

## Summer 2014

### *Inside this Issue*

A Shift in Support p.2

Save the Date  
Good Shepherd Institute Dinner  
2014 p.3

Volunteer Spotlight p.3

Good Shepherd  
Institute p.4

Krug Zaboty p.5

Marathon Re-Cap p.5

They Said What?! p.8

## Our Work Is An Honor

Last week, Alice sent us a note her husband had written a couple of days before he died. She sent it to us because in the note he was thanking the staff of Good Shepherd for the care we gave to him and the support we gave to his wife. The note, however, was much less an expression of appreciation for our care and much more an expression of appreciation for the loving wife with whom he had shared his life and who had stood by him and cared for him until the very end.

This small note of thanks is the perfect example of what is so gratifying about the work we do at Good Shepherd. We are given the opportunity to enter the lives of people at what is often the most difficult and most poignant time in their lives. Because our staff bears witness to patients and their families in the most vulnerable times, we see them at their strongest. Frequently what we observe is a kind of love that endures all until there is nothing left but that love. And often that love is so strong that it reflects upon us. Families thank us, and praise us for our compassionate care. But it is not solely our presence that allows for these experiences. What we do is important but we are merely supports to a foundation that was there long before we ever arrived on the scene. We facilitate people's

ability to live the final stage of life as organically as they had lived prior years. Our successes, however, are not really our own – but those of the patients and families for whom we care.

We cannot do our job of facilitating these meaningful end-of-life experiences, however, if we are not called in to help; and we often cannot do as good a job if we are not called until the final days or hours of life. Over the years, we have found that clear, calm patterns of communication between patients, family members and physicians are essential to creating the understanding needed to identify, plan for and optimize the final stage of life. Good Shepherd Institute provides just this type of leadership and education to raise awareness and promote community dialogue around end-of-life issues.

In November, we launched Good Shepherd Institute with an inaugural dinner featuring speaker Ellen Goodman from *The Conversation Project*. Today, the programs of Good Shepherd Institute are well underway, helping people to navigate the many changes and challenges in the current and ever-changing healthcare environment.

*(continued on p. 2)*



**Good Shepherd  
Community Care**  
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[gscommunitycare.org](http://gscommunitycare.org)

*“Thank you Good Shepherd for sponsoring last night’s event. Ellen Goodman and your entire program was truly inspiring. We are all feeling like change agents this morning.”*

Jennie Wright  
Manager, iCMP  
Community Care  
Management Program  
Newton-Wellesley Hospital

The success of Good Shepherd Institute will not solely be measured by the number of programs we offer, the amount of books in our resource library, the quantity of internships we fill or the number of new physicians we help train. The success of Good Shepherd Institute is dependent upon you – the people who take advantage of our offerings and who benefit from

our services. The success of Good Shepherd Institute is in the stories we hear from patients and families who report a comfortable, peaceful and meaningful end-of-life experience as a result of having made their wishes known and allowing us to care for them - to uphold, honor and see them through.

Timothy Boon  
President and CEO

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## A Shift in Support

**Thank you** to all of you who made the 2013 Good Shepherd Memorial Walk a wonderful and successful day for our organization. Thanks to you we raised close to \$30,000 to support the care we provide to our patients and families. We appreciate your support and participation so very much and especially enjoy the opportunity to see so many friends of the organization come together.

We want to let you know that this year (2014) we will not be holding our Memorial Walk. Instead we will be focusing our attention on the Good Shepherd Institute Annual Dinner, featuring speaker Dr. Atul Gawande (see page 3).

We still need your support in order to make this incredible educational opportunity affordable for all members of our community who would like to attend. We are asking those of you who supported the Walk in the past to gather the same support from family and friends that you have gathered for the Walk to help sponsor this community event.

For information on sponsorship opportunities or ticket sales, please contact Jennifer Sax, [jsax@gsccommunitycare.org](mailto:jsax@gsccommunitycare.org), or call 617-969-6130.



## Good Shepherd Institute

*A community resource for education, training and research about end-of-life issues*

### Save the Date for this year's Good Shepherd Institute Dinner

#### Featuring Atul Gawande, MD

*Distinguished surgeon, teacher and bestselling author, Dr. Gawande has been named "one of the world's hundred most influential thinkers" by Foreign Policy and TIME.*

Thursday, October 30, 2014, 6:00 pm  
The Westin Hotel, Waltham

Attendees will receive a free, signed copy of Dr. Gawande's new book, *Being Mortal*.

This is a community education event, not a fundraising event. Ticket sales do not cover the costs of the event.

If you would like information on sponsorship opportunities, tickets or would like to make a donation towards the Good Shepherd Institute, please contact Jennifer Sax, [jsax@gsccommunitycare.org](mailto:jsax@gsccommunitycare.org), or call 617-969-6130.

Generously sponsored by  
**Pelham Community Pharmacy**

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### Volunteer Spotlight

Hospice patient Jake lived alone and at the end of his life he developed a keen interest in food. Jake's hospice volunteer, Kay, played an integral role in supporting his newfound hobby and would spend hours with him talking about food and meal-planning. Kay called Jake from Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, The Soup Kitchen and even CVS to entice him with the new and interesting things she had found that he might like to try. Jake read newspaper articles about new restaurants and things that he hadn't tasted before. Kay would deliver whatever Jake wanted to try and visit with him to taste the food together. For Jake, Kay not only offered her comforting presence, but also shared with him the passion for food that filled his final days.

Good Shepherd volunteers are a vital part of our programs and bring a unique and crucial perspective to our care.

For information on becoming a volunteer, contact Christina Coffey, [ccoffey@gsccommunitycare.org](mailto:ccoffey@gsccommunitycare.org), or call 617-969-6130.



*Atul Gawande's bold visions for improving performance and safety in health-care have made him one of the most sought-after speakers in medicine.*

*His three books, *Complications*, *Better*, and *The Checklist Manifesto*, have all been highly praised inside and outside the medical community.*

*He is a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship winner, a New Yorker columnist, an author — but, most of all, a physician, with a practitioner's grasp of the everyday challenges of healthcare delivery.*

*“Why it’s important to talk about end of life: Because it’s a liberation; because it gives you peace to talk about it openly and not to be fearful, and to do it more the way you want it to be. You have the freedom to decide for yourself.”*

Lica Brill  
Family Member

## Community Education Events

This spring, Good Shepherd Institute began hosting a monthly group to help individuals and family members discuss and navigate the many challenges of planning and decision-making around the final phase of life.

Conversations Before the Crisis is open to the community and designed to encourage dialogue and problem-solving related to end-of-life decision making. We hope these facilitated group discussions can assist members of our community who are either currently struggling with end-of-life decisions or who anticipate those decisions in the future.

Groups take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month and are running now through August in our building at 90 Wells Avenue in Newton.

Upcoming dates are as follows:

Tuesday, July 1<sup>st</sup> from 6-7:30pm

Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 6-7:30pm

While it is a ‘drop-in’ group, we ask that people RSVP if possible so that we can plan accordingly for attendance and light refreshments.

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## Resource Library

The Resource Library at Good Shepherd Community Care provides a space where people from the community can find comfort and solace through the words and voices of others, and gain access to important resources about dying, death, grief and loss and a variety of other topics.

We are committed to helping prepare people for, and supporting them through, significant transitions in their lives.

Our lending library is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

## Krug Zaboty Enlists New Advisory Board

In an effort to better understand some of the unique cultural and linguistic barriers that can prevent Russians and other émigrés from the former Soviet Union from understanding their medical conditions and options and from getting the most out of their final months, Good Shepherd recently enlisted an Advisory Board to the *круг заботы* program.

Board members met to learn about some of the issues related to outreach and care for Russian-speaking individuals towards the end of life and discussed ways to improve outreach and care for this population.

The Krug Zaboty Advisory Board will continue to meet annually in the spring.

### Advisory Board Members

Tim Boon  
Good Shepherd President & CEO

Joyce Gallagher  
Good Shepherd Director of Nursing

Renee Goldstein Fixler  
Good Shepherd Dir. of Counseling Services

Natalia Khalaydovsky  
Krug Zaboty Nurse Case Manager

Dr. Olga Kozyreva

Genya Krane  
Director, Brighton House Russian Program

Dr. Zinaida Levina

Artur Micolisin  
Krug Zaboty Program Director

Dr. Ida Minevich

Natasha Mitlina  
Krug Zaboty Social Worker

Leo Newhouse, LICSW  
Director, Multicultural Care Solutions

Jennifer Sax  
Good Shepherd Director of Communications

Lena Zeliger  
Russian Program Director, Royal Rehab & Nursing Center of Braintree



*“Our work with these [Russian-speaking] patients and families can often be the difference between a chaotic and painful end-of-life experience and a comfortable and peaceful one.”*

Artur Micolisin,  
Russian Program Director

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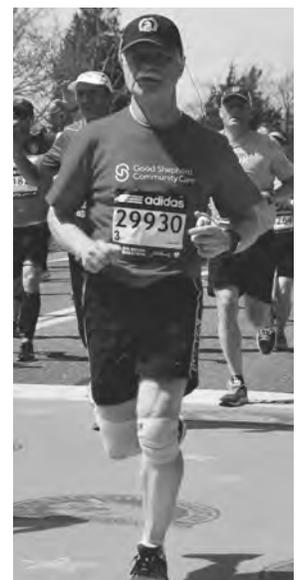
## Good Shepherd Runs in Boston Marathon

Good Shepherd Community Care is pleased to announce that – thanks to the city of Newton – for the second year in a row we were afforded a charity bib number to participate in the 2014 Boston Marathon.

Longtime Board Member, Stephen Campbell ran from Hopkinton to Boylston Street to raise funds to help bridge the gap between insurance reimbursement and the cost of the skilled compassionate care provided by our programs.

On behalf of Stephen and all of us at Good Shepherd, thank you to all who supported our campaign - with donations, with enthusiasm, and by cheering for Stephen on April 21<sup>st</sup>. We raised more than \$5,000!

For more information on how you can make your tax-deductible donation to Good Shepherd Community Care today, please call 617-969-6130 or visit [www.gscommunitycare.org](http://www.gscommunitycare.org).



*“Intense and persistent sadness, preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased or conditions surrounding the death, feeling alone or detached from others, and confusion about one’s role in life or identity are some of many symptoms that indicate that one could benefit from some form of assistance.”*

## The Trajectory of Grief

Though grief and bereavement are conditions common to the human experience, they are also profoundly individual experiences. The loss of a loved one brings on an array of feelings that may be expected or may totally bewilder those sitting with their grief. A question that is often asked of hospice workers following a patient’s death is, “Is this feeling or behavior normal?” The then often asked follow-up question is, “How long will this last?” Though we acknowledge that everyone’s grief experience is unique to him or her, there is much concern for what is considered a normal trajectory for these feelings. When the experience of loss deviates from the anticipated path, how do we recognize it and what can we do?

Though not a psychiatric disorder, bereavement is a condition that has been given much attention by the health and mental health communities. Acknowledged by the American Psychiatric Association in the latest update to the Diagnosis and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM-V), bereavement has been flagged as a condition for further study, and “Persistent Complex Bereavement Disorder” may appear in future changes to the DSM. Other changes to the DSM include considerations for differential diagnosis when grief responses may mimic symptoms of a major depressive episode or acute stress response. Intense and persistent sadness, preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased or conditions surrounding the death, feeling alone or detached from others, and confusion about one’s role in life or identity are some of many symptoms that indicate that one could benefit from some form of assistance.

Help with grief can come in many ways, and from many different sources. Good Shepherd Community Care provides grief resources through the hosting of support groups, individual phone calls or meetings with social workers or our bereavement coordinator, and even by providing referrals to therapists when indicated. We also collaborate with other organizations to locate assistance in the wider community. Recognizing that additional help may be needed can be immensely beneficial to the overall development of a healthy grieving process. Though the timeframe for healing after loss is very individualized, many are able to feel at peace with the loss and grieve healthily by the end of a year. To grieve healthily does not mean that we “get over” the loss, but rather that the loss is acknowledged and accepted into our new understanding of life without our loved one. We are then able to re-engage with other people and in activities; however, we will always remember and carry with us those whom have died.

Rob Atwood, LICSW  
Social Worker

be doing. We all know that “life goes on.” Nonetheless, to someone who is grieving, it may feel like time and life have stopped. People who are grieving describe feeling like they are in a daze, dream, or fog. Their lives have been irrevocably changed, so to imagine it going on can be utterly surreal. It may be hard for a bereaved person to believe that the unbearable pain of grief will ever stop.

Since each of us is unique and so is every grief process, “I know how you feel,” is another potentially dangerous comment that rarely seems to make someone feel better. Asking people if they are “over it yet” can make them feel invalidated in their grief, and in fact pushing someone to grieve faster than his or her own pace may only exacerbate already painful feelings.

So what do you say? Sometimes simply acknowledging one’s feelings of grief and mirroring back to him or her, “I can see that you are experiencing a great deal of pain”, can be effective. Offering this type of genuine concern and your presence alone can be comforting to a loved one in need. Often sitting with someone who is grieving in silence can be extremely validating. At other times, listening while the mourner talks and tells stories about his or her memories can be tremendously healing. After all, being there to listen, to be present and patient, and to offer unconditional love is the most generous gift we can offer to someone who is grieving.

Jaye Casellini, MS, LSW  
Bereavement Coordinator

*“For some moments in life there are no words.”*

David Seltzer,  
Screenwriter, Producer  
and Director

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## Community Gives Back to Good Shepherd

Good Shepherd Community Care would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Julia from Pretty Paws pet grooming services.

Due to her declining health, Good Shepherd Community Hospice patient, Rosita Prado had not been able to take her beloved pooch, Hachi, to a groomer in several months. Julia recently donated her mobile grooming services, giving Hachi a much needed and appreciated ‘spa day’.

To arrange for mobile services for your pet, contact Julia at 978-684-2202.



## Return Service Requested

*"We live in a society that uses phrases, clichés, and euphemisms to talk about death because most people do not know what to say or do in order to be helpful when someone has died."*

### **They said what?! A word about platitudes**

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Managing the profound feelings of grief can be more than difficult to handle. Yet, many of us have heard people make comments or perhaps are guilty ourselves of giving some well-meaning advice that leaves our grief stricken family member, friend or loved one standing in disbelief, utterly shocked and feeling like, "they said what?"

We live in a society that uses phrases, clichés, and euphemisms to talk about death because most people do not know what to say or do in order to be helpful when someone has died. In our helplessness, we grasp at the first thing we can think of, desperate to offer something, anything, to release ourselves from feeling as vulnerable as the mourner. We frequently don't realize the negative effects these upsetting phrases have for someone that is grieving. While saying something like, "There are people who are worse off than you," may objectively be true, this comparison or measuring of one's pain against another's cannot diminish the intensity of feeling for the individual who is mourning. Stating, "It was their time," may seem appropriate to describe the death of someone who has lived a long and full life. Yet, for the mourner, there is no convenient time to grieve a loved one and these words can feel less than comforting. Life is precious and regardless of when a life ends, there is grief.