



# 2023

ANNUAL REPORT  
*of Giving*

THE SPIRIT OF  
*hope*





## The Spirit of Hope guides everything we do

Nearly a decade ago, the HopeHealth Board made the decision to add hope to the name of our organization – to become HopeHealth. Including hope in our name is a constant reminder of our commitment to provide our patients with the highest level of home care, palliative and hospice care. It serves as our promise to support their wishes and goals for their healthcare journey.

The spirit of hope is alive in our multidisciplinary, highly trained, engaged, and experienced workforce. Physicians and clinicians who take the time to get to know each of their patients and help support their goals. Hospice aides like Patrick Wallace, CNA, CHPNA, the first recipient of the newly created Spirit of Hope Award, who brings joy and peace to his patients in the Hulitar Hospice Center. The hospice teams that work out of HopeHealth's office in Wakefield, RI, who have built a trusted relationship with the South County and island

communities they serve. And the Advanced Illness Care team that provides highly coordinated palliative care to seriously ill patients in their homes.

Our hope is fueled by the generosity of the HopeHealth community. More than 220 hospice volunteers, like Richard Donelly, have turned their personal experiences into ways to help others on their journey. And thousands of donors, like HopeHealth Board member Deborah Cornwall, who help provide the financial foundation for our programs.

Not long ago, we invited our employees to share how they had come to work for HopeHealth. Their profound responses astonished us. You'll find them sprinkled throughout the Annual Report. We're so pleased to share their "spirit of hope" with you.

As we look towards our 50th anniversary in 2026, our longstanding gift to the community is a relationship that is built on compassion, trust and the Spirit of Hope.

*Thank you for being part of it.*

Diana Franchitto, FACHE  
President & CEO



Vincent Mor, PhD  
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ON THE COVER: Patrick Wallace, CNA, CHPNA, a hospice aide in the HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center, is the recipient of the first Spirit of Hope Award for his expertise and compassion.

## "Saint Patrick" and The Spirit of Hope

Both of Andrea Hazian's parents were cared for by the expert team in the HopeHealth Hulitar Center. The experience was profound: "It was like somebody was holding your hand the entire time," she said. But she remembered one hospice aide in particular: Patrick Wallace, CNA, CHPNA. When she saw a post on Facebook about HopeHealth's Spirit of Hope Award, she couldn't help commenting: "Patrick made my Mom LAUGH! He is such a special man. Thank you for all you do and for the loving care you gave to my Mom."

Patrick Wallace (pictured below), is the first ever recipient of the Spirit of Hope Award, which was created in 2023 to recognize HopeHealth's skilled hospice aides. Wallace was voted by his peers to receive the honor. "He is genuine in his delivery of care. He is a listening ear for families as they tell the story of their loved one. He is a very special human. In fact, he is known among our staff as "Saint Patrick," said Breda Hines, RN, CHPN, Manager of the Hulitar Hospice Center. "Need I say more!"

Wallace was recognized at An Evening of Hope & Gratitude, HopeHealth's gala fundraiser, on June 8, 2023, along with



**"He is a listening ear for families as they tell the story of their loved one. He is a very special human. In fact, he is known among our staff as 'Saint Patrick.'"**

U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse and Drs. Terrie Fox Wetle and Richard Besdine (pictured below). In his remarks, Wallace recognized his colleagues, several of whom were present to cheer him on. "I want you all to know that we as a team love what we do and deeply care about all the patients and families that come through the doors of HopeHealth," said Wallace.

The work of hospice aides is sometimes overlooked but is critical to patient—and family—care. "Patrick brings with him, every day, his vast knowledge of hospice, his gentle spirituality, and his boundless energy," said Virginia Magnan, RN, CHPN, Director, Hulitar Hospice Center. "Somehow, in the darkest moments, Patrick will manage to elicit laughter from patients and family members.... He's one in a million."

"My Mom and Patrick had an ongoing joke," said Hazian. "I don't know what it was, but I knew she was surrounded by loving care. He made her last days better. He made our days better."



*Breda Hines, RN, CHPN  
Manager of the Hulitar Hospice Center*

# One Enchanted Evening

On June 8, 2023, HopeHealth's gala fundraiser, An Evening of Hope & Gratitude, raised \$307,000 in support of HopeHealth's mission of providing compassionate care, support, and education to hospice and palliative care patients and their families. Three awards were presented at the event: **the Human Dignity Award** to Richard Besdine, MD, and Terrie Fox Wetle, PhD; **the Distinguished Advocate Award** to U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse; and **the Spirit of Hope Award** to Patrick Wallace, CNA, CHPNA.



HopeHealth President & CEO Diana Franchitto and Patrick Wallace, CNA, CHPNA, celebrate at An Evening of Hope & Gratitude. Wallace is the first-ever recipient of the award, in a vote by HopeHealth employees.

**“Patrick brings with him, every day, his vast knowledge of hospice, his gentle spirituality, and his boundless energy... He’s one in a million.”**

*Virginia Magnan, RN, CHPN,  
Director, Hulitar Hospice Center*



Event Co-Chairs Cathy Lund, DVM, and Peter Karczmar, MD, helped raise over \$300,000 to benefit hospice patients and their families.



Rapt attention from Margaret Wool, PhD, and HopeHealth's Board Chair, Vince Mor, PhD.



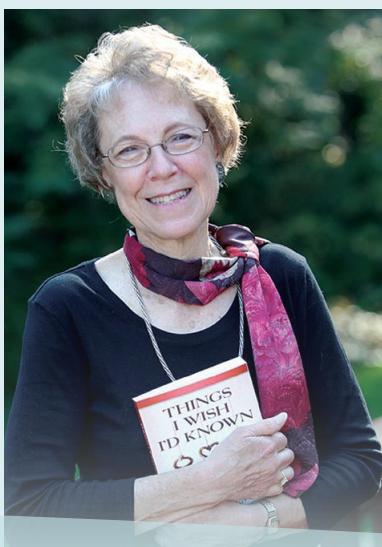
Patrick Wallace's acceptance speech elicits a standing ovation from the nearly 300 guests at An Evening of Hope & Gratitude.

## Meaningful Giving through a QCD

An expert on health care leadership and governance and the author of a book on cancer caregivers, Deborah J. Cornwall brings a unique perspective to her service on HopeHealth's Board of Directors. "Everyone on the HopeHealth team is so committed to the organization, our patients, and to each other—they inspire the Board," she said. "They see multiple dimensions of every patient and every caregiver and they focus on doing whatever they can to enrich people's lives for as much time as they have left."

Cornwall and her husband recently learned about an opportunity to support HopeHealth more generously than they had thought possible—and to save on taxes, too. "Our 401K had done well and our required minimum distribution was larger than we had expected – but so were the tax implications," Cornwall said. Their financial planner suggested a Qualified Charitable Distribution: a way to make a tax-free gift from their retirement plan directly to their favorite charities. "We identified two organizations we wanted to support in a major way – of course, one was HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care," said Cornwall. "We are living on a fixed income, so this was our opportunity to do that and still eat!"

Even more meaningful was that the Cornwalls could designate their support to a specific HopeHealth program: Advanced Illness Care. "Being able to direct our support has really strengthened my connection to HopeHealth. It is an incredible feeling to know that we are part of caring for HopeHealth's patients and everyone impacted by their illnesses," said Cornwall.



*HopeHealth Board member Deborah J. Cornwall and her husband, Barry, found that a Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) was a great way to make a substantial gift and lower their taxes at the same time.*

## The Champlin Foundation Makes a Difference in South County

The white clapboard colonial at Number 143 on Wakefield, RI's busy Main Street has been the face of HopeHealth in South County since 2008. Housing 55 employees on two hospice teams who serve more than 225 patients each day in their homes and in long-term care facilities, this is a busy place. Hospice interdisciplinary teams meet here, nurses and aides pop in to get assignments and pick up supplies, social workers and grief counselors meet with families, and patient care managers juggle everything to ensure patients get the very best care.

Over the years, this heavy use wore down the building's once elegant façade. The interior was shabby, with rooms that were subdivided into office spaces in the 1970s. Heating and electrical systems were outdated. "HopeHealth needed to make an investment in this building," said Jennifer Rogers, RN, CHPN, Patient Care Manager for the South Home Team, "so that it would continue to support the important work of our hospice teams – and be a professional and welcoming environment for our staff."



*Veronica Paolantonio, BSN, RN, MBA, and Jennifer Rogers, RN, CHPN, in front of the newly renovated offices in Wakefield, RI. From this building, their hospice teams care for patients throughout southern Rhode Island, from Warwick to Westerly—even to Block Island.*

The Champlin Foundation stepped in with a generous grant of \$133,500 to support interior and exterior renovations to the building. Rogers participated in the site visit with representatives from the Foundation and was impressed by their longtime commitment to HopeHealth's patients—and their interest in the behind-the-scenes work the building represents. "The Champlin Foundation folks could appreciate that the building is part of the care that we offer our families. My staff's ability to work efficiently in clean, safe, professional surroundings is all part of the hope that we give our families. The renovations have made such a difference!"

## A New Role: Hospice Volunteer

A veteran actor with numerous film, television and theatre credits, Richard Donelly found that becoming a hospice volunteer caused a bit of stage fright, at first.

"The first time I walked into a patient's room [at the Hulitar Hospice Center], I was nervous," said Donelly. "I didn't want to say the wrong thing or make them feel like they *had* to talk with me."

But people are willing to talk with Donelly and share a range of emotions from humor to sorrow. One patient offered that he was curious to know where he would go after he died. "We joked that if he could, he should find a way to let me know, because I was curious too," laughed Donelly.

Another afternoon, a patient's mother asked Donelly to talk over a cup of coffee. "She said that losing her son was the worst thing she had ever experienced," said Donelly. "I am humbled that she saw me as someone she could open up to."

Donelly has plenty of life experience to bring to this new role: both parents were supported by a hospice in Florida. As he sees it, volunteering is another way to connect. "I've been an actor my entire life, but it's in my nature to want to help people," he said. When dear friend Stefani Hulitar (the Hulitar Hospice Center was named for her father) suggested he might consider volunteering, it seemed like a natural fit.



HopeHealth volunteer Richard Donelly leads an acting workshop at Camp BraveHeart, HopeHealth's summer camp program for children ages 4 to 17 who have lost a loved one.

As one of HopeHealth's 223 volunteers, Donelly's part in patient care is vital. "I know I am helping them in that moment," he said. "And it is the moment-to-moment that gets our families through this experience of loss and grief."

## Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Program Offers Caregiver Support



Since 2001, HopeHealth Community VNA's Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Program has provided respite care, caregiver support groups, education programs, and resources to caregivers of people with dementia in the Attleboro, MA region. This free program, supported by philanthropic gifts and grants, offers caregivers an opportunity to refresh and recharge themselves and gain support and advice from Program Coordinator Robin Walsh, LSW.

In the last year, with support from the Fred M. Roddy Foundation, Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation, Sophia Romero Trust, Bluestone Bank Charitable Foundation and other community donors, the program has grown exponentially, offering increased respite hours at an adult day center or in the home, gathering caregivers in eight different support groups—and seeing a 37% increase in patients enrolled.

Ed Ellis was diagnosed with vascular dementia four years ago and his wife, Peg, has cared for him at home. "I'm not sure which has been more helpful," said Peg, "the time at an adult daycare center, HopeHealth's educational series, or my weekly support group." Best of all, Peg can call on Walsh or her support group facilitators, Jamie and Mark, with a question whenever she needs help. "They understand the frustration and grieving that is part of our lives now—Jamie and Mark have lived through it—and it means so much to me to know that I can get support when I need it."

**To learn more about the Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Program in the greater Attleboro area, call (401) 741-4803 or email us at [Information@HopeHealthCo.org](mailto:Information@HopeHealthCo.org).**

## Setting the Standard for Advanced Illness Care

Patients with serious illnesses like cancer, heart failure or COPD often face a bewildering and fragmented medical system. The new Advanced Illness Care program at HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care brings palliative nurse practitioners into the home to coordinate patients' care needs with their goals of care, help manage symptoms, and support families in making informed healthcare decisions. "Our goal," said Program Manager, Kaitlin Collins, NP, ACHPN, "is that our patients stay out of the hospital and safe and comfortable in their own homes for as long as possible."



*Kaitlin Collins, NP, ACHPN, Manager of Nurse Practitioners, and Maria Appenfeller, RN, CHPN, Transitions Manager, discuss precise care plans for each patient in the Advanced Illness Care program.*

HopeHealth launched Advanced Illness Care in March 2023 with just 32 patients. Today, there are more than 200 patients supported by the team. "Patients learn about us through their current provider or a HopeHealth palliative team member at the hospital," said Maria Appenfeller, RN, CHPN, Advanced Illness Care Transitions Manager. "So, we start working with our patients immediately from a place of trust."

That trusted reputation means that foundations and donors are willing to invest in the intensive program. The Edward R. and Virginia M. Routhier Foundation, the Rhode Island Foundation and several individual donors have already supported Advanced Illness Care. "I hope it will be there for me when my time comes," said donor Barbara Ruttenberg.

"HopeHealth has set the standard for palliative care for more than two decades," said Collins. "With Advanced Illness Care, we are giving our patients and their families the hope to live their best quality of life for as long as they can."

## It Never Rains on the HopeHealth Invitational!

All around the region on September 11, 2023, heavy rain and high winds foiled golfers' plans, but the 2023 HopeHealth Invitational went off without a hitch, raising an impressive \$125,000 for The Arthur S. Robbins Hope Fund. The Hope Fund provides financial assistance to hospice patients who are uninsured, safeguarding access to compassionate end-of-life care.

**Don't miss the 14th HopeHealth Invitational at the Rhode Island Country Club, September 9, 2024!**



*With the support of the Feldman Family Charitable Fund, HopeHealth's Chief Medical Officer, Edward W. Martin, MD (third from left), enjoyed a day of golf with Tom Acciardo, Susan Korber and John L. Reagan, MD, at the 2023 HopeHealth Invitational. To learn more about how you can sponsor Dr. Martin's Foursome or participate in the Invitational yourself, visit our website at [HopeHealthCo.org/2024Golf](http://HopeHealthCo.org/2024Golf).*

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*Includes donors whose cumulative giving was \$250 or more between October 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023.*

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**“My husband was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer at the age of 45; he died on HopeHealth’s service 18 years ago. Today, I am a Grief Counselor and absolutely love the opportunity to provide support and the space for people to begin their journey of healing.”**

*Marsha Ireland, Grief Counselor*

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Justin Millan, RN, CHPN  
Hospice Nurse

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*Michele Cerreta Gibbons (left), with Hulitar Hospice Center Manager, Breda Hines, RN, CHPN (right), found comfort in the warm atmosphere of the HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center during her husband's final days in December 2019. Each year since, she has donated the holiday florals that enhance the experience for families visiting a loved one at the holidays.*

# Stones of Remembrance

HopeHealth's Wall of Gratitude is a lasting and continually renewing memorial to loved ones who are gone—and a focal point in the HopeHealth Hulitar Center.

Ron Gaulin was one of the first donors to purchase a memorial stone for his wife, Joanne, who was a patient in the Hulitar Hospice Center. Gaulin and Christine Nevins-Herbert, MD, Hospice Medical Doctor—known as "Dr. Chrissy"—developed a bond during Joanne's stay in Hulitar Hospice Center, which he recognized with a stone on the Wall of Gratitude.



Christine Nevins-Herbert, MD, with donor Ron Gaulin.

Plaques purchased for the Wall of Gratitude remember a loved one and ensure that HopeHealth's services will be here for patients in the future. **For more information on remembering your loved one through the Wall of Gratitude, or to make a memorial gift, please contact the philanthropy department at (401) 415-4206 or visit [hopehealthco.org/giving](http://hopehealthco.org/giving).**

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*This HopeHealth hospice team (Hospice Aide Carol Brantley, CNA, and social workers Colleen Quinonez, LCSW, and Nealisce Morillo, LICSW) was invited by our patient's daughter to celebrate her 100th birthday with her! Her daughter told us: "I love HopeHealth. You have all made such a difference. I couldn't be doing this without all of you."*

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**"That vision that the patient and family are at the center of everything is not a figment, but a reality at HopeHealth. I have been honored, impressed, and beyond excited to work in an organization where everyone works to the best of their ability."**

*Rhonda Iacobucci, MS, RN, CHPN  
Informatics System Analyst*

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**"I have found my purpose, and I am so, SO grateful every day for the path and people that got me here."**

*Karina Santos, NP, ACHPN  
Palliative Care Practitioner*

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*The end of the day at Camp BraveHeart brings calm and camaraderie.*

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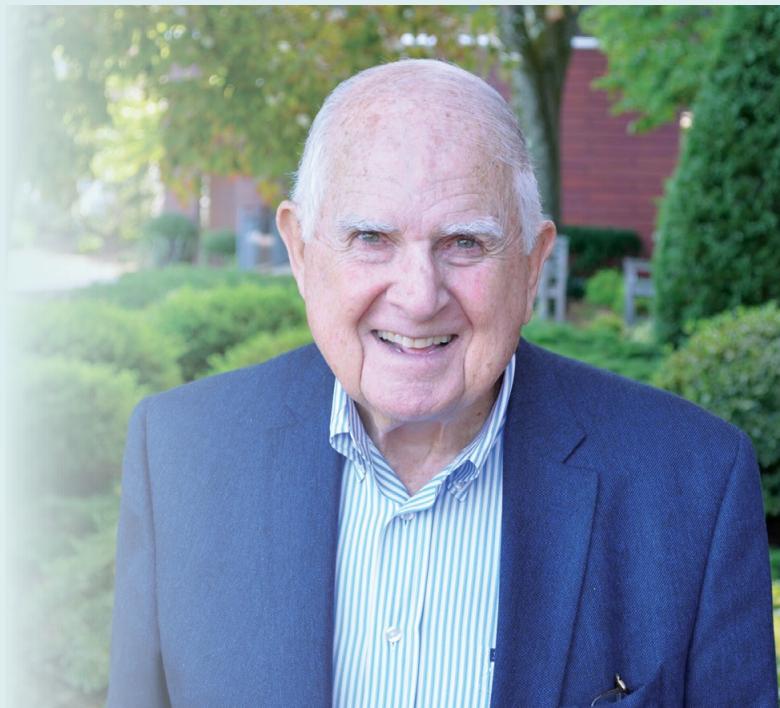
## Arthur Robbins' Legacy

Arthur Robbins, a person many think of as "Mr. Rhode Island," passed away on February 20, 2024. Arthur believed that our highest calling is to treat one another with dignity. From the moment he joined HopeHealth's board of directors in the mid-1970s, he fought to give patients at the end of life just that.

At the time, the world did not yet understand or appreciate hospice the way that Arthur did. This didn't intimidate him—it motivated him. He dreamed big. He set his sights on building Rhode Island's only freestanding inpatient hospice facility.

As a result of Arthur's advocacy and fundraising, the Hulitar Hospice Center exists today. Every day, patients and families tell us about the comfort, peace and dignity they find here, a place where they spend precious final moments together.

Arthur Robbins, HopeHealth's chair emeritus, made that possible. He is a reminder to all of us that one person can make a profound difference for many. In the work of hospice, we often remind patients and families that even when a person's life comes to an end, their legacy has just begun. Arthur's legacy lives on in all of us at HopeHealth, and the work we are privileged to do.



## Very Special Guests



Some special visitors toured the HopeHealth Hulitar Hospice Center this year. Left to right: Providence Mayor Brett Smiley (center) with members of his staff; second from left, Jennifer Lepre, HopeHealth Chief Human Resources Officer; second from right, Diana Franchitto, HopeHealth President & CEO; and, far right, Vice Chair of the HopeHealth Board of Directors, Mark A. Tracy. U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (center) on camera during a visit with staff in the Center. Mukesh Jain, MD, Dean of the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University (center) with HopeHealth's Chief Medical Officer Edward W. Martin, MD and Hospice Medical Doctor Jensy Stafford, MD.

# Sustaining Donors

The following donors help sustain HopeHealth's operations by making two or more gifts per year at an intentional frequency (monthly, quarterly, twice yearly). This thoughtful, sustaining support helps HopeHealth to provide excellence in home care, palliative care, hospice care and grief support each and every day.

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We thank the following donors who have made plans to leave a gift for HopeHealth through a will or estate plan.

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## Veterans Pinning Ceremonies



HopeHealth staff and volunteers lead pinning ceremonies where hospice patients who are veterans are recognized for their service to our country.



*A Weekend of Hope & Healing is an annual adult grief retreat offered by HopeHealth's Center for Hope & Healing that includes a variety of interactive workshops and hand-on activities designed to nurture the body, mind and spirit.*

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In 2023, the Flynn Palliative Nursing Fellowship graduated two nursing students, Olivia Clift and Abigail Caron. A partnership between HopeHealth, the University of Rhode Island College of Nursing and the Flynn Foundation, the fellowship offers an eight-week summer program in all aspects of hospice and palliative nursing. Left to right, Fred Flynn, Olivia Clift, HopeHealth President & CEO Diana Franchitto, HopeHealth Chief Clinical Officer Julie Conway, RN, JD.



Hospice volunteers create activity blankets for patients with dementia. The colorful blankets are embellished with buttons, beads, fabrics and fasteners to keep hands busy.

## HopeHealth Senior Leadership Team

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HopeHealth's 15 chaplains kicked off Spiritual Care Week in October with a luncheon and conversation with chaplains from around the community. Pictured: Meredith Sinel, LICSW, Manager of Social Work & Chaplains, and HopeHealth chaplain Jeffrey Thomas.



A creative fundraiser organized by Star Trek fan Robert Plante, far right, raised \$1,730 for HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care at Rhode Island Comic Con. Plante, a Rhode Island native who now lives in North Carolina, makes the trek to Rhode Island each year to raise funds in memory of his mother, Doris Normandin, who was cared for by our hospice services.

## Donors Share Their Thoughts

In a recent survey of HopeHealth's donors, "we learned some interesting information," said Suzanne Fortier, Chief Philanthropy Officer. "We were surprised and pleased to find that 50% of our donors said that they were motivated to give to HopeHealth because they know an employee. This suggests a very strong sense of connection to the organization," she continued. In fact, many respondents shared stories of care their loved ones received.

HopeHealth's donors tend to be slightly older than the average of all U.S. donors, which is age 65. Knowing this information helps HopeHealth communicate with our donors better. For example, about 15% of respondents told us they had included HopeHealth in their long-term plans. Many said they were interested in learning more about tax-advantaged giving. In future communications, you'll hear more on these topics. Or, if you'd like to learn more now, call the Philanthropy Office at (401) 425-4690 or visit our website at [legacy.hopehealthco.org](http://legacy.hopehealthco.org).



# 2023 Facts & Figures

## STATISTICS

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Hospice patients .....   | 5,406       |
| Palliative care patients .....                                   | 7,105       |
| Home care patients .....   | 4,380       |
| Pediatric hospice patients .....                                 | 31          |
| PediPal patients .....   | 180         |
| Grief support service hours .....                                | 13,211      |
| Camp BraveHeart participants .....                               | 109         |
| Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Program patients .....            | 64          |
| Community Education participants .....                           | 2,393       |
| Employees .....  | 584         |
| Volunteers .....   | 223         |
| Volunteer hours .....  | 18,164      |
| Donors .....   | 6,286       |
| Gifts .....  | 10,032      |
| Total philanthropic support .....                                | \$2,619,173 |
| Free care provided through the Arthur S. Robbins Hope Fund ..... | \$244,429   |

## Consolidated Financials for HopeHealth, HopeHealth Hospice & Palliative Care, HopeHealth Community VNA and HopeHealth Visiting Nurse\*

|                              |               |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| FY23 annual revenue .....    | \$92,504,068  |
| FY23 annual expenses .....   | \$96,043,220  |
| Income from operations ..... | (\$3,539,152) |

\*HopeHealth Visiting Nurse closed September 30, 2023.

## HopeHealth's Annual Report of Giving

From time to time, we share news and information with our donors by email. If you would like to receive electronic updates and help us reduce printing and postage costs, please contact us at [Giving@HopeHealthCo.org](mailto:Giving@HopeHealthCo.org).

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*Camp BraveHeart is a special place to make friends who share profound experiences. Because the experience of grief changes as children grow, many of our campers return each year and develop lasting bonds.*



HopeHealth is a nonprofit organization serving thousands of people each year in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Our caregivers support patients and their families through all stages of illness, providing hospice care, palliative care, home care, and dementia and Alzheimer's support services. For nearly 50 years, HopeHealth has provided high-quality care with the utmost skill, compassion and respect for our community.

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