

# *Annual Report*

## 2024



**Uplifted**

— CARE —

REDEFINING HOSPICE CARE



## A Message from our Leaders,



Founded in 1982 as the **area's only not-for-profit hospice**, UpliftedCare has been deeply rooted in our community, adhering to our mission and dedicated to providing compassionate physical, emotional, spiritual, and social support to terminally ill individuals and their families.

The landscape of healthcare is constantly changing, and we are incredibly proud of the way we continue to navigate these changes, all while keeping the **mission** of UpliftedCare in the forefront with every patient, family and community interaction.

In our world today, it is no secret that we struggle to find common ground with those around us, but even in the face of adversity, there are two shared experiences that truly **unite** us all. We were all born and we will all, one day, die.

Keeping this in mind, we set out on a mission in 2024 to **Redefine Hospice Care**...to communicate the mission of UpliftedCare in a way that engaged our community, educated about the benefits of the services we provide and empowered everyone to be in control of their unique wishes and needs.

Launching in June, our Redefining Hospice Care campaign engaged our community by challenging the misconceptions of hospice and palliative care to help uncover the true value this care can bring to families struggling with serious illness. We helped educate that in many cases, earlier access to hospice care can actually help patients **live longer** – meaning more time to craft precious memories with those they love. Those patients who accessed our care sooner were also able to experience the full benefit of the holistic care we provide – helping increase their overall quality of life. We also helped empower our community to be more in control of their healthcare decisions, better equipping them with information and questions to ask when handling the stress that comes with navigating serious illness.

*"An adaptable company is one that captures more than its fair share of new opportunities. It's always redefining its 'core business' in ways that open up new avenues for growth."*

-Gary Hamel

Internally, we Redefined Hospice Care with our team, ensuring we are all experts in having difficult conversations with families during some of the most trying times of their lives. The decision to choose hospice or palliative care is not a transactional decision. It is a deeply personal, highly emotional decision with an inevitable result of losing someone we love – a result no one truly wants. We engaged our team, provided education to enhance their skills of leading with compassion and empathy during those conversations and empowered them to take great pride in the work we do and feel confident in the way they communicate the benefits.

Whether through our palliative and hospice care programs or our dedicated grief support services, we are honored to have the privilege of **Uplifting** our patients, families and clients for over 40 years. The continued support of our communities and our mission of Redefining Hospice Care has allowed us to enhance the valuable services we provide, and we are proud to detail the information of the lives we've touched in the UpliftedCare 2024 Annual Report.

In Sincere Gratitude,

Fawn Hendershott, RN, BSN, MBA  
UpliftedCare Executive Director

Scott Piggush  
SA Piggush Business & Retirement Planning  
President - UpliftedCare Board of Directors

## 2024 Board of Directors

### Officers:

**Scott Piggush**

*President*

**Dianne Schaafsma**

*Vice-President*

**Brenda Leiser**

*Secretary*

**Cathy Boicken**

*Treasurer*

**Dawn Willbarger**

*Past President*

### Board Members:

**Robert de Oliveira**

**Kalisha Hill, MD**

**Mark Hodge**

**Bev Lemenager**

**Stonewall McCuiston, Jr., MD**

**Mary Nehls, DNP, MSN, RN**

**Meredith Purcell**

**Eric Peterson**

**Abraham Thomas, MD**

**Doug Zimmerman**

## 2024 Executive Leadership

**Fawn Hendershott**

*Executive Director*

**Farhan Shams, MD**

*Medical Director*

**Vicki Schultz**

*Director of Clinical Services*

**Paige Billings**

*Director of Social Services*

**Yolanda Davis**

*Director of Compliance*

**Karen Vulich**

*Director of Finance*

**Becky Eartly**

*Director of Human Resources*

**Katie Canada**

*Director of Community  
Relations & Development*

## Who We Are

Since 1982, UpliftedCare, originally founded as Hospice of Kankakee Valley, has been the area's only not-for-profit community-supported hospice.

We provide excellence in hospice and palliative care through traditional programs and services, as well as complementary therapies including music therapy, massage therapy, respiratory therapy and pet programs.

Originally organized as a volunteer-only hospice, we now have over 80 paid staff members and nearly 75 volunteers.



## Our Mission

The Mission of UpliftedCare, founded as Hospice of Kankakee Valley, is to provide compassionate physical, emotional, spiritual and social support to individuals living with terminal illness and their families throughout our service area. We strive to provide comprehensive palliative comfort care services, regardless of ability to pay, in a manner that maintains the dignity and independence of the person and family.

## Where We Serve

Hospice and palliative care services are provided wherever the patient calls home. This includes private homes, assisted living facilities, long-term care facilities, etc. UpliftedCare currently is contracted to provide mutual care for patients in over 20 area care facilities.

UpliftedCare is licensed to provide care in six counties throughout Illinois.

### **Counties We Serve:**

**Ford**

**Grundy**

**Iroquois**

**Livingston**

**Kankakee**

**Will**



# Our Care

For over 40 years, UpliftedCare has had the honor and privilege of caring for thousands of patients in our communities. In 2024, we cared for a total of **1,285** patients, providing **45,236** visits during some of the most trying and tender moments of their lives.

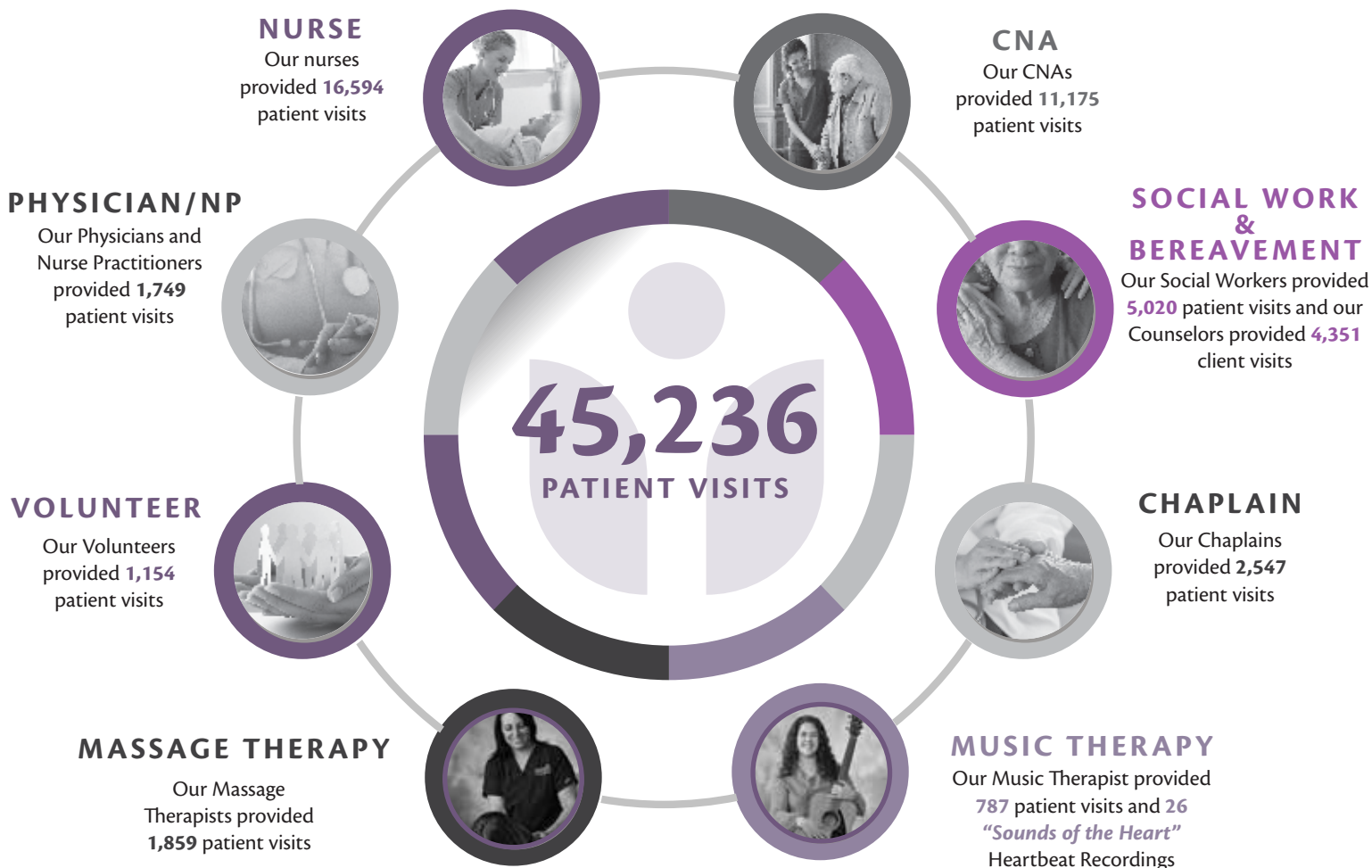
Our dedicated Palliative Care team of nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers and chaplains cared for **410** patients, offering expertise, guidance and support as they navigated their serious illness.

Our hospice team, including our medical director, nurses, CNAs, social workers, chaplains, volunteers, music therapists, massage therapists, respiratory therapists and bereavement counselors, provided expert medical, social and spiritual support for **875** patients and their families during their final stages of life.

# 1,285 PATIENTS

# 410 PALLIATIVE PATIENTS

# 875 HOSPICE PATIENTS



# Our Grief Center

**1,724**  
CLIENTS

**690**  
NEW HOSPICE CLIENTS

**131**  
NEW COMMUNITY CLIENTS

**1,056**  
GRIEF SUPPORT SESSIONS

**1,093**  
GRIEF OUTREACH CALLS

**12**  
GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

**668**  
SUPPORT GROUPS ATTENDEES

**11**  
GRIEF WORKSHOPS

**72**  
WORKSHOP ATTENDEES

**4**  
GRIEF SUPPORT EVENTS

Founded in 2020, The UpliftedCare Community Grief Center has provided support to thousands of clients through both our hospice and community bereavement programs.

Thanks to the gracious support of our community over the years, we are honored to provide these essential services to anyone in our community and throughout the State of Illinois, completely free of charge.

In addition to our individual counseling, family counseling, grief support groups and grief workshops, the UpliftedCare Community Grief Center also hosts larger grief support events throughout the year including our Candlelight Memorial Service in the Spring and Fall, Tree of Life & Healing Garden Donor Event in June and our Annual Good Grief Family Camp in July.

The support received through donations, memorials, and other partnerships allows us to continue to enhance our grief support offerings each year, creating a lasting impact in the overall well-being of those in our communities.



## *Candlelight Memorial*

Nearly 300 attendees honored their loved ones at our Candlelight Memorial Services held in April and October each year. This event is open to UpliftedCare patient families and the community.

## *Tree of Life & Healing Garden*

This donor event is held the first Sunday in June each year for those who have memorialized their loved one with a leaf on our Tree of Life or paver in our Healing Garden to see their memorial and hear the impact their donation has had on the community.



## *Good Grief Family Camp*

Our annual Grief Camp welcomed nearly 40 children and their families for a full day of support and fun. UpliftedCare staff connected with campers, allowing them a safe space to grieve and begin their healing journey.

Community partnerships from local individuals and organizations allowed us to continue enhancing this incredibly valuable free community service.

# Lives We've Touched

*"What I've experienced...if it will help someone else, I'm willing to share my story."  
- Carol Thompson*



Carol assumed a caregiving role when her husband Alan received a devastating Alzheimer's diagnosis and began to decline. Leaning on local resources, Carol was referred to UpliftedCare for support and elected hospice care for Alan five months before his death.



The UpliftedCare team provided expert medical care for Alan and also incredible support for Carol along the way.

Struggling to grasp the reality of their current situation, the social worker, Deric, recommended Carol connect with a grief counselor to process the feelings she was experiencing prior to Alan's death. She connected with Diane at the UpliftedCare Community Grief Center and began her anticipatory grief journey.

When Alan's time on earth came to an end, Carol knew the journey would be hard, but also knew she had the support in place to walk alongside her.

Because of her experience with UpliftedCare and the powerful impact it had on her, Carol wanted desperately to give back and honor Alan by spreading the word to those who may be unfamiliar with the true benefits of hospice care and grief support.



Carol was the keynote speaker at our annual Tree of Life & Healing Garden Ceremony in June of 2024, participated in a live radio interview sharing her story with WGFA Radio and she made the courageous choice to have her story taped with the hope of reaching more people that would benefit from the care and support offered through UpliftedCare. We hope you'll take a moment to watch her full testimonial video below.

*Carol pictured (R) with Katie Canada and James D. Jones  
after their featured interview with WGFA Radio - 94.1*

We're also honored to announce that Carol is one of the newest members of the dedicated group of UpliftedCare volunteers, donating her time and offering support to patients and families during some of the most trying moments of their lives.

**View Carol's full story and the other powerful family stories from those who have been so deeply touched by the services provided through UpliftedCare.**



# Where We're Going

In 2024, we launched the “*Redefining Hospice Care*” campaign. This fresh new look challenged misconceptions and encouraged people to think differently about hospice care and the value it can bring to you or your loved one.

To continue the momentum, in 2025 we've launched the partnering “*Timing Matters*” campaign to help highlight the benefits patients and families experience when they call UpliftedCare sooner - helping them increase quality of life and craft more memories with those they love.

Discover how UpliftedCare is  
Redefining Hospice Care.



# TIMING MATTERS

**More Time, More Memories:  
Our Care Helps Families Stay Together Longer.**

Multiple studies have proven that earlier access to hospice care can actually help patients *live longer* – meaning more time crafting precious memories with those they love.



**Uplifted**  
— CARE —

**REDEFINING  
HOSPICE  
CARE**

WE CHALLENGE CURRENT  
MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND  
ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO  
THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT  
HOSPICE CARE.

**Learn more at  
UpliftedCare.org**

# Financial Reports

Hospice & Palliative care services are covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance plans. Over 95% of our revenue is received from these programs. Please see the consolidated reports of our revenue, expenses, primary diagnosis and patient length of stay below.

## Revenue:

### Reimbursement

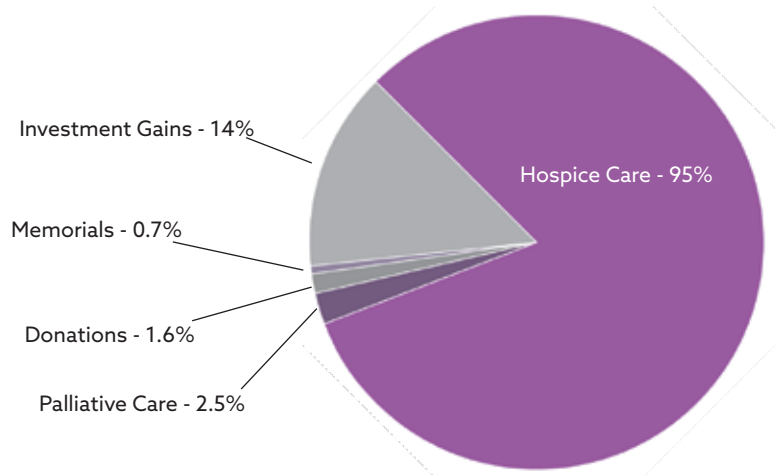
- Hospice Care - \$8,525,000
- Palliative Care - \$223,000

### Contributions

- Donations - \$145,000
- Memorials - \$67,000

Investment Gains - \$1,462,000

**Total Revenue - \$10,422,000**



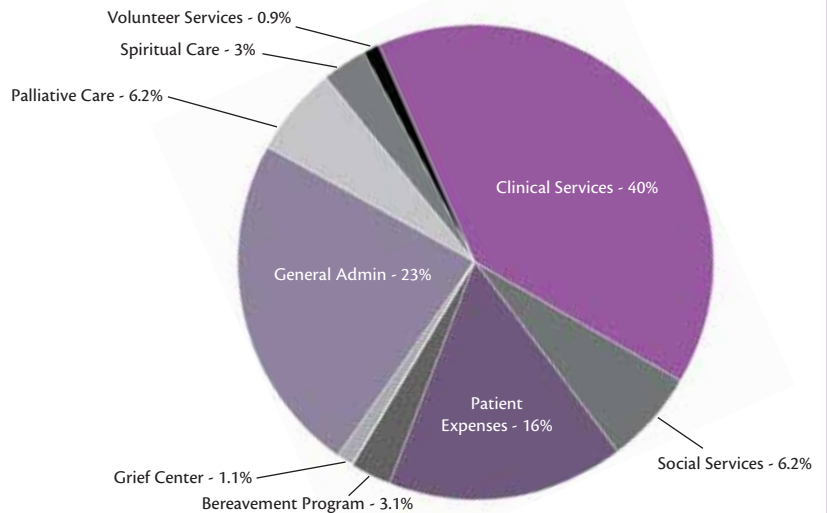
## Expenses:

### Program Services

- Hospice Care - \$6,866,000
- Palliative Care - \$611,000
- Community Grief Center - \$112,000

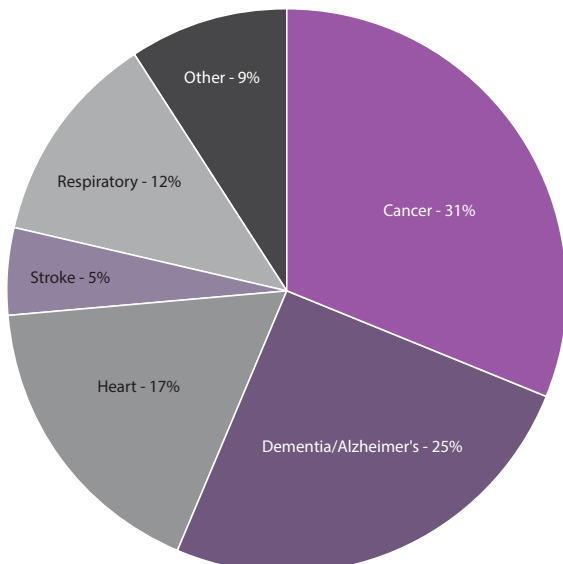
Administrative - \$2,327,000

**Total Expenses - \$9,916,000**

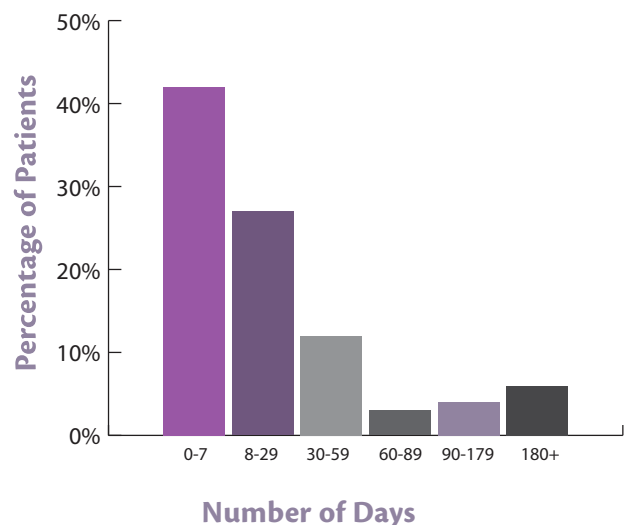


*\*These results are unaudited*

## Patient Diagnosis:



## Patient Length of Stay:



# Your Support Matters

*If you would like a listing of your loved one's memorial donations, please contact UpliftedCare at 815.939.4141, and information will be mailed to you.*

Families are never denied care because of inability to pay. While Medicare, Medicaid, and many private insurance plans provide benefits to pay for hospice care, the cost of some patients' care often exceeds their reimbursement, and still other patients do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid and do not have insurance coverage. Many of our community programs are largely uncompensated and depend on the generosity of our donors.

Community support through generous donations are vital to the function of our organization, and allows us the opportunity to continue to serve. Programs like Sounds of the Heart, our complementary therapies, grief support and the addition of our Community Grief Center offer services to the entire community, completely free of charge. We are blessed to be able to offer these valuable services thanks to the generous donations we've received throughout the years.

## Legacy Giving

*Legacy giving is about making a difference through a planned charitable gift. Our Legacy supporters are diverse, yet they have one common interest – to ensure that quality, compassionate hospice care will be available for future generations.*

*When you make a Legacy Gift to UpliftedCare, you may recognize significant charitable tax deductions and other benefits. More importantly, you will know you are helping to bring dignity and comfort to individuals and families when compassionate care is needed most.*

**To see the impact your donation can have or view our Annual Giving Campaign, please visit our website at [UpliftedCare.org](http://UpliftedCare.org) or by using the QR code below:**



If you'd like to donate to UpliftedCare, we are grateful for support in any amount. You can donate online by visiting [UpliftedCare.org](http://UpliftedCare.org) or checks may be mailed to:  
**UpliftedCare - 482 Main St. NW, Bourbonnais, IL 60914**

## Easy Ways to Leave Your Legacy

There are many ways to make a Legacy Gift. Here are a few simple and inexpensive options that can make a significant difference.

- **Bequests:** Through a Bequest, you can make a provision for UpliftedCare in your Will or Living Trust for a specific dollar amount, specific asset or a percentage of your estate.
- **Retirement Accounts:** UpliftedCare can be designated as a primary or secondary beneficiary of all or part of your retirement account (IRA, 401(k), or 403(b) account). The forms are easy to change and the gifts are completely exempt from inheritance or income taxes, and they avoid probate.
- **Life Insurance Policies & Annuities:** A simple change in beneficiary can direct your life insurance policy or other annuities to UpliftedCare. These gifts are also exempt from inheritance tax, income tax or probate.
- **"In Trust" Accounts:** Any bank account or stock account in your name can be set up "In trust for UpliftedCare." You retain exclusive control of the account during your lifetime. Upon your death, the account passes to Hospice without probate or tax.
- **Gifts that generate income for life:** You may choose to create a charitable gift annuity and receive fixed payments for life in return for your contribution.