

Comfort Cart - Palliative Care
A special project of the St. Cecilia Catholic Women's League
Initiated by Lyle Petryna, Palliative Care Volunteer

This is a message from Marlene Jackson, Volunteer and Bereavement Coordinator, Palliative Care Services, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region: "A palliative care volunteer (Tiffany) sent me an email about her experience of the comfort cart on the Palliative Care Unit. She's given me permission to share this with you. We are so grateful to everyone at St. Cecilia Parish who has supported this project. Please share with your church community so they can read what an impact their donations are having for our patients and our families."

Tiffany's Message

A lovely soul reminded me today that I must share with you my experiences with the comfort cart. A family member was in tears of gratitude when she took her much needed 'comfort loot' back to her ailing mom's room. She asked me to thank all involved with the comfort cart and that is what I intend to do!

I love the comfort cart. Even though it steers like an old grain truck I have come to enjoy pushing it down the corridor of our Palliative Care Ward.

Being a stranger walking into a room for the first time can be intimidating but the cart is a great way to say hello. Fortunately, it has become more than that! As we know, caregiving means giving up a lot of ones own self care to give love and support to another. It just goes hand in hand. Self sacrifice for the need of another. I see that every time I volunteer at the hospital. A family member has been sitting in a room with a loved one, waiting for peace to come, in any form it may. When I bring the cart around I am greeted with such kindness and relief. Many have been in the room with their loved ones for a few days or more. Tired of walking around in big winter boots, a pair of slippers is a comfort. Lip balm is a relief as their husband keeps forgetting to bring hers to the hospital and she doesn't dare leave her mom in case she passes. Ear plugs for a patient who is having a hard time sleeping because of the technology or hustle and bustle of the night crew. Sleep is so important for our patients, isn't it! A crossword puzzle keeps the mind busy and intrigued instead of constantly sitting and stressing over their time of uncertainty. Hand cream for an elderly patient who is unable to drink and is very dehydrated. Helping her with hand lotion is a rare human kindness that is so appreciated. The list goes on, but I don't want to ramble.

The comfort cart was donated to us from St Cecilia Parish, and we have extended that love to the heart of our Palliative Care Ward: the ones who are there NOT because they choose to be, but because they need to be. I speak of our families and our patients. They truly are our heart source. I do my best to extend that miracle on wheels, to them, and I am so blessed for the opportunity St. Cecilia has given us. I hope they will learn of the impact they have had, not only on the ward, but in my life too. Knowing there are such good, kind, unconditional loving people out there, makes me want to be one too. This world of ours can be quite mechanical but I see heart when I take that runaway cart down the halls!

God Bless and thank you for letting me extend unconditional love to our families and patients.