



The Community Network for Appropriate Technologies

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Journey Project Resource Center at the Environmental Center
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Annual Report – November, 2011
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Executive Director/Principal Planner

1. Overview:

For many years we've been actively engaged across the health care continuum helping to shape policy and program development as consumer advocates. It's wonderful to witness systemic change now rapidly emerging at every level . . . a paradigm shift indeed - long past due. In support of this transformation, we routinely are providing health community leadership and others with turnkey research, tools and resources dedicated to improving quality of life and care through life's end.

This report highlights work we've been doing over the past year along with work which will carry us on into the coming year. Internet "hotlinks" are given for tools and resources referenced herein. To each of you reviewing our report, we thank you for your ongoing interest and support so greatly appreciated. We couldn't carry on without you!

2. Journey Project:

Thanks to pro bono assistance of our Latino Program Development Team (Teresa Fernandez, Ortencia Angotti and Sara Katra) we are now actively planning the next phase of program development for the Latino Caregiver Program. We are in the process of reviewing work previously done and preparing a business plan needed to secure funding to help grow that program into the coming year. Ortencia is taking the lead working with me to seek out possible funders, develop the scope of work for her role as Program Director, and do funding proposals needed to proceed with work planned.

Routinely we get requests to use our "End of Life Care Values Checklist and Guide" from all over America. This form was created by the Journey Project in the mid-1990s and has been used extensively here in Sonoma County and elsewhere ever since, available in English and Spanish. Thanks to the support of the [Coalition for Compassionate Care of California](#), we are able to provide ongoing access to bulk quantities of all POLST materials including POLST forms, consumer booklet, and user-friendly CPR/DNR and Tube Feeding brochures through the Journey Project Resource Center which remains housed in the [Environmental Center of Sonoma County](#).

This past year trainings were done for owner/administrators of board and care homes for the elderly, West County Community Health Center Clinicians, and the Senior Peer Counselors Program. Training also is done ongoing for Year Two Resident MD's in the Santa Rosa Family Medicine Residency via a one-on-one three hour monthly rotation I do at the Residency as a UCSF Clinical Instructor. The Network website, www.CaringCommunity.org continues to provide important research and resources for thousands of visitors frequenting our website annually.

Exploratory meetings are ongoing with the [Palm Drive Hospital](#) (PDH) CEO Rich Pohleber and staff

regarding prospects for collaboration with the Community Network/Journey Project. Our focus is on training and innovations in care supportive of seniors, the frail elderly, high risk patients and their caregivers. In tangent with that, I've been regularly attending PDH Board meetings and meetings of the [Northern CA Health Care Authority](#) comprised of the small district hospitals in preparation to explore opportunities there. Occasionally I've been meetings with the Medical Director of the [West County Health Centers](#) (WCHC) exploring prospects for community clinics building upon Journey Project resources and prior training done for WCHC clinicians.

Federal health reform is creating new opportunities for all with the “[triple aim](#)” to: improve the health of the population; enhance the patient experience of care (including quality, access, and reliability); and reduce or at least control the per capita cost of care. Community-based long-term care of the nature we have advocated for decades now is finally coming into focus for health care systems needing to adapt to new rules and regulations emerging. It is absolutely transformative in terms of how health care has been in the fee for service world and how it will be as payment becomes tied to outcomes. A sea change is at hand – badly needed. The West County is a wonderful place to serve as a model for the best of what could be and is well on the way thanks to the work of WCHC and the Palm Drive Hospital District.

3. Sonoma County POLST Coalition:

The Journey Project/POLST Coalition we convened to help develop the Sonoma County POLST Education Program is now working primarily as two work groups of the Journey Project/Coalition. The two work groups comprise the Coalition Leadership Council responsible for overseeing and supporting work done. The Physician Champs Work Group has been working to develop a new one hour training program targeting physicians concerning advance care planning and end of life care. This program will provide doctors with our best available research; tools and resources of value for engaging in advance care planning and end of life care. Special emphasis is being given to the interconnectedness of values-based planning, palliative care and quality of life through life's end.

The Community Ed Work Group has been following up with board and care home owners/administrators who participated in the fall 2010 training we produced titled: “Improving Care Through Life's End for People in Residential Care.” This Work Group has been focused on developing a program for care home residents and their families. The program will be offered in concert with senior centers and special invitations will be distributed by the Work Group to board and care homes encouraging participation. This strategy helps address the problem of very limited space in small care homes and also helps with social engagement in the process. We are planning to do the first of these in spring, 2012 with the Santa Rosa Senior Center and plan to also have an information table staffed by Work Group members at the Senior Health Fair later in May.

It should be noted that POLST stands for Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment if you are new to our work or need a reminder concerning that acronym. We remain extremely involved with POLST Implementation here in Sonoma County and at the state level where I serve on the statewide CA POLST Task Force responsible for POLST implementation in California. As part of this work, I participate in bi-monthly state teleconference calls, assist with networking information and resources here locally on behalf of the CA POLST program, serve on the state POLST Public Policy Committee currently working to resolve concerns about the role of the surrogate in POLST, and attend state level meetings of the Coalition for Compassionate Care of CA among other things.

We are also in the loop participating in audit training and helping to support POLST audit work by providing local contact information, advocacy for survey completion and dissemination of results.
Audits

are being done by UCLA Researcher Neil Wenger, PhD with funding from the [California HealthCare Foundation \(CHF\)](#). Audits are evaluating the impact of community POLST coalitions such as the Journey Project/Coalition on quality and use of POLST in nursing homes and hospitals. Comparative studies are being done for coalition and non-coalition communities statewide. Results for Sonoma County are impressive with the nursing homes surveys now completed and the hospitals survey underway.

4. Environmental Center. The Community Network continues to serve as convener for the Sonoma County Conservation Council with me as SCCC Board chair. Seventeen member organizations are SCCC members helping to share in the cost of Center operations with the Sierra Club responsible for paying 50% share and SCCC responsible for the remainder. In addition to very nominal dues, members actively engage in production of two fundraisers a year. Reservations may now be made for the annual holiday party at Don Taylor's Omelette Express on Wed., December 7th from 5 – 8 PM and/or for the Annual Environmental Awards Dinner in March. For more info visit the [SCCC/Environmental Center website](#).

5. Funders and Supporters. An ongoing donation from Marcia Thorndyke to the SCCC on behalf of the Community Network helps secure our library in the Environmental Center. Through the trust fund of Dr. M. Gregg Steadman, we have funding to help offset Network operating costs and partial funding for my work as Executive Director. Dr. Steadman (Marcia's father) served Network Board president years ago.

The [Marco A. Vidal Fund](#) continues providing an annual grant for general operating expenses which helps further all that we do. Funding from Mr. Vidal has been helping to seed and grow the Residency training program, the Latino Caregiver Program and ongoing community engagement.

Through the [Coalition for Compassionate Care of CA](#) and the [CA HealthCare Foundation](#), we have access to a Reimbursement Fund to cover out-of-pocket expenses related to POLST work we do ongoing. That fund enables us to provide area hospitals, hospices, nursing homes, clinics and others with POLST materials produced by CCCC to further our work. This fund is also helping to match a \$5,000 grant recently received from the [Pacific Foundation for Medical Care \(PFMC\)](#) to further our physician education efforts.

Last fall, a grant from the [Exchange Bank](#) enabled the Network to acquire a new state-of-the-art computer system to replace the antiquated system I had been working on since 2004. It also made possible the purchase of a portable DVD player to use in small group sessions when doing community education, staff training by coalition participants in their respective work places, etc.

An audited financial statement and tax filing for FY 2010/11 is available on request.

6. Next Steps – The months ahead!

By mid-December we aim to meet with the Community Foundation about our Latino effort and meet again with the Palm Drive CEO and staff to hone in on possibilities there. Work with Residency Year Two doctors continues on. Into January, the Coalition Leadership Council (CLC) will be reconvened to explore the prospect of merging the CLC with the Network Board to consolidate leadership efforts and reduce demands on my time working pro bono.

The Work Groups presently comprising the CLC will carry on as standing work groups. Into the New Year, the Physician Work Group will finalize the MD training program, partnerships to pursue etc. for

pilot testing on into spring. The Community Ed Work Group will be developing some kind of a educational program that can be done at Senior Centers and include residents of residential care homes in the process.

The Latino Caregiver Program will be an ongoing priority focus for funding along with website work. Discussions are underway with some of our collaborators about the prospect of relocating the Journey Project Library into an established health care site to optimize potential for professional staff, patients, families and caregivers. We are past due for major funding and will be working on a proposal that might be an umbrella program to fund and hold all together all that we are doing. We are in the process of reorganizing the Board a bit with this in mind to focus in on this as time and resources permit.

We are just beginning work to secure a contractor and help needed to rebuild our website onto new software and a new server. The site was built in 2004 using Drupal software compatible with the server where our website has been residing ever since thanks to the generosity of Bo Laurent who built the initial site. With advances in technology and the explosion in Internet use across the globe, our web site is vulnerable to compatibility problems if we don't upgrade everything soon. Thus this is a high priority project.

By early December we hope to have a contractor secured with a solid bid for work to be done so we can seek needed funding to proceed. In the meantime, the site is fine and will continue to serve all as it does so well on through the transition. As part of funding we are seeking for website work, we will include funding needed for me to work along with the webmaster to help guide re-design and upgrade research posted on the site to reflect all the great resources we have uncovered these past few years and more.

Readers are reminded that we depend upon contributions from people like you to do all that we do. Please remember the Community Network when you are considering making charitable contributions. All work we do relies on major pro bono contributions from me and many others. Cash donations are badly needed and greatly appreciated to help us carry on with all we are doing.

7. Board of Directors, Advisors and Work Groups.

Board of Directors: Terry Popp, President; Carolyn DeTierra, Vice-President; Kathy Rueve, Treasurer; Sara Katra, Secretary; and Ortencia Angotti. Ex officio Nancy Unger, Past-President

Coalition Leadership Council: Nina Arbour; Harry Carr, MD; Marian Cremin, LCSW; Terri Dent, MDiv; Bill Dorsey, LCSW; Tim Gieseke, MD; Patty Jellison; Gary Johanson, MD; Cristi Keith; Sue Pearce, MA; James Salvante; Eloise Tweeten; Andrew Wagner, MD.

Latino Program Co-Directors: Ortencia Angotti, Teresa Fernandez, Sara Katra

Senior Advisor: Helen B. Rudee

8. Special Appreciation. . . to all of you working on the front lines helping with work we are doing. . . and to all of you funding and supporting our work. We couldn't do it without you. We will continue to keep you in the loop informed on our progress through occasional eNews Updates and reports like this. If you have any suggestions, ideas, questions or need for help you'd like to share, please do be in touch. Enjoy the holiday season.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan

Susan Keller, MA, MLIS
Executive Director/Principal Planner