An Introduction to Hospice Advocacy

If you provide end-of-life care, you are probably very passionate about the impact of your work on patients and families. It’s also likely that you are among those Americans who believe they are fulfilling a personal mission, as well as practicing a vocation.

Like any other job, though, your day-to-day responsibilities may sometimes feel routine. The checklist of duties surrounding a patient’s admission to hospice and the decisions made within those first few days of care, become increasingly similar. To many Americans, however, the details of your daily routine would be extraordinary.

For the vast majority of Americans — the teacher, the judge, the grocery store clerk, and certainly the Member of Congress — the process of dying and supporting those experiencing the nearness of death can be intimidating, uncomfortable, even scary. Many Americans push the reality of death to the backs of their minds.

Responsibilities you consider average, others would find remarkable. It is for this reason your stories of care ought to be shared. Local, state and federal elected representatives need to hear about the patients from whom you’ve learned, the families you can’t forget, or the inexplicable feeling when you know you’ve made someone’s life better.

Providers talk a great deal about compassionate end-of-life care; however, we’ve reached a time in our industry when compassion alone is not enough. Providers must share the value and benefits of your unique vocation by saying to members of Congress, members of the State legislatures, and members of your local city council, “Let me tell you about our program, and what we provide our community. Let me share with you how you can help provide for and protect our patients and their families. Let me share with you my experience.”

NHPCO provides all the tools you need to join other Hospice Advocates across the country in effectively advocating for our industry — today and every day. These tools are designed to facilitate advocacy planning across all levels of government, from your city mayor or supervisor to your United States Senator.

If you have any questions about grassroots advocacy don’t hesitate to contact the NHPCO Public Policy Team at info@nhpcohan.org.