



# Profiles OF CARING

The care you need, the comfort you deserve.

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## Omega Health Care

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Find out more about how Omega and Sunflower Health Care can make life better for your patients. Call the office closest to you or visit our website at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com).



VOLUME 4

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NUMBER 2



Medical Director Dr. Deborah Manning (center) and her Omega Care Team meet weekly to review patients' needs and are on call 24/7.

## These physicians practice their commitment to hospice every day

*Omega and Sunflower Medical Directors Jeff Lawhead, William McKay and Deborah Manning say hospice care provides a wider range of services than you could get anywhere else, with nurses, chaplains, social workers and others on call 24/7. It's a service they hope doctors and patients will learn about—and use more fully.*

Jeff Lawhead, M.D., practices in Johnson, Wyandotte and Leavenworth Counties in Kansas; Bill McKay, M.D., in Springfield, Mo.; and Deborah Manning, M.D., in eastern Jackson County, Mo.

What they share is their commitment to hospice care—so much so that they all serve as Omega or Sunflower medical directors in their respective areas.

Their affinity for hospice care emanates from personal experience. Dr. Lawhead, who joined Sunflower as its first medical director in 2007, said his mother was cared for by hospice. Later he was the primary caregiver for his father when he needed hospice care. Through those situations, he saw “how valuable hospice was in all modalities, from nursing assistance to services for the families.”

*(continued, page 2)*

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### **We're pleased to be selected by Springfield's Best**

Omega Health Care just received a new honor. Our Springfield office been accepted as a member of an elite group, “Springfield's Best.”

Springfield's Best, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that encourages the public to conduct business with reputable, locally owned or managed companies that operate with honesty, integrity and ethical behavior. It also encourages consumers to support the community by keeping their dollars at home in Springfield.

As members of Springfield's Best, we pledge to conduct our business in ways that integrate honesty, integrity and ethical behavior in all our endeavors and toward every individual we interact with.

It's how we've done business since we opened our doors in 2007, and we're proud to be part of a group that affirms that philosophy.

For more information about how your patients can experience “the best” in hospice care, call me at **1-877-275-7086**.

Russ Rogers, President

## Medical Directors, continued...

Likewise, Dr. McKay's parents utilized hospice. For him, the information and reassurance hospice staff provided was crucial.

"A good nurse and chaplain are indispensable," said McKay. "They really help you understand what is happening and relieve the guilt that you feel. They helped me realize that I had done all I could do."

Dr. Manning's involvement began after recommending Omega Health Care for several of her patients. She said her patients "fell in love with everyone on their staff and were so enamored with their services." Based on patient and family feedback, and how pleased she was with the way Omega kept her informed about each of her patients, when they asked her to join them as a medical director in 2009, she said, "Yes."

All three agree that the wide range of services hospice provides to patients and families makes it unique—and infinitely valuable. It's a sentiment that is shared by Dr. Mary (Jeannie) East, Omega's medical director in its Cartersville, Ga., office.

Those services comprise a "complete package" which includes health care direction, nursing care, assistance with medications, bereavement support, home health assistance, chaplaincy, social care and volunteers who visit patients and provide respite for family members.

The medical directors provide a key element in that package, serving as the interface between primary care doctors and Omega/Sunflower staff. They are available 24/7 to directly or indirectly help patients and nurses who have problems or questions. They also attend Omega/Sunflower interdisciplinary care plan (IDP) meetings during which individual patient care plans

are discussed.

"I supervise the care of patients to make sure they are a good fit for hospice and that they receive appropriate care," Lawhead explained. "In that regard, I function as the primary care physician's advocate, making sure the care he or she has ordered is being delivered. As I monitor conditions, I might make suggestions about adjunct care or additional approaches that could be helpful. I've had very good reception by all the doctors I've had the chance to work with."

Patients and their families tell Omega and Sunflower that such approaches improve the quality of their lives immeasurably. The range of available services, including a 24/7, one-on-one nurse, allows them to stay in their homes and focus on personal relationships rather than on medical and financial issues.

And, though "quality of life" may be difficult to quantify, Lawhead said there are also clearly measurable benefits, the most notable of which is that hospice has been shown to extend the life of its patients—an average of 29 days. For some patients, it improves their condition so much that they "graduate" from hospice care, he added.

In addition to closer monitoring, another way hospice can improve patient status is through more economical medications. Manning cited the situation of several patients who couldn't afford their prescriptions. When she discovered their conditions—and medications—were covered by Medicare, under the hospice provision, they started with the program and began to improve.

These are the kinds of rewards the Sunflower/Omega medical directors experience from working with hospice. They also cherish the comments of family members who tell them hospice "made a difficult situation easier," or who say, "I don't know what we

*"My patients fell in love with everyone on their staff and were so enamored with their services that I started recommending Omega first."*

*— Deborah Manning, M.D., Omega Health Care Medical Director, Jackson County, Mo.*

## Omega and Sunflower now provide hospice care in 85 counties.

Although our hospice service is only about four years old, Omega and Sunflower Health Care now serve 85 counties in Missouri, Kansas and Georgia.

Omega corporate offices are located in Lee's Summit, Mo., which serves as a center for the Greater Kansas City area 14 Missouri counties where we provide hospice care. On the Kansas side of the state line, hospice services are offered in 20 counties through offices in Lansing, Stilwell and our recently opened Topeka location.

In Southwest Missouri, we serve 29 counties in the Springfield and Joplin areas. And, we provide care in 22 counties in the Atlanta, Ga., area, from our Cartersville office.

We're proud of our continued success and the ability it gives us to provide a wide range of services to those

who need hospice care. We want to be able to provide our special brand of care and comfort to as many patients as possible and hope to continue to flourish in the future.

If you have a patient in one of these areas that could benefit from hospice care, we hope you'll give us the opportunity to serve you. Call us at **1-877-275-7086**.

would have done without you guys."

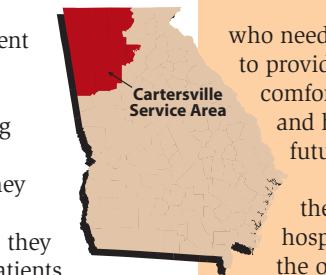
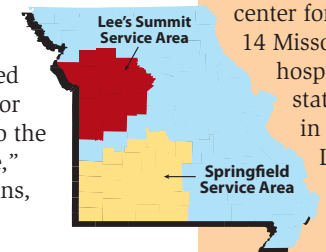
They hope other physicians will increasingly realize these—and other—benefits of hospice for their patients.

"Hospice is not about giving up on seriously ill patients. It plays an important role in improving their lives by providing more coordinated care without overtreating or making patients come into the doctor's office all the time," McKay said. "For physicians, it relieves some of the burden and extends the care he or she can provide."

"It gives patients and family someone to call anytime, day or night, without feeling they are a bother," Manning added.

Many doctors don't know the extent and content of what hospice provides, Lawhead offered.

"Hospice isn't replacing physician care; it is an adjunct to the doctor. If they understood the range of services hospice provides, they would want to get their patients on it sooner."



## What our Clients are saying...

*Dear Omega Health Care*

*What a blessing to have such caring, loving and dedicated people caring for us in a time of need.*

*We thank God for each and every one of you and are so grateful and thankful for all you do for all who need you.*

*May God bless each and every one of you now and always.*

*The Carey Family*

Read more about what our clients are saying at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com)

