

# Best Practices in Culturally Sensitive End-of-Life Care

## Program Profile: Hospice of the Cherokee

### Cherokee Nation Home Health Services, Inc. –

#### Hospice of the Cherokee

**Caring for patients within a comforting, familiar setting in the presence of loved ones is only the beginning.**

- The Cherokee Nation Home Health Services, Inc., (CNHHS) is a tribally incorporated, non-profit agency that was contracted by Oklahoma to provide programming in 1996.
- CNHHS received their hospice care license in 2000 and is the only non-profit hospice that is locally owned and operated in the Tahlequah area.
- Many of the referrals the Hospice of the Cherokee receives come from the Cherokee Nation W.W. Hastings Hospital in Tahlequah.

#### Successes and Innovations

- The Hospice of the Cherokee uses community volunteers to help expand their staffing in order to provide more care to the community.
- CNHHS provides in-service staff training to help them stay abreast of best practices in hospice care.
- CNHHS staff meet once a week with the medical director to review hospice care cases.
- Staff provide service and care as they would for their own family members.

#### Incorporating Culture

- CNHHS works to carefully balance the cultural needs of their patients with the rules and regulations by which they are required to abide.
- The chaplain within Hospice of the Cherokee plays an important role as the cultural medium between the patient, the facility, and the spokesperson for the family's wishes.
- Relationship-building with community members is a point of pride for hospice staff.

**Operated by:** Cherokee Nation Home Health Services, Inc.

**Established:** 2000

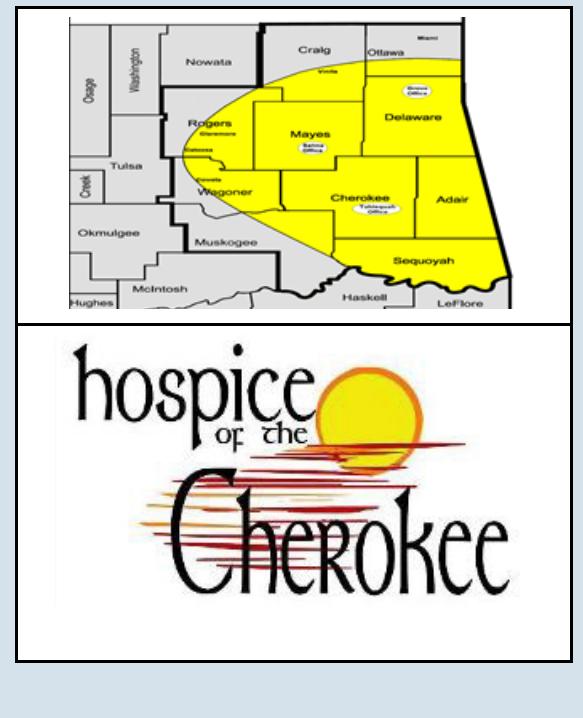
**Location:** Tahlequah, Oklahoma

**Area served:** Adair, Cherokee, Delaware, Mayes, Muskogee, Sequoyah, and Wagoner

**Contact Information:** Casi Jennings, Director, (918) 456-5051

**Website:** <http://www.cnhhs.org/hospice/>

**Mission Statement:** To ensure the highest level of care possible by expertly addressing the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of patients and their families.



# Best Practices in Culturally Sensitive End-of-Life Care

## Program Profile: Hospice of the Cherokee

### Administration, Staffing & Facility

- Hospice of the Cherokee has 15 staff members, a medical doctor, an assistant medical director, 2 chaplains, 2 aides, 3 RNs, 2 LPNS, a volunteer coordinator, and a host of volunteers who provide services to the community.
- The hospice facility can assist 25 persons at one time and generally operates at full capacity.
- Staff training includes webinars, conferences, and written materials developed to meet identified needs.
- As the only hospice in the area, they serve people from all of the surrounding communities, 50% of whom are Native American.

"Assuring the patient's freedom from discomfort or pain is a priority which requires teamwork among referring physicians, family members and the hospice staff."

-Hospice of the Cherokee Commitment

### Funding

CNHHS is a tribally incorporated, non-profit home health care agency that:

- Is a certified Medicare hospice program,
- Does not limit service eligibility to tribal members, and
- Is a self-sufficient agency that has not received supplemental support from the Cherokee Nation since 1999.

### Lessons Learned

- Integrated care has been an important aspect of what CNHHS has been able to provide to the surrounding community.
- CNHHS has three levels of care it provides: Advantage, Home Health, and Hospice.
  - Advantage provides case management and light, in-home support to patients.
  - Home Health provides in-home nursing care to patients recovering from procedures.
  - Hospice care provides end-of-life support for patients and their families.

### Future Directions

CNHHS is looking to possibly expand, but wants to ensure that they maintain the tight-knit relationships they are currently able to forge with their patients and families.