

Tuesday, November 17, 2015



Trillium House Board of Directors, from left, Jackie Martin, Dr. Dan Mazzuchi, Bob Racia, Sue Kittl and Dr. Aaron Scholnik stand on the property slated for construction of the county's first hospice house at 1144 Northland Drive in Marquette. (Journal photo by Ryan Jarvi)

Trillium from 1A

daily needs, such as personal care assistance, meals and laundry services.

"One of the important things Trillium House is going to bring is we will have beds available for what's called respite care, and that's if somebody is at home and they've got a nice opportunity to be at home, but the caregivers just get worn out," Executive Director Pat Bray said.

Because caregivers work around the clock, Bray said they often have to put other parts of their lives on hold.

"For a number of days they can leave the patient with us and know that they're going to be cared for," Bray said. "A lot of it might be just to catch up on sleep or to catch up on other things that they've had to put aside to care for their loved one."

Trillium House's Board of Directors is composed of representatives from local hospice organizations, physicians and others with hospice care experience.

Board President Dr. Daniel Mazzuchi said at any one time 75 to 100 people could be receiving hospice care, and he estimated that 10 percent of those people could need a

place like Trillium House.

"This is not something for a tiny group of people," he said. "This is something for all of us. Hospice is a growing phenomenon. ... I've watched the population of hospice patients in the county grow almost double in the last 15 years."

According to a press release, more than 350 patients receive hospice care in Marquette County each year.

"In a community of our size with the amount of hospice residents that we serve, ... there is a definite need to add this to end of life care," board member Jackie Martin said. "I've seen it both personally and professionally where a hospice home has been needed in Marquette for quite some time."

Hospice houses are already operating in both Houghton and Sault Ste. Marie. Trillium House, modeled after Houghton's Omega House, will operate on a sliding fee scale based on a patient's ability to pay.

The facility is expected to cover at least half of its annual operating costs from these fees with the remainder covered through fundraising, according to

the release.

Bray said based on operations at the Omega House, which also has eight rooms, he expects Trillium House to employ 13 part- and full-time workers.

Board member Dr. Aaron Scholnik said hospice patients who may not have a 24-7 caregiver might be "consigned to a very un-home-like place to receive their hospice care, such as a nursing home."

"Nursing homes deliver an absolutely needed care, but for those that are not under active medical treatment other than to relieve their symptoms and to improve their quality of life, a home-like place is where they want to be," Scholnik said. "They don't want to be in a medicinal type of place, and we can supply that home-like atmosphere for them and supply a place where hospice professionals can do their best to make their last weeks, days high quality."

For more information or to make a tax-deductible gift, call 264-5026 or visit trilliumhospicehouse.org.

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