



Our Unique Vision

Solace's goal is to create and maintain a welcoming residential environment (presently called Solace Home), where terminally ill individuals who are underserved in the current system can live and be cared for during the last days or months of their lives.

Our Model

Solace Home is based on a model supported by The Omega Home Network, a national organization that promotes the development and expansion of community homes offering non-medical, family-like care for dying people. We will not only ensure that basic needs such as shelter, food, hydration, and hygiene are met, those we serve will receive person-centered care that nurtures bodily comfort, emotional, social, and spiritual wholeness, and individual dignity. There are currently 40 such homes in the U.S., with a least 19 more in development. *Solace Home would be the first of its kind in Wisconsin.* Community supported homes for end-of-life care are:



- not a hospital, nursing home, hospice, or medical facility—simply "home and family"
- independent and freestanding; complementary to and distinct from what already exists in the community
- inclusive and open to all people, according to local regulations
- grass-roots in nature; managed by non-profit organizations, funded by the community
- staffed by paid caregivers and volunteers who are considered "extended family"
- in collaborative working relationships with the residents' hospice/medical care providers

Solace is not, and will not be, licensed as a hospice provider; it will supplement rather than replace clinical care services delivered by area hospice organizations. As a result, Solace will help to reduce many of the burdens and barriers hospice staff may face while trying to serve this population, therefore benefitting both care recipients and care providers.

- Hospices will be responsible for physician oversight, scheduled visits from nurses, nursing assistants, social workers, and others. They will also supply medications, durable medical equipment, and other care supplies and treatments necessary for symptom management.
- Solace will offer additional support just as family caregivers do when hospice patients receive in-home care. This includes providing companionship and community, meals, and assistance with activities of daily living such as bathing, toileting, dressing, as well as housekeeping tasks like cleaning and laundry.

Community, Comfort, & Care at Life's End



A Welcoming, Homelike Setting

In March 2021, Solace established a formal agreement with Housing Initiatives, Inc., a Madison organization whose mission is to end homelessness for those suffering from mental illness. The plan is for Solace to raise sufficient funds that will cover rent and maintenance expenses for the first two years of operations, after which Housing Initiatives will purchase a dwelling and rent to Solace. Solace hopes to eventually purchase this property. We are looking for an accessible, residential setting that accommodates up to four individuals at a time, each with their own private room. Ideally, our home will be located in a residential neighborhood within the Madison city limits, with easy access to Madison Metro Service, and good connections to downtown. We will proactively seek neighborhood buy-in and participation.

Creating a More Equitable Community

Solace is based on the premise that every human being has the right to die in a dignified manner, surrounded by compassion, respect, love, and grace. As an organization whose purpose is to reduce suffering at the end of life, we support physical comfort, as well as emotional and spiritual wholeness for all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, education, age, sexual/affectional orientation, physical ability, language, political affiliation, economic position, immigrant/citizenship status, military experience, and legal standing.

Solace will work to eliminate destructive disparities in our society that are due to the many covert and overt discriminatory practices that disproportionately affect those who are Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Color—including inequities in the health-care and death-care system, that too often lead to increased morbidity and mortality in these populations.

Guiding Principles and Values

- Our intent is for guests to have safety, comfort, and community at the end of life
- Administrative, service, and community efforts will be informed by:
 - compassionate presence
 - hospitality, generosity, and flexibility
 - respect for the worth and dignity of all
 - diversity, equity, and inclusivity
 - social and distributive justice
 - reverence for the natural process of dying
 - communications grounded in transparency and honesty
- Preference for those who are the most vulnerable and in the greatest need
- Services are offered regardless of an individual's ability to pay

Too many people suffer needlessly as they die—usually individuals who are experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, extreme poverty, mental and emotional health issues, substance abuse disorders, and/or social isolation.

Solace Friends, Inc. is a nonprofit organization working to bridge the existing gaps in end-of-life services for people in Dane County

www.solacefriends.org

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