CATHOLIC COMMUNITY HEALTH
HOME CARE · VILLA ST. FRANCIS · HOSPICE

Hope & Healing

Stories & Updates from CATHOLIC COMMUNITY HEALTH

FALL 2026 | VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 1

From the CEO



by Brad Heidrick

What does it mean to have dignity? At CCH, it means recognizing that each person truly matters at every stage of life. When we speak about person-centered care, we are acknowledging the God-given dignity with which every patient and resident is endowed.



Person-centered care is not a slogan; it is our commitment to honor and support those entrusted to us. Whether someone resides at Villa St. Francis, receives Home Care, or is served through Palliative or Hospice Care, we strive to meet their needs as we would for a member of our own family. We are here not simply to complete tasks, but to accompany each person in a meaningful way. Staff and volunteers become extended family. Residents become neighbors and friends.

At Villa St. Francis, dignity is perhaps most visible in the Honor Walk. When a resident passes away, staff, residents, volunteers, and family members gather to pay tribute. A flag is gently draped over the individual as they make their final journey through the building and past Our Lady of Grace Chapel. There are tears, hugs, and prayers. In those moments, it is clear: this is not an institution. It is a family grieving one of its own.

The story of Catholic Community Health is ultimately a story of people caring for one another. Together, through service, prayer, generosity, and compassion, we help ensure that every person we serve is treated with the dignity they deserve.

CCH Events:



DEC 08 — Christmas Caroling
CONTACT TAMMY: 913.621.5090
Start at CCH - Lenexa, KS

Together IN HEALING
VIRTUAL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

DEC 17 — Grief Support
FOR HOSPICE FAMILIES
On Zoom---------->

love letters

DEC 17 — Love Letters
MOBILE BOUTIQUE
Villa St. Francis - Olathe, KS

Volunteer Spotlight



RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Larry Collett

VSF Mass Sacristan

Years at CCH: 5.5 Years

"I attended Mass with my aunt for four years at Villa St. Francis and formed a connection with the residents that inspired me to volunteer. I enjoy giving, but received so much in return! I love seeing them smile, free from their infirmity. I can't wait to go back!"

Love in Action

Extending Christ's Compassion into the Home

BY KYLENE DICKERSON - HOME CARE DIRECTOR



At Catholic Community Health Home Care, we believe every person is created in the image of God and deserves to age with dignity, respect, and compassionate support. As a nonprofit ministry, we are privileged to bring the healing presence of Christ into the homes of seniors and individuals who need assistance to remain safe and independent.



Our caregivers provide personal care, companionship, respite, medication reminders, transportation, and other supportive services that help individuals remain in the place they call home for as long as possible. Beyond meeting physical needs, our team offers comfort, connection, and peace of mind to clients and their families during life's most challenging seasons.

We are proud to partner with The Welstone, Greenwood Terrace, and Santa Marta in Kansas, as well as St. Anthony's in Missouri, supporting residents in independent and assisted living communities when additional care is needed.

Each year, CCH Home Care serves hundreds of individuals throughout our community, helping older adults maintain their independence while receiving compassionate, faith-filled care. Through this ministry, we continue the Church's tradition of caring for our neighbors and ensuring those we serve experience the love of Christ.

Together, we are strengthening our community—one person, one family, and one act of service at a time.

Supporting the Mission

Mission & Development Spotlight

BY MITCH NOLAN



Thank you to everyone who joined us for our fourth annual Fall Ball. Your presence and generosity helped us meet the match and made the evening a true success. It was a joy to gather with friends of Catholic Community Health, celebrate the work we do together, and honor those who have championed Catholic healthcare ethics in our community. Nights like this remind us that our mission of putting the love of Christ into action is only possible because of people who show up, give, and stand with the residents and families we serve.





There are many ways to support Catholic Community Health with your time, talent, or treasure. Consider making a tax-deductible gift today or remembering our ministry in your estate plans. Your continued partnership helps ensure that seniors receive the compassionate, faith-filled care they deserve.

For more information, contact me:
mnolan@catholiccommunityhealth.org.

Good Grief

Finding joy alongside grief

BY MICHELLE BUZZARD - COMMUNITY LIAISON



For those navigating loss while still holding space for moments of light, hope, and meaning.

Grief is not something we "get over." Rather, it is something we learn to carry. Life's changes—whether through loss, transitions, or unexpected challenges—can reshape our world. Yet even in these difficult seasons, it is possible to find moments of connection, beauty, gratitude, and joy.

Through reflection, conversation, creative expression, and shared experiences, we explore how to navigate life's changes while keeping our joy—allowing grief and joy to exist together in meaningful and healing ways. There is no single path through loss, and no timeline we must follow. What matters is that we do not have to walk it alone.

I facilitate several Good Grief support gatherings throughout the community, offering a safe, welcoming, and compassionate space for individuals to share their stories, reflect on their experiences, and find support—wherever they may be on their journey. These gatherings are open to anyone seeking a place to be heard, to listen, and to remember that hope and healing can grow even in the midst of sorrow.



In these spaces, people often discover that carrying grief does not mean setting joy aside. Small moments of light—shared laughter, a kind word, a memory that still brings a smile—can exist alongside sorrow. The gatherings provide room for both, without pressure to rush the process or pretend the loss is gone.

A Brief History of Hospice

Modern hospice care was first offered in 1967 when Dame Cicely Saunders founded St. Christopher's Hospice in London, England (*Dame Cicely at right*). She believed that people facing a life- limiting illness deserved compassionate care that addressed their physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.



Inspired by her work, Florence Wald, Dean of Nursing at Yale University, helped bring hospice to the United States by establishing one of the nation's first hospice programs in Connecticut in 1974.

Hospice continued to grow across the country, and in 1982 it became a Medicare benefit, making comfort-focused end-of-life care available to millions of Americans.

Today, hospice provides comfort, dignity, and support for patients and their families, helping them navigate life's final journey with compassion and respect. At Catholic Community Health, we are guided by our mission of putting the love of Christ into action. While rooted in Catholic values, we serve people of all faiths, beliefs, and backgrounds, meeting patients and families where they are and providing compassionate care that honors the dignity of every person.

Let's Celebrate

Honoring Recovery, Resilience, and New Beginnings

BY JILL ALLIN - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VILLA ST. FRANCIS



One of the most meaningful traditions at Villa St. Francis is our "Let's Celebrate" send-off. When a resident completes their rehabilitation journey and is ready to return home, staff members receive an email or text announcing, "Let's Celebrate!" Team members gather in St. Raphael Neighborhood, line the hallway, and applaud as the resident makes their way to the front door and the next chapter of their journey. While the applause lasts only a few moments, it represents weeks—or sometimes months—of hard work, determination, and progress.



Paula's First Rehabilitation Journey

Today we are honored to share the inspiring story of Paula. She first came to Villa St. Francis in September 2025 following a total hip replacement. When she arrived, she required maximum assistance with basic bed mobility. Through determination, perseverance, and the expert care of our rehabilitation partner, Summit Care, Paula steadily progressed. By the end of her stay she had achieved modified independence using her walker. She was walking to Mass each day and enjoying dining with friends before returning to her independent living apartment at Little Sisters of the Poor.

Choosing Villa St. Francis Again

When Paula needed a second hip replacement, she called two weeks ahead to reserve her room. She arrived needing moderate assistance with transfers, walking only 15 feet, and standing for just two minutes. By discharge she had reached modified independence, increased her walking distance to 500 feet, and improved her standing tolerance to more than 15 minutes. Paula's story shows the life-changing impact of quality rehabilitation.

A Partnership Rooted in Mission

She returned home to Little Sisters of the Poor, a Catholic care provider we are privileged to partner with. Stories like hers remind us why we celebrate every successful return home. Each "Let's Celebrate" send-off is a tribute to resilience and recovery. Congratulations, Paula! We are grateful to have been part of your journey and wish you health, happiness, and blessings.



Learning the ERDs

HEALTHCARE GUIDANCE FROM THE USCCB



Catholic care faces death with the confidence of faith, knowing God has created us for eternal life. We seek to be a community of respect, love, and support for patients & families as they face the end of earthly life, offering medical skill and the assurance that every life retains its dignity until natural death.

- ERDs,USCCB, 2025 Part Five