

A MESSAGE FROM – Terrilynne Young, Hill House Nurse Manager

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Our people make the difference!

The pandemic has proven to be a challenge in every walk of life, and Hill House Nurse Manager Terrilynne Young credits her nurses and personal service workers for overcoming each challenge the pandemic has created. "We have an incredibly dedicated staff that have stepped up. Their dedication, actually, is why we're still open," Terrilynne said.

At one point during the pandemic, the nursing staff was reduced to just four—half of the current rotation. Because we were short-staffed, they were working 24-hour shifts every three days. And that was without the assistance of any volunteers or family members, who were not allowed in the house at that time for safety reasons. That put even more stress and responsibility on the nursing staff.

Terrilynne worried that Hill House would not be able to stay open.

However, the nursing staff and the PSW's were committed to doing absolutely everything they could to keep Hill House open and provide their loving palliative care. "I can't tell you how many times I had to contemplate closing. The staff said, 'no. That's not an option.' Every single one of them said, 'okay, we'll just sleep here until our next shift. We've got shower facilities down here. We'll just make it work.'"

Our staff is experienced and have been with Hill House for a number of years. And if the pandemic has proved anything, they are not going anywhere anytime soon.

"They've been with us for a long time, they know the ins and outs of the organization. They are dedicated to keeping our doors open. It was tough with no family members, but we didn't lose anyone. Not one person said 'sorry, I can't work.' Other hospices have experienced that, and we didn't."

Although volunteers were unable to come into Hill House due to COVID protocols, they did not go away either. Instead of baking cookies at our house, they baked cookies for us in their own home and drop them off at Hill House. One volunteer makes a whole spread of Persian food for the patients and staff to enjoy on days she pops in to say "hi", forever grateful for our care of her father. Other volunteers have also helped with paperwork in their own homes, sending envelopes and packages on behalf of Hill House. "We are just so grateful to all our volunteers whether it's in their home or ours, we feel blessed they just want to keep volunteering," Terrilynne said.

Hill House has recovered to a point where now eight nurses are in its rotation. COVID restrictions have eased, so that each patient can now have two visitors at a time.

"We believe in hospice. We believe that it's just as important leaving the world as it is when you come into the world," Terrilynne said." We all believe that wholeheartedly, and everyone COVID or no COVID deserves a hospice bed. Everybody."

HILL HOUSE STAFF
STAYING SAFE WITH
SOME DONATED PPE

