



**LOS ALAMOS**  
Home Care ♦ Hospice

**VISITING**  
P.O. Box 692

**NURSE SERVICE INC.**  
Los Alamos NM 87544

**(505)662-2525**

- Most Home Health Care is covered by private insurance, employers' insurance, Medicare and Medicaid.
- 40 percent of Medicare dollars are used to cover care for people in the last month of life
  - LAVNS is federally certified, State licensed and approved by most private insurance companies.
- LAVNS belongs to the New Mexico Association of Home Health Agencies, The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, and is a participant with the United Way of Northern New Mexico.
- LAVNS has been awarded five HomeCare Elite Awards for Home Health Care Excellence
- Sarah Rochester was named *2011 Executive Director of the Year* by the Texas, New Mexico Hospice Association

### **What is Hospice Care**

Hospice is a special type of care that focuses on providing comfort, relieving pain, and offering support to individuals during the last months of life. The patient, the physician, and loved ones choose hospice care, which means they are no longer seeking a cure but rather a comfortable and dignified end-of-life journey.

People can receive hospice services at home, in nursing homes, in a hospital or in a dedicated hospice house; however,

Northern New Mexico lacks a facility that is dedicated to compassionate end-of-life care. Currently, hospice patients, caregivers and family who desire the privacy, dignity



and comfort of 24-hour hospice care must make the two-hour drive to Albuquerque. This scenario can create hardship for patients and their families during an emotionally difficult time.

LAVNS has been providing in-home hospice visits to patients who are terminally ill for twenty years. Caring professionals visit their patients and caregivers several times a week to make sure they have the medical and emotional support they need. But LAVNS leaders have long dreamed of doing more. They dreamed of building a hospice house where caregivers can access short-term relief (respite care) or patients can spend their last days in comfort and dignity, surrounded by loved ones, in an environment that is specially designed and staffed for the terminally ill.



### **Hospice House Benefits**

LAVNS has long recognized the personal and financial benefits that an inpatient hospice house in Los Alamos would bring to Northern New Mexico:

- Hospice care keeps health care costs down – the cost of in-home AND inpatient hospice care is 1/3 – 1/10 the cost of hospital or nursing home care.
- Hospice care is less stressful on families – a hospice house helps both patients and their loved ones cope with the myriad of health and emotional challenges associated with dying.
- A hospice house keeps loved ones together – families no longer have to drive to Albuquerque to receive dedicated hospice care in a private, dignified setting.

Hospice patients and their loved ones have accepted that all life must end. They realize that often the best way to confront death is in a quiet environment free of the invasive treatments delivered in hospitals and nursing homes. A hospice house environment focuses on palliative care, keeping the patients and their loved ones comfortable and well-cared-for as life comes to an end. It fosters poignant goodbyes and welcomes life's final journey with dignity.

### **A New Dream Unfolds**

Recently, LAVNS purchased a 5-acre property on Canyon Road in Los Alamos overlooking Pueblo Canyon. This begins the fulfillment of a dream LAVNS has been working toward for ten years: finding a spacious, centrally located, forested and peaceful piece of land to build a hospice house and relocate its administrative offices. The Canyon Road property is perfect.

LAVNS envisions a tranquil setting with six private rooms/baths specially designed and staffed to provide end-of-life care. The facility will be available to hospice patients who are unable to remain at home. It will be available to families and caregivers who need respite care (a short-term stay), patients who choose not to die at home, and patients or caregivers who can no longer manage on their own.

Los Alamos is home to numerous members of the greatest generation: men and women who dedicated their lives to developing and maintaining our nation's strength through science, ingenuity, and innovation. This is a special group of people. They helped save our country in battles fought thousands of miles away, while creating a community in Los Alamos dedicated to education, health, spirituality, culture and recreation. In short, they have dedicated their lives to service. This new hospice home will honor them. LAVNS's \$3 million capital campaign will ensure that they, and the generations that follow, have the full complement of hospice services available, from in-home to inpatient, and that caring staff and loving family are with them during life's final journey.

