of-life care and comfort the grieving.

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THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

When facing the serious illness of a child, parents will go to any length in an effort to help their child. But even then, sometimes the miracles of modern medicine are not enough. When that time comes, there truly is no place like home.

Hoffmann Hospice understands how difficult it is for parents to make the hospice decision for their child. Many parents feel as though they are somehow “giving up” by choosing hospice care, but that isn’t true at all. Hospice is merely a shifting of focus – to helping your child live as full and pain free a life as possible.

We understand that this is a difficult decision, but Hoffmann Hospice has been helping families care for their children since 1995. We are here, and ready to help your family.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Caring for a child with a serious illness may seem like more than any family could handle. With hospice, you are not alone. The interdisciplinary team of doctors, nurses, social workers, clergy and volunteers at Hoffmann Hospice are here to provide the coordinated care and support you need. Our nurses receive comprehensive training from the End of Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) in the areas of pediatric assessment, pain treatment for children, medications, grieving and more. Our goal is to prepare you to assume the role of primary caregiver and to include your family and your child in all decisions regarding care.

PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATE MEDICAL DIRECTOR DR. SUDHIR PATEL

Dr. Sudhir Patel has over 23 years experience as a Pediatrician; many of those years practicing pediatric intensive care. Dr. Patel is currently the Director of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at both Kern Medical Center and San Joaquin Community Hospital in Bakersfield, CA. Patel joined Hoffmann Hospice as the Medical Director for pediatric patients because he recognized the great need in the community for pediatric palliative care. It is his desire to make a child’s transition home easier for families by providing patients and their families quality end-of-life care right here in their communities through Hoffmann Hospice.

YOUR SPECIALIZED PEDIATRIC TEAM

At Hoffmann Hospice, we believe you are your child’s best caregiver. But in the case of a serious illness, you need help. Our Starlight Pediatric Program – a team of professionals and volunteers with experience in pediatrics and a variety of other specialties – was developed to give you that help. Our Pediatric Medical Director and team, with the input from the patient, family and your child’s specialist will develop a personalized plan of care and support that is continually reviewed and adapted to meet your child’s changing needs. The Starlight Pediatric Program puts your child and family at the center of this team.

SKYLAR FRANK

Skylar Frank is one of several hundred adolescents in California with Cerebral Palsy who are also deaf and blind. Her family is convinced that bringing her home with the support of Hoffmann Hospice is the reason her condition began to improve.

On 7-24-13 she also graduated from Hoffmann Hospice care and is continuing her education.

When four year old Paulina Lopez was diagnosed with cancer in May, 2008, doctors told her parents there was nothing more they could do. Ten months after enrolling in hospice care she was discharged with an extended prognosis and today Paulina’s cancer is in remission.

At first it was so scary, but then Paulina’s nurse came for her first visit and we knew we would be taken care of.

Paulina with Hoffmann Nurse 2010

Paulina in 2008

• Physician
• Registered Nurse
• LVN
• Certified Hospice Aide
• Chaplain
• Social Worker
• Trained Volunteers

STARLIGHT PEDIATRIC PROGRAM SERVICES

• Pain and symptom control
• Care for patients and their families
• Physician services
• Social services
• Spiritual care
• Bereavement services

• Specialized medical equipment and medications
• 24-hour access to on-call hospice nurses
• Sibling support through the Buddy Brigade

• Trained Volunteers