

Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care Enters South Florida Market

BY LINDA LEATHERBURY

Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care, a national leader in the provision of end-of-life care, has partnered with Miami Jewish Health Systems (MJHS) to convert the former MJHS Douglas Gardens Hospice into "Seasons Hospice and Healthcare of Florida."

Now entering its fifteenth year in business, Seasons Hospice and Palliative Care serves 15,000 patients annually, making it one of the nation's top 10 providers of hospice and palliative care. The company operates in 20 offices in 11 states, and may soon add a location in Georgia.

"Seasons has an ongoing mission to find creative solutions that add quality to end-of-life care," said Executive Director Pedro Del Campo. "The partnership with MJHS provided us an opportunity to enter the South Florida market, which is home to one of the nation's largest senior populations."

Seasons Hospice is conveniently located on the MJHS campus, which also houses a 32-bed acute care facility, a 450-bed nursing home and 400 assisted living facility rooms.

"Since we began operating in South Florida, Seasons Hospice has doubled



Pedro Del Campo

the number of patients served," said Del Campo. "Our goal for the coming year is to achieve name recognition in the Miami-Dade market. We plan to undertake a number of community-based education and outreach programs aimed at expanding our reach and patient base in the Dade and Monroe Counties."

Seasons has a goal to "strive beyond accepted standards" and to develop its hospice and palliative care programs to meet the unique needs of each individual it serves. A team of caring physicians, nurses, social workers, home health aids, chaplains, counselors and volunteers provides a personalized approach to each patient and family.

The company is differentiated by its "open access," which allows patients currently receiving certain medical treatments to access hospice services earlier than usual. "Seasons is allowed to accept patients sometimes deemed inappropriate for hospice care, such as those on dialysis or intravenous feeding," said Del Campo.

Seasons also offers a Palliative Care program designed to help patients who either do not qualify or are not yet ready for hospice transition into the hospice

program.

Another unique Seasons Hospice program involves music therapy as a core discipline. Seasons is the first hospice company to create a comprehensive Music Therapy Department as an integral part of its staff to help positively affect the physical and emotional well-being of patients and families.

"Research has shown that sound affects bodily functions such as heart rate, blood pressure and release of the body's natural painkilling chemicals," said Del Campo. Our full-time music therapist visits the patient and plays the guitar, which can assist with pain and also be stimulating for unresponsive Alzheimer's and dementia patients," he said.

Seasons also offers fully computerized medical records and a Call Center that directs patients or their families to a nurse who can answer their questions or provide assistance as needed.

"Looking ahead for the coming year, our South Florida patients can expect to receive compassionate, quality care provided by teams of caring professionals," said Del Campo. "We look forward to a long and prosperous affiliation with MJHS as we expand our reach into communities across the state."

For more information about Seasons Hospice and Healthcare of Florida, call (305) 762-3883.