



Registered Charity No: 517724

## **The Hospice Philosophy**

There is That of God in every person,

To that we respond with the desire to serve the weakest and most helpless of our fellows -those who are dying.

Because of that, we should accord freedom and profound dignity to every man and woman.

Therefore, we wish to enable our patients to preside over their own dying. We wish to obey their own priorities and serve their needs. Their freedom and dignity can be impaired by severe physical distress. We, therefore, seek to relieve pain and suffering - in the physical, mental, social and spiritual worlds -using all the skills, techniques, kindness and wisdom available to us.

Good care of a dying person means making his body a comfortable enough place to live in so that he is free, if he wishes, to prepare for death, mentally and spiritually. It will mean enabling a patient to live as fully as possible up until he dies, and the family to go on living afterwards. To these ends the hospice team will offer practical services of all kinds. Once trust is established, then all the team will also be giving time to the patient and his care-givers for listening, conversing, sharing confidences and reassuring fears.

We must look to the health of the whole family. Since their suffering will continue after the death of the patient, a bereavement care service must be provided.

As in any other branch of medical care, the attention of our team is focused upon Health. Our special concern, however, is that the patient shall have a healthy death. That is, one which is peaceful and comfortable, not one which takes as long as possible. Measures which merely delay death, but do not offer the prospect of better or maintained good health, will therefore not usually have any part in hospice care. On the other hand, having due regard to the precepts of the wise and holy teachers of all the major religions of mankind, we are never prepared to hasten any patient's death. We are convinced that if our care is good enough, none of our patients will be driven to demand euthanasia.

We do not consider it commensurate with freedom and dignity to lie to a patient. This, therefore, we will never do, even if asked by his family or physician. Conversations will be led by the patient. Such information about his condition as he specifically requests, will be given by any member of the professional team: doctors, chaplains, nurses, social workers or therapists.

It is our duty to teach our skills and attitudes to all members of the health care professions who will listen, and to the public. For this reason hospices often maintain study centres.

Some people, usually for social rather than medical reasons, cannot die at home, and a few do not wish to. This is why hospice in-patient buildings are needed.

Accepting the limitations of human weakness, it is our aim to provide those we serve with perfect service, calling on all practical and spiritual resources available to us.