

CENTER *for* ETHICS *in* HEALTH CARE

3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Road UHN-86, Portland, OR 97230 · (503) 494-4466 · fax: (503) 494-1260 · www.ohsu.edu/ethics · ethics@ohsu.edu

November 2005



A major focus of the Center's work in the last decade has been improving the care of Oregonians at the end of life. We are seeing results—Oregon has become the national leader in use of home hospice, has the lowest rate of in-hospital death in the United States, and leads the nation in completion of advance care plans and POLST forms by the terminally ill.

Still, symptom management at the end of life remains challenging. Half the families of terminally ill Oregonians still report that their loved ones suffered moderate to severe pain or distress in their final week of life. Learning to care for terminally ill patients with the most challenging symptoms requires intensive, hands-on training by teachers with special training and certification in this area.

By formalizing our relationship with the VA Interdisciplinary Fellowship in Palliative Care, we plan to offer training experiences for physicians, nurses, social workers, and chaplains. We plan to add extensive practical bedside teaching and mentoring experiences for students, residents, fellows, and practicing health care professionals statewide who wish to have a “shadowing” experience.

The inpatient palliative care consultation service at OHSU now consults on the care of more than 500 patients a year. The medical director of this program, **Paul Bascom, MD**, a native of Eugene and son of **Dr. and Mrs. John Bascom**, is board certified in both internal medicine and palliative care. The hospital supports the direct care of patients, but the teaching itself takes time and requires additional support.

We see an opportunity to meet an important statewide need for this advanced hands-on training. Several committed individuals have made gifts in honor of **Miles Edwards, MD**. Throughout his distinguished career at OHSU in pulmonary and critical care medicine, he has had an abiding interest in compassionate patient care. When he learned of gifts to the Center being made in his name, he suggested that the funds be directed toward palliative care education at OHSU. We are grateful for a contribution of any amount and thank you for all of your support.

Addressing the need to train the next generation of leaders and clinicians in palliative medicine in Oregon is within our grasp. We hope you will join us by supporting this program to educate professionals and meet the needs of those with the greatest suffering at the end of life.

Wishing you all the best this holiday season,

Susan W. Tolle, MD
Cornelia Hayes Stevens Chair
Director, Center for Ethics in Health Care

