

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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HPCG Offers an Overdose Loss Support Group

(GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA)—Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro (HPCG) has started a free support group to help people who are grieving the overdose death of a loved one. As opioid abuse continues to escalate, an increasing number of local families are left reeling from the sudden death of a child, sibling or parent.

“This is a very unique, and often traumatic loss,” said Kimberly Grove, a bereavement counselor at HPCG. “Those who are grieving an overdose death need a safe, nonjudgmental place to share their pain and begin to heal.”

The group started in response to growing community need. In addition to the pain of losing a loved one, the group’s participants struggle with the heavy stigma surrounding drug abuse. They often feel judged by others who question how they could “let this happen.” Many suffer from isolation after family and friends grow distant or refuse to acknowledge the cause of their loved one’s death.

Randy Abbott, a participant in the monthly support group, says the group “absolutely” has helped him. He recalls how some people recoiled when he told them that his daughter, Vanessa, died of a heroin overdose in January 2015.

“You’d see it in their faces. They wish they hadn’t asked,” Abbott said. “So being with a group of people who *get it*, who’ve been through it, has been extremely helpful.”

Opioid abuse is an epidemic, with a death toll rivaling that of the AIDS crisis of the early 1990s. Greensboro has averaged 24 overdoses per month since August 2016—compared to about ten per month just one year ago, according to the Greensboro Police Department.

HPCG’s Counseling and Education Center offers individual counseling, support groups and educational workshops to anyone in the community who is grieving, no matter how their loved one died. Thanks to generous community support, these services are made available to everyone free-of-charge.

“Addiction is a public health issue, and our role at Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro is to be a community resource for those affected,” said Grove.

For more information about the overdose loss support group, please call 336.621.5565 or email thecenter@hospicegso.org

About HPCG

HPCG, a nonprofit organization serving Guilford County and surrounding areas since 1980, is situated on a 14.75 acre campus at 2500 Summit Avenue. HPCG provides physical, emotional and spiritual support for children and adults faced with a life-limiting illness, as well as their caregivers and families. For more information, call 336.621.2500 or visit www.hospicegso.org.