Thanks to a generous grant award from the Disabled Veterans National Foundation (DVNF), Bluegrass Care Navigators will be expanding specialized integrative medicine therapies to veterans in our care throughout Kentucky.

Integrative medicine offers a rich set of complementary therapies to help patients better cope with symptoms and side effects, provide pain relief, enhance medical treatment, and improve quality of life. Current offerings for Bluegrass Care Navigators’ patients include art therapy, music therapy, animal-assisted therapy, and massage therapy.

While veterans may suffer from similar symptoms and psychological issues as non-veteran hospice and palliative care patients, the context in which they experience this distress may be unique to their time as an active-duty military member. As they approach the end of life, veterans who are still struggling to process the trauma they experienced during active military duty may exhibit behaviors such as anxiety, agitation, nightmares, sleeping “on guard,” and drug/substance abuse. Our Integrative Medicine clinicians recognized the need to develop specific interventions to address the unique needs of our veteran patients.

Using music, art and massage therapies, Bluegrass Care Navigators will help veterans alleviate stress, reduce pain and process emotions. Grant funding also will support expansion in the areas of virtual reality and energy therapies.

The organization has plans to participate in a virtual reality program that will give veterans who cannot travel the opportunity to experience honor flights to national military monuments in Washington, DC. Additionally, Bluegrass Care Navigators will expand partnerships with veterans’ organizations in Kentucky and develop our clinicians’ expertise in providing compassionate care to our veteran patients.

“Bluegrass Care Navigators serves more than 1,000 veterans each year in hospice and palliative care,” said CEO Liz Fowler. “We are so honored to partner with DVNF through this grant to provide therapies focused on disabled veterans in Kentucky.”

Joseph VanFonda (USMC) SgtMaj. Ret., CEO of the Disabled Veterans National Foundation shares, “We are very proud to support Bluegrass Care Navigators as they continue to make a positive impact in Veteran’s lives with integrated medicine therapies. We would like to congratulate and thank them for their commitment and continued service and program assistance for the men and women who served in the defense of our country.”
They had to be side by side…

Charlene and Charles had been side by side for over 50 years, when Charlene was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. After a courageous battle, the family looked to Bluegrass Care Navigators to help make Charlene’s final weeks as comfortable and memorable as possible, with Charles at her side. Charlene and Charles celebrated their last Christmas and a surprise 51st anniversary party with their family at the Greg and Noreen Wells Bluegrass Hospice Care Center in Hazard.

After Charlene passed away, Charles placed a personalized memory stone for her in the Hospice Care Center’s courtyard. The family continued to visit there together on holidays. And Charles, a retired social worker, began to volunteer with Bluegrass Care Navigators by leading a grief support group where he formed many great friendships.

When Charles himself became ill, the family immediately contacted Bluegrass Care Navigators to provide him with in-home hospice care at his daughter Elaine’s home.

“After going through the same great hospice care with our mom, having a care team come to the house for Dad was a comfort and a relief, like getting a big hug,” said Elaine.

Charles had planned for his own memory stone to be placed next to Charlene’s in the Hospice Care Center’s courtyard, a place that meant so much to him. They had to be side by side.

On his final day, Charles signaled it was time for him to go to the Hospice Care Center, where he passed peacefully surrounded by his family, as he had wanted. “He felt close to Mom there,” said Elaine. “It was comforting for him, and for us.”

Because people like you care, our team is able to provide families, like that of Charlene and Charles, with much-needed support and cherished memories. Thank you for your support!
10th Anniversary of Hospice Care Center

In May, Bluegrass Care Navigators celebrated the ten-year anniversary of the Greg and Noreen Wells Bluegrass Hospice Care Center in Hazard. Since its opening in 2011, more than 3,500 patients have benefitted from this inpatient facility for hospice care.

Located in Hazard to serve southeastern Kentucky, the hospice care center features 12 private patient suites with outdoor patios and multiple family areas. The Hospice Care Center provides a comforting place for patients and families when symptoms cannot be controlled in the home, or the family is unable to provide the care that is needed for a loved one at home. The center enables families to remain involved in the patient’s care while benefiting from the full-time nursing and physician services.

In 2011, Bluegrass Care Navigators was honored to receive a lead gift for the Hospice Care Center in Hazard. Today, the Greg and Noreen Wells Bluegrass Hospice Care Center provides end-of-life and respite care for patients in a setting designed to comfort both the patient and their loved ones.

“We are proud to celebrate ten remarkable years made possible by the generosity of Greg and Noreen Wells. We look forward to providing many more years of service to patients and families,” said Monica Couch, Associate Vice President of Eastern KY Operations for Bluegrass Care Navigators.

RADIO DAYS ARE COMING!
Proceeds from the 2021 Radio Day events will provide hospice and grief services to families throughout our 16 Eastern Kentucky communities. We want to say THANK YOU to everyone who listened and donated during the London and Pikeville Radio Days earlier this spring.

It is not too late to participate this year. Please tune in to WSGS 101.1 FM on August 10 to listen as patients and families of Bluegrass Care Navigators share their stories along with guests from the community.

Hazard Radio Day
August 10, 9 a.m.– 5 p.m.
WSGS 101.1 FM
Listen in live at WSGS.com

Make a donation at: bgcarenav.org/hazard-radio-day
Celebrating our Volunteers!

In April, Bluegrass Care Navigators honored the approximately 300 dedicated volunteers who support our patients and families in the 32 Kentucky counties we serve.

Volunteers for the organization support patient needs or assist with office-based activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteers have been supporting families through the Compassion from a Distance program. This program allows volunteers to complete a variety of socially distanced or virtual activities, such as delivering necessities and gifts to families, making weekly care phone calls, and providing companionship through phone or virtual visits.

“Volunteers play an indispensable role in enabling Bluegrass Care Navigators to offer the best care possible for our patients, their families and caregivers. By sharing their time, energy and expertise, our volunteers bring compassion and caring to the lives of those in need,” said Liz Fowler, President and CEO.

As Bluegrass Care Navigators continues to serve more patients throughout Kentucky, we need more volunteers! For more information on this program or how to volunteer for Bluegrass Care Navigators, please call 855.492.0812 or visit www.bgcarenav.org/volunteer.

Sy Leaves a Legacy of Compassion

Ed “Sy” Sypolt was what we call a full-circle volunteer. He gave his time, his kindness, to help hospice patients. And in turn, the patients helped him...changed him.

Sy’s natural love for talking to people and his drive to make the sale led to a successful career as a pharmaceutical salesman. But Sy had described himself as a bit of a jerk in those days, having an insensitive attitude towards others.

That changed after Sy retired. He decided that he’d like to make some changes, get involved in the community and do some good for others. He joined Bluegrass Care Navigators (BCN) as a volunteer in 2002.

“I remember Sy telling me that his volunteer experiences humbled him, made him appreciate the things he’d been given,” says Kimberly Heestand, provider liaison for BCN.

Sy chose to spend his time helping our hospice patients after experiencing his own heartbreak. His mother-in-law suffered with illness for several years before she passed away, and his 16-year-old daughter died suddenly in a car accident. These profound losses left Sy with a desire to help people in their final days.
As a volunteer, Sy was willing to do anything that was needed. He would visit with patients in their home or nursing home, offer respite care for family members to give them a little time away from the pressures of round-the-clock caregiving, and provide 11th hour care – sitting at the bedside as a patient is dying so they don’t die alone.

A few months before Sy passed away, he told Kimberly that he wanted to transition from actively volunteering to mentoring other volunteers. “He was seeing at least a dozen patients a week. That’s a lot, especially since he was almost 80 years old,” Kimberly says. “He was such a gift.”

In honor of Sy’s extraordinary service to our patients and families, we established the Sy Award, which is presented each year to one special volunteer who has displayed selfless, compassionate service to those in our care.

Volunteer President’s Award

Bluegrass Care Navigators proudly announced the first annual Volunteer President’s Award winner and nominees this spring. This new award recognizes the efforts of all those who work so hard to support patients and families in their communities. The winner of the 2021 Volunteer President’s Award is the Shah Family, located in Barbourville.

Mayur Shah, and his sons, Nakhil and Sahil, make volunteering a family affair. Mayur has volunteered with hospice over the past eight years in many ways, from making care calls to patients to even serving as the office manager when the Barbourville office went for a time without a receptionist. Nakhil and Sahil, started volunteering in 2018 making deliveries with their dad on weekends as well as participating in various events and crafting projects. During the pandemic in 2020, they made several Compassion from a Distance porch deliveries and assembled many goody bags for patients.

Other Volunteer President’s Awards finalists included:
- Linda Boots, Lexington
- Shirley Bubany, Frankfort
- Annette Cody, Hazard
- Pete Croswell, Frankfort
- Marybeth Davin, Cynthiana
- Kate Fresca, Lexington
- Cynthia Gooch, Hazard
- Lynn Gosnell, Northern Kentucky
- The Moudy Family, Frankfort
- Margot Strother, Lexington
- Claudia Vollmer, Northern Kentucky
- Joan Webb, Lexington
- Deana Wilmoth, Frankfort

“Ed (Sy) Sypolt with his wife Elizabeth and daughter Leslie”

CREATE A LEGACY

Have you considered including Bluegrass Care Navigators in your will or estate plans? It’s a simple way to make a powerful impact for patients and families. Contact us at give@bgcarenav.org or 859.296.6865 to learn more.
Let’s Pawty!

Grace and Rosemary, our furriest therapists, turn two years old in June. They bring so much love to our patients and team members! We invite you to show them a little love by purchasing a birthday gift from their Animal Assisted Therapy Wish List on Amazon:

Amazon.com/gp/clpf

(On the Amazon Charity List page, search “Bluegrass Care Navigators” to find wish lists for our Animal Assisted Therapy, Bright Path Pediatric Palliative Care and Hospice Family Cheer Cart programs.)

Make a Gift Online: bgcarenav.org/newsletter

Please email us at give@bgcarenav.org to let us know that you provided an item from the list, or enclose a gift receipt with your name and your purchase, so we can thank you!

Musical Memories

Music can bring joy and happy memories into our lives. At Bluegrass Care Navigators, music therapy is a source of great comfort to many of our patients. Recently, 98-year-old Wilma found great happiness holding her original accordion. As a young girl of 12 to 14, Wilma had played in a musical group. Her son, Mitch, has a photo of her with the other girls and their accordions.

Wilma is visited by BCN music therapist Emma Powers every two weeks, and Wilma is always excited to see her. Mitch shares how happy his mother is when Emma visits, stating, “Mom loves it. It’s really something how music just changes people’s feelings. It really lifts her spirits.”
provides a place for clinicians to rejuvenate, rest and prepare for the care they provide to patients and families in their homes and facilities,” said Bluegrass Care Navigators CEO Liz Fowler. “The entire experience of the building, garden and surrounding artwork is also meant to be a place of hope, healing and peace for the bereaved and those who have experienced a loss.”

Barnes said he hopes to inspire viewers to focus on the spiral captured in his work, as the spiral is a positive force reflected in nature, in mathematics and in the universe. “Each strand of glass represents a facet of one’s life and they join together to create the whole of a person’s spirit and essence,” Barnes said.

“Life Spiral is a significant achievement for Barnes, with the piece marking his first major installation since the onset of COVID-19 in the spring of 2020. “This sculpture sends a powerful message to the arts community that art is indeed vital and a much-needed part of our community,” said Barnes.

Barnes drew inspiration from the intentional design of Bluegrass Care Navigators’ building renovation, through discussions with Denham-Blythe contractor Damon Durham, Nathan Zamarron at LexArts who assisted the agency in commissioning artwork for the building, and landscape designer Jon Carloftis, who created a healing garden space outside the two-story glass atrium where Barnes’ piece will be installed.

“Our new facility and garden were designed to provide an inspirational workspace that supports our core values and provides a place for clinicians to rejuvenate, rest and prepare for the care they provide to patients and families in their homes and facilities,” said Bluegrass Care Navigators CEO Liz Fowler. “The entire experience of the building, garden and surrounding artwork is also meant to be a place of hope, healing and peace for the bereaved and those who have experienced a loss.”

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“Please take a quick moment to tell us how our staff, our services or our support has made a difference in your life or the life of someone you love, at: bgcarenav.org/mystory
It’s a Win-Win!
Support our patients & receive a great tax benefit!

Beginning July 1, the Endow Kentucky Tax Credit Program will make $1 million in tax credits available to Kentucky individuals and businesses who contribute to endowments held at qualifying community foundations. You may be eligible for a state tax credit of up to 20 percent of your gift.

It is important to apply for the tax credit by July 7. The tax credit pool typically runs out within the first two weeks of July. All applications approved by the Kentucky Department of Revenue between July 1 and July 7 will receive a credit of up to 20 percent of the value of the gift. After July 7, any remaining tax credits will be approved on a first come, first served basis until available funds are depleted.

The Endow Kentucky Tax Credit program is a great way to support the patients and families of Bluegrass Care Navigators while receiving a substantial tax benefit!

If you are interested in learning more about the tax credit or completing a tax credit application, please contact Laura Klumb at lklumb@bgcarenav.org or 859.296.6865.