

Something quite humbling happened to me this afternoon as I supported parents hearing news of their unborn baby's serious medical condition. Per this couple's request, their 3 year old daughter remained with them during our conversation. As the neonatologist paused, giving parents time to take in their baby's poor prognosis, I watched their little girl reach up to touch her mother's face with an expression of gentle concern. Then, quite suddenly, she turned to me, extending her small hand my way. As our fingers touched, the kind, wise-beyond-her-years look in her eyes struck me to the core. She continued to hold my hand throughout the rest of the conversation. I'll probably never know her motivation for reaching out to me, but her tight grasp on my hand throughout the remainder of that meeting connected me with her with her family in a powerful, tangible way.

Her actions reminded me of how each of us involved in this work of hospice and palliative care are drawn into our patients' journeys, establishing vital and meaningful connections. It is from such connections that trusting relationships are formed and hopes are voiced, allowing nurses to provide optimal, individualized care. As such, I write this final letter as HPCC President with a spirit of sincere gratitude to each HPCC certificant. *Thank-you*, for all of the incredible ways you share your expertise, wisdom and presence with the patients and families in your care!

As I reflect on this past year's service for HPCC, I am in awe of the tremendous work accomplished by our CEO & Staff, Volunteers and Board of Directors. In the past 12 months we have adopted a new mission and vision, along with a new name, poising the organization well for future growth. In addition, HPCC, HPNA and HPNF leaders worked tirelessly this year, enhancing our collaborative efforts through joint strategic planning, the launch of a united website, and the announcement of the Campaign to Advance Expert Care in Serious Illness. My gratitude to all who have worked to make all of these exciting changes and initiatives possible; a special thank-you to the invaluable contributions of Denise Stahl, Julie Holman, and Judy Friedrichs who complete their terms of service on the HPCC Board. We warmly welcome Kathleen Broglio and Catherine Glennon to the 2015 HPCC Board, and look forward to Sue Koff's leadership as 2015-2016 HPCC President.

In 2015, there will be numerous opportunities for each certificant to live out our mission of advancing expert care in serious illness: become involved with one of the six Campaign strategy teams, read through the new IOM report "*Dying in America*," enroll in an Item Writer Workshop, apply to serve on an exam development committee, become a member of HPNA and join in the online community discussions, share the value of certification with your patients and employer, mentor others interested in this work.

Your story, your voice, your expertise is needed as we work together to move our specialty forward, while meeting the needs of patients and families.

As this year draws to an end, my wish is that moments of reflection will meet each of you; a time to recall the patients who reached out to you this year, a time to reconnect with the value and meaning of your work, a time for renewal and hope.

With deep respect and gratitude,



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HPCC President