

Registration

HOSPICE

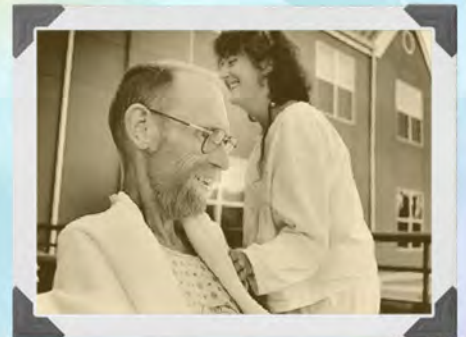
Through the Decades

• 1960's • 1970's • 1980's • 1990's • 2000's • 2010's • 2020's •

AHPCO 2026 Annual Conference

October 14-16, 2026

Embassy Suites Hotel Gulf Shores, AL
112 West Beach Boulevard, Gulf Shores, AL 36542



ALABAMA
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE ORGANIZATION

Celebrating 60 Years of Hospice

Join us as we celebrate 60 plus years of hospice at the Alabama Hospice and Palliative Care Organization’s 2026 Annual Conference!

We have a new venue! The Embassy Suites Hotel, Gulf Shores.



Embassy Suites By Hilton Gulf Shores Beach Resort

112 West Beach Boulevard
Gulf Shores, AL 36542
October 14-16, 2026

| Days Attending | Member | Non-Member |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| Full Conference | \$600 | \$750 |
| Two Days | \$400 | \$500 |
| One Day | \$200 | \$250 |

Register Online

Hotel Rates Available Tuesday - Saturday, starting at \$174.00 per night.

Feel free to come earlier or stay later!

Includes two beach chairs.

The cutoff date for special rates is September 14.

Reservation Link: [AL Hospice 2026 Annual Meeting Booking Link](#)

Note: If the dates you entered are before or after our group dates, your special rate may not show – please call the hotel.

Continuing Education Information

15.4 Nursing Contact Hours • 13.5 Social Work Contact Hours

AHPCO is a recognized provider of continuing education in Alabama. Credit is given for each day and participants must attend all sessions during the day to receive contact hours. No partial credit will be given.

Alabama Board of Nursing Provider Number: ABNP 1070 Expiration: 5/17/2028

Alabama State Board of Social Work Examiners Provider Number: 0010 Expiration: 7/31/2026

Tuesday, October 13, 2026

Note Day Change for AHPCO Meeting

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM | AHPCO Executive Committee and Board Meeting |
| 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM | Meet and Greet Hotel Cocktail Hour |

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 60s and 70s

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| 7:00 am - 8:00 AM | Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table (included with hotel) |
| 8:00-AM - 8:30 AM | Welcome and Introductions |
| 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM | The Commitment Compass - Veronica Sterling |
| 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM | Vendor Visits / Break |
| 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM | Broken Heart Syndrome - Doris Vaughans |
| 11:15 AM - 11:30 AM | Vendor Visits / Break |
| 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM | Let's Get Talking: Creative Ways to Talk about End-of-Life Lisa Pahl |
| 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM | Lunch and Discussion |
| 2:00 PM - 2:15 PM | Vendor Visits / Break |
| 2:15 PM - 3:15 PM | Peace, Love and Pain and Symptom Management Jackie Palmore |
| 3:15 PM | Vendor Visits / Networking |

Thursday, October 15, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 80s and 90s

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 7:00 am - 8:00 AM | Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table (included with hotel) | |
| 8:00-AM - 8:30 AM | Introduction to the Day | |
| 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM | When Words Have New Meanings - Gabby Jimenez | |
| 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM | Vendor Visits / Break | |
| 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM | Death Doulas - Gabby Jimenez | Intercoastal A Marijuana for Symptom Management - Rebecca Christensen, PharmD |
| 11:15 AM - 11:30 AM | Vendor Visits / Break | |
| 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM | Generational Perspectives at Work - Jennifer Hannum | Intercoastal A Understanding the Medicare Hospice Cap - Glenn Beville |
| 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM | Working Lunch: Alone, Not Unprepared: Protecting Hospice Staff in the Office and the Field - Edward Colson | |
| 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM | Hospice Spotlight: Pet Therapy - Paul Garing, Lakeside Hospice | |
| 2:30 PM - 4:00 PM | Vendor Visits / Networking | |

AHPCO Silent Auction 2026

We encourage all participants to bring an item or gift basket for the AHPCO Silent Auction.

Join in the fun and excitement of the conference by bidding on great items from participants and vendors!





Friday, October 16, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 2000s

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| 7:00 am - 8:00 AM | Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table (included with hotel) |
| 8:00 AM - 8:15AM | Introduction to the Day |
| 8:15 AM - 9:45 AM | Pearls of Communication in Palliative Care and Hospice: Five F's, Goals of Care, and NURSE - Rodney Tucker, MD |
| 9:45 AM - 10: 00 AM | Vendor Visits / Break |
| 10:00AM - 11:00 AM | Survey - Vicki Barron, CHAP |
| 11:00 AM - 12 :00 PM | The Heart for Hospice - Joan Wells |
| 12:00 PM - 12:15 PM | Closing |

The Return of the Wine Pull

Explore new wines by participating in the AHPCO Wine Pull!

Bring a bottle of wine or champagne \$15 minimum value.

Purchase a \$25 Ticket and get ready for a great bottle of Vino

All proceeds go to the AHPCO Conference Fund



Tuesday, October 13, 2026

Note Day Change for AHPCO Meeting

3:30 PM - 5:00 PM **AHPCO Executive Committee and Board Meeting**

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM **Meet and Greet Hotel Cocktail Hour**

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 60s and 70s

7:00 am - 8:00 AM **Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table** (included with hotel)

8:00-AM - 8:30 AM **Welcome and Introductions**

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM **The Commitment Compass - Veronica Sterling**



Veronica Sterling

Traditional goal setting can steer us away from our purpose, clouding effort and achievement with overwhelm and unfulfillment. The Commitment Compass offers a powerful alternative. In this transformational keynote, Veronica introduces a fresh, grounded framework for people who are ready to move beyond to-do lists and into meaningful, sustainable action. In this keynote Veronica offers practical exercise, clear structure, and engaging storytelling – highlighting the calamity and adventure of renovating a vintage Airstream to travel to every U.S. National Park with her husband. Audience members will learn to name what truly matters, make space to pursue it, and stay the course when it gets hard.

About Veronica

Veronica Sterling is a keynote speaker known for helping audiences navigate change with clarity, capacity, and courage. Her message is shaped by more than twenty years of executive leadership, including her role as CEO of Hospice of Southwest Ohio. Her work informs her approach to purpose, resilience, and alignment.



Veronica Sterling

Veronica created The Commitment Compass to give people and teams a grounded, practical method for shaping meaningful goals and staying steady through seasons of transition. Based in Cincinnati, Ohio, Veronica is available for speaking engagements nationwide.

10:00 AM -10:15 AM

Vendor Visits / Break

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 60s and 70s

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

Broken Heart Syndrome
Doris Vaughans, LPC, PhD, LPC, NCC



Doris Vaughans

This session will explore the Broken Heart Syndrome, its diagnostic complexities, its implications for hospice care, and the ethical and clinical considerations involved in supporting patients, caregivers, and bereaved individuals at elevated risk.

Dr. Vaughans will describe the clinical features and contributing factors associated with the Broken Heart Syndrome and discuss the relationship between emotional stressors and the physiological responses that characterize the syndrome. Participants will be able to identify possible risk factors that increase vulnerability among hospice patients, caregivers and bereaved individuals.

About Doris

Dr. Doris Vaughans has a private practice, Tuscaloosa Center for Cognitive Therapy. She is an international faculty member at Portland Institute for Loss and Transition, the Associate Director of Embedded Counseling at the University of Alabama, and teaches grief counseling at the University of West Alabama as an adjunct professor. Since the death of her beloved son, CJ Vaughans, she has been educating the public on Broken Heart Syndrome.

Dr. Vaughans had a career as a Registered Nurse for more than 22 years in the areas of palliative and hospice care. Dr. Vaughans is the mother of three children, Tiffany, CJ (1985 - 2025), and Lea. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc, Tuscaloosa Alumnae Chapter, Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, and loves reading, watching football, traveling, all things grandchildren, and spending time with family and friends.



Doris Vaughans

11:15 AM -11:30 AM

Vendor Visits / Break

The founding idea of Hospice

- The modern hospice movement began in 1967 with St. Christopher’s Hospice in London, founded by Dame Cicely Saunders.
- This was the first place designed specifically for people who were dying, not to cure them—but to care for them.
- Hospice in the late 1960s focused on a radically different philosophy:
 - Relief of pain (what Saunders called “total pain”)
 - Emotional and psychological support
 - Spiritual care and dignity at end of life
- This “whole-person” approach was groundbreaking compared to traditional medical models.



Wednesday, October 14, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 60s and 70s

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Let's Get Talking: Creative Ways to Talk about End-of-Life

Lisa Pahl



Lisa Pahl

Lisa will identify barriers that patients and families face when discussing end-of-life preferences and provide tools to help facilitate the discussion. By practicing skills users will find increased confidence in initiating and guiding value based discussions.

About Lisa

Lisa Pahl, LCSW, APHSW-C, is an end-of-life educator, speaker, and CEO of The Death Deck, LLC (thedeathdeck.com), a company dedicated to creating tools that inspire meaningful conversations about what matters most in our lives and in our deaths. With over eighteen years of experience in hospice and seven years in emergency medicine, Lisa helps individuals and families navigate illness, dying, and grief with greater clarity and compassion.

She is also an expert contributor for Help Texts, providing grief and mental health support through text-based care, and volunteers with the Humane Prison Hospice Project, supporting palliative care education for incarcerated individuals. Guided by her belief that peace at the end begins with meaningful conversations over time, Lisa engages audiences in thoughtful, approachable dialogue that encourages preparation, connection, and a deeper understanding of what it means to live and die well.



Lisa Pahl

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Lunch and Interactive Discussion

2:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Vendor Visits / Break

By the early 1970s, hospice ideas spread to the U.S. and elsewhere.

- The first modern U.S. hospice (Connecticut Hospice) was established in 1974, inspired by Saunders' work.
- Hospice was not widely known—many people (even healthcare professionals) didn't understand it.
- Programs were often small, community based or volunteer.

Hospice in the 1970s often looked like:

- Home-based care (many patients stayed with family)
- Volunteer support teams (nurses, clergy, social workers, and trained volunteers)
- Limited or no insurance reimbursement
- Reliance on donations and community support

Hospice was defined by its focus on comfort, support for patients and families and acceptance of death as a natural part of life.



Florence Ward,
Founder of the American hospice movement

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 60s and 70s

2:15 PM - 3:15 PM

Peace, Love, & Pain, Symptom Management

Jackie Palmore, RN, BSN, CHPN



Jackie Palmore

In this presentation, Jackie’s goal is to empower attendees with advanced clinical knowledge and practical strategies to confidently assess, manage and optimize pain control, ultimately improving the quality of life and comfort for patients at the end of life.

By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to identify the components of total pain (physical, psychological, social and spiritual) and evaluate how each impacts a patient’s overall comfort. They will also be able to formulate an individualized multi-modal pain management strategy utilizing both pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions.

About Jackie

Jackie Palmore has 37 years combined experience in hospice and palliative care. An exciting part of her nursing career was the opportunity to implement the first hospice prison program for the State of Alabama in 2001, training volunteer inmates to care for dying inmates. She is passionate about education when it comes to hospice and palliative care. She is an End-of-Life Nurse Educator and has an advanced certification in hospice and palliative care.

She has been with UAB’s Center for Palliative and Supportive care for 20 years in her role as a Palliative Care Coordinator.



Jackie Palmore

3:15 PM

Vendor Visits / Networking

By the end of the 1990s, hospice in the U.S. had evolved from a small, philanthropic experiment into a permanent Medicare benefit

- Medicare Hospice Benefit (1982) – The single most important milestone. Congress created a demonstration benefit that allowed Medicare to reimburse hospice care, legitimizing the model and enabling growth.
- National Hospice Organization (NHO) standard-setting (1978-1985) – The NHO published common standards of practice, paving the way for accreditation and quality control.
- Joint Commission accreditation (early 1980s) – Helped formalize hospice as a healthcare provider rather than a volunteer service.
- Shift from volunteerism to professionalization – Early hospices relied heavily on volunteers and philanthropy; the 1980s introduced interdisciplinary teams, clinical protocols, and regulatory expectations.
- Federal research investment – The National Cancer Institute funded early hospice research, validating the model and informing policy.

What this decade accomplished: Hospice became a recognized, reimbursable, regulated part of the U.S. healthcare system.



Celebrating passage of the Hospice Medicare Benefit 1982

Thursday, October 15, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 80s and 90s

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| 7:00 am - 8:00 AM | Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table (included with hotel) |
|-------------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 8:00-AM - 8:30 AM | Introduction to the Day |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM | When Words Have New Meanings - Gabby Jimenez |
|--------------------|---|



There is a deeper meaning behind the and language and experiences that shape end-of-life care. Gabby strives to reconnect participants to the heart of hospice work by reflecting on relational aspects of care, presence, listening and honoring individual choices. Her goal is to cultivate a renewed sense of purpose, meaning and pride in the work of accompanying others at the end-of-life

About Gabby

Gabrielle Elise “Gabby” Jimenez is an end-of-life educator, author, hospice nurse, and founder of The Hospice Heart, an online community offering support and education around death, caregiving, and grief.

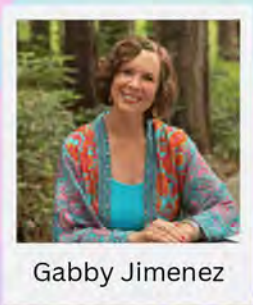
She entered this work at 45 after helping a close friend with prostate cancer. Sitting at his bedside showed her the power of compassionate presence, inspiring her to complete an adult-education program, become a caregiver, and later train as a hospice nurse.

In 2019, she launched The Hospice Heart on Facebook as a safe space for end-of-life conversations. The community grew rapidly—especially during COVID-19—and now includes more than 140,000 people who are dying, caregiving, grieving, or preparing for loss.



| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 10:00 AM - 10:15 AM | Vendor Visits / Break |
|---------------------|------------------------------|

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 10:15 AM - 11:15 AM | Breakout 1A - Coastal B&C Death Doulas - Gabby Jimenez |
|---------------------|---|



Death Doula’s are a growing part of end-of-life care and can enhance hospice for patients and their loved ones. In this presentation, Gabby will help participants to understand the role of the Death Doula and how they can support the emotional and human experience of dying. She will explore ways to be present with patients and families without relying on clinical language. In addition, she will help participants with real-world tools to respond to what arises and help build confidence in supporting end-of-life care with clarity, calm and confidence.

(see Gabby’s information above)

Thursday, October 15, 2026

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Celebrating the 80s and 90s

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

Breakout 1B - Intercoastal A
Marijuana for Symptom Management
Rebecca Christensen, PharmD



Rebecca Christensen

The purpose of this presentation is to critically appraise the current evidence and guideline recommendations for medical cannabis/cannabinoids in hospice symptom management (pain, nausea/vomiting, appetite, sleep, anxiety), and apply this to patient selection, counseling, and risk-benefit decision-making in refractory symptoms.

About Rebecca

Idaho State University graduate Rebecca Christensen followed in her grandfather’s footsteps into pharmacy, building a career rooted in compassion, clinical excellence, and service. More than 20 years ago, while working with long-term care patients, she discovered her passion for hospice care – a field that perfectly blended her love of patient advocacy, symptom management, and interdisciplinary teamwork.

As the Clinical Services Director of Better RX, Rebecca is deeply committed to advancing hospice care through education, mentorship, and clinical leadership. She is passionate about empowering hospice teams with the knowledge and confidence to provide exceptional end-of-life care and continuously elevate the patient and family experience.

Outside of her professional life, Rebecca is a proud mother of three adult children and shares her home with two dogs and two cats, who keep life lively and full of personality.



Rebecca Christensen

11:15 AM -11:30 AM

Vendor Visits / Break

The Alabama Hospice Organization was founded in 1982 to help communities establish hospices and to advocate for hospice care in Alabama. This coincided with the creation of the Medicare hospice benefit in August of 1982.



Thursday, October 15, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 80s and 90s

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Breakout 2A - Coastal B&C

Generational Perspectives at Work - Jennifer Hannum, RN, BSN



Jennifer Hannum

This presentation is designed to explain how generational perspectives impact workplace behavior and communications. Participants will be able to identify generations currently in the work force and learn strategies for effective collaboration across age groups.

About Jennifer

Jennifer Hannum started her hospice journey in 2000 as an administrative assistant, quickly discovering a passion that led her to earn a BSN from Florida Gulf Coast University. She advanced through roles from RN Case Manager to Clinical Manager and Corporate Staff Development, developing a deep expertise in documentation education.

Today, as Director of Learning Services at KanTime Software, Jennifer helps shape training tools and enjoys engaging with post-acute care agencies during the training phase of their implementation. Jennifer also serves as the social media consultant for AHPCO.



Jennifer Hannum

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Breakout 2B - Intercoastal A

Understanding the Medicare Hospice CAP - Glenn Beville



Glenn Beville

Medicare capitation payments are difficult to calculate. In this presentation, Glenn will help participants understand the basic components and history of aggregate CAP calculation, learn strategies to lower the risk of an aggregate CAP overpayment and learn options when facing a CAP payment.

About Glenn

Glenn Beville is the Principal Consultant with Cardinal Point Consulting, LLC, where he provides interim, part-time, and fractional CFO services, client advisory, and other services to healthcare clients. Other services include Medicare cost report preparation, income tax return preparation, and Medicare hospice cap analysis. He has served in various consulting roles for the past 14 years and founded Cardinal Point Consulting 10 years ago.

Glenn also has served as the AHPCO Treasurer for more than a decade.



Glenn Beville

Thursday, October 15, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 80s and 90s

12:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Working Lunch:

Alone, Not Unprepared: Protecting Hospice Staff in the Office and the Field - Edward Colson



Edward Colson

The goals of this program is to identify common workplace violence risks specific to hospice settings, including both office environments and in-home patient visits, and recognize early warning signs staff should not ignore.

Participants will be able to apply practical strategies to reduce risk and improve staff safety, including pre-visit planning, situational awareness, communication protocols, and clear decision-making in the moment.

About Edward

Edward Colson is the owner of Ready Northwest, based out of Portland, Oregon. He has worked in emergency management since 2016, assisting healthcare partners with emergency management and preparedness needs, including planning, training, and exercises. His experience includes working with public health emergency preparedness, federally qualified health centers in Oregon and Washington, hospice agencies, and ambulatory surgery centers. He has spoken on emergency management and preparedness for the Oregon Association of Home Care and works with their members in providing technical assistance.

Edward also serves as Chair of the West Coast Chapter and as a Fellow of the Institute of Strategic Risk Management.



Edward Colson

2:00 PM - 2:30 PM

Hospice Spotlight: Pet Therapy - Paul Garing, Lakeside Hospice

This year we spotlight Lakeside Hospice’s Pet Therapy Program featuring Renfro.

About Paul and Renfro

Paul Garing is the Community Liaison for Lakeside Hospice, serving eight counties in Central Alabama. After leading the organization as Executive Director for six years, Paul found a new calling in community outreach—accompanied by his loyal therapy dog, Renfro.

Whether they are visiting homes, hospitals or nursing facilities, this dynamic duo is dedicated to providing compassionate care. Renfro has even earned a reputation as one of Lakeside’s top marketers over the last five years! Paul, Renfro, and the entire Lakeside team share two vital qualities: a heart for service and a love for great food.



Paul Garing



Paul Garing



Renfro



Renfro

Thursday, October 15, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 80s and 90s

2:30 PM - 4:00 PM **Vendor Visits and Networking**

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM **Stars in the Sun Karaoke Party - *SoundWave Bar***



Thursday, October 15th

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

DJ and Karaoke

Music from the 60s through today!

Dress in your favorite decade.



Bar & Hors D'oeuvres Sponsor:





Karaoke Sponsor:



Friday, October 16, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

| | |
|---|--|
| 7:00 am - 8:00 AM | Breakfast on your own - Tide and Table (included with hotel) |
| 8:00-AM - 8:15AM | Introduction to the Day |
| 8:15 AM - 9:45 AM | Pearls of Communication in Palliative Care and Hospice: Five F’s, Goals of Care, and NURSE - Rodney Tucker, MD |
|  <p>Rodney Tucker</p>  <p>Rodney Tucker</p> | <p>Dr. Tucker will introduce the concept of the Five F’s of patient decision making and participants will practice a simple three question “goals of care” conversation and incorporate “NURSE” statements in acknowledging emotion in tough conversations.</p> <p>About Rodney</p> <p>Rodney O. Tucker, MD MMM, graduated from medical school at UAB in 1989 and is board certified in Internal Medicine and Hospice and Palliative Medicine. After a career in private practice, home care and hospice, Dr. Tucker returned to UAB in 2002. Since then, he has been active in the development of a comprehensive clinical, educational and research program in palliative care, including the Southeast Institute for Innovation in Palliative and Supportive Care at UAB. Serving currently as the Director of the UAB Center for Palliative and Supportive Care, Dr. Tucker also completed his Masters in Medical Management at the University of Southern California in 2009.</p> <p>He has been a member of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM) and the Center for the Advancement of Palliative Care (CAPC) for two decades, having served in several leadership roles. He was the national President of AAHPM in 2020-2021 and has participated in the education and mentorship of over 300 fellow learners and health care systems. From 2013-2018, Rodney also served in the role of Chief Experience Officer for UAB Medicine. He also served as the Associate Director for Access, Belonging and Culture in the O’Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center from 2022-2025 and is the lead organizer of the LGBTQ+ Faculty Association in the Heersink School of Medicine.</p> |
| 9:45 AM - 10:00 AM | Vendor Visits / Break |

In 2012, the Alabama Hospice Organization changed its name to the Alabama Hospice and Palliative Care Organization to promote and advocate for expanded palliative care beyond hospice end-of-life care.

Friday, October 16, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

Celebrating the 2000s

10:00AM - 11:00 AM

Survey Readiness and Compliance Issues Impacting Hospices

- Victoria Barron, MBA, BSN, RN, CHS-C



Vicki Barron

Vicki will describe the current survey and regulatory environment impacting hospice agencies and identify the top hospice survey findings impacting hospice agencies. In addition she will describe survey readiness and compliance strategies that can be utilized by agencies to implement ongoing, organization-wide survey compliance.

About Victoria

Vicki Barron is a Registered Nurse with more than 40 years of nursing and healthcare experience including roles with home health, hospice, home care, and home infusion providers. Vicki has served as a Community Health Accreditation Partner (CHAP) site visitor, clinical consultant providing education and support to home health and hospice providers nationally, agency administrator, interim administrator, clinical director, direct care registered nurse and QAPI team member. As the Director of Clinical Education for CHAP, Victoria directs and engages in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs and activities and is the Program Director for CHAP's American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Accredited Provider Program.



Vicki Barron

Hospice in the 2000s: Regulation, Scale, and Complexity

- Increased regulation and compliance oversight
- Rise of for-profit hospice organizations
- Broader patient eligibility (more chronic illness, not just cancer)
- Growing scrutiny on billing and quality
- Oversight organizations like OIG and CMS intensified focus on:
 - Fraud prevention
 - Billing accuracy
 - Eligibility requirements
 - Audits, investigations, and payment reviews became more common



Friday, October 16, 2026

All events in Coastal B & C unless otherwise noted

11:00AM - 12:00 PM

The Heart for Hospice - Joan Wells, RN, CHPN



Joan Wells

Joan will review the core philosophy and guiding principles of hospice care and identify the physical, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients and their families.

Focusing on the interdisciplinary team Joan will explain the importance of delivering compassionate patient-centered care and describe strategies for fostering meaningful connections with patients and families.

About Joan

Joan Wells is a native of Tuscaloosa, raised and educated in the community she calls home. Joan has known she had the spirit of serving others for as long as she can remember. The desire to pursue a career in nursing came naturally, with a deep passion for the elderly and caring for terminally ill patients and families.

Joan has worked for Hospice of West Alabama for the past 26 years. She currently serves as the Director of Nursing and Education Coordinator. Joan is ELNEC certified and has held a hospice and palliative nurse certification since 2006. She welcomes opportunities to share her passion for quality end of life care by speaking to various audiences and platforms. Joan records a monthly AHPCO aide teleconference series that used for training and maintaining contact hour requirements for hospice organizations across the state. Joan actively works with the Alabama Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, and is a member of the Alabama State Nurses Association.

Joan has two daughters and one granddaughter. She is a member of Bethel Baptist Church where she is a member of the music and children’s ministry.



Joan Wells

12:00 PM - 12:15PM

Evaluations and Wrap Up

Major shifts in Hospice the 2000s:

1. **Payment & Compliance Pressure** - Hospice became a major Medicare expense category and triggered:
 - Audits (ZPIC, RAC, etc.)
 - Documentation requirements
 - Eligibility scrutiny

2. **Industry Growth & Commercialization**
 - a. Significant growth of for-profit providers
 - b. Expansion into:
 - Skilled nursing facilities
 - Assisted living
 - Hospital-based hospice programs
3. **Quality and Length of Stay issues**
 - a. Long length of stays (Alzheimers / Dementia)
 - b. Late referrals

THANKS TO OUR MEMBER HOSPICES

- Agape Care Alabama - Birmingham (ACG)
- Agape Care Alabama - Tuscaloosa (ACG)
- Alabama Hospice Care of Birmingham (LHC)
- Alabama Hospice Care of East Alabama (LHC)
- Alabama Hospice Care of Jasper (LHC)
- Alabama Hospice Care of Mobile (LHC)
- Alabama Hospice Care of Tuscaloosa (LHC)
- Alabama Hospice of the Shoals (LHC)
- Aveanna Hospice of Andalusia
- Aveanna Hospice of Cullman
- Aveanna Hospice of Decatur
- Aveanna Hospice of Demopolis
- Aveanna Hospice of Fairhope
- Aveanna Hospice of Gadsden
- Aveanna Hospice of Gardendale
- Aveanna Hospice of Greenville
- Aveanna Hospice of Huntsville
- Aveanna Hospice of Jasper
- Aveanna Hospice of Mobile
- Aveanna Hospice of Montgomery
- Aveanna Hospice of Pelham
- Aveanna Hospice of Pell City
- Aveanna Hospice of Scottsboro
- Aveanna Hospice of Sheffield
- Baptist Hospice - Montgomery
- Chattahoochee Hospice, Inc.
- Columbus Hospice of Alabama
- Community Hospice of Dale Medical Center
- Community Hospice of South Alabama - Foley (ACG)
- Community Hospice of South Alabama - Mobile (ACG)
- Community Hospice of South Alabama - Bay Minette (ACG)
- ExpectCare Hospice
- First Choice Hospice - Montgomery (ACG)
- First Choice Hospice - Elba (ACG)
- First Choice Hospice - Dothan (ACG)
- First Choice Hospice - Andalusia (ACG)
- Gentiva Hospice -Anniston
- Gentiva Hospice - Cullman
- Gentiva Hospice -Daphne
- Gentiva Hospice - Dothan
- Gentiva Hospice - Enterprise
- Gentiva Hospice - Florence
- Gentiva Hospice - Hoover
- Gentiva Hospice - Huntsville
- Gentiva Hospice - Jasper
- Gentiva Hospice - Montgomery
- Gentiva - Mobile
- Gentiva Hospice - Phenix City
- Gentiva Hospice - Rainbow City
- Heartlight Hospice (LHC)
- Hospice of Limestone County
- Hope Alabama - Gardendale (ACG)
- Hope Alabama - Rainbow City (ACG)
- Hospice of Northwest Alabama
- Hospice of the Valley
- Hospice of West Alabama
- Ivy Creek of Dadeville
- Ivy Creek Hospice of Elmore - Wetumpka
- Lakeside Hospice - Pell City
- Preferred Hospice - Florence
- Pro Health Hospice - Birmingham
- Pro Health Hospice - Gadsden
- Pro Health Hospice - Jasper
- Pro Health Hospice - Tuscaloosa
- Shepherds Cove, Albertville
- Shepherds Cove IPU, Albertville
- SouthernCare Atmore
- SouthernCare Daphne
- SouthernCare Dothan
- SouthernCare Enterprise
- SouthernCare Evergreen
- SouthernCare Greenville
- SouthernCare Grove Hill
- SouthernCare Mobile
- SouthernCare New Beacon Anniston
- SouthernCare New Beacon Jasper
- SouthernCare New Beacon Scottsboro
- SouthernCare New Beacon Alabaster
- SouthernCare New Beacon Alexander City
- SouthernCare New Beacon Clanton
- SouthernCare New Beacon Cullman
- SouthernCare New Beacon Decatur
- SouthernCare New Beacon Demopolis
- SouthernCare New Beacon Gadsden
- SouthernCare New Beacon Huntsville
- SouthernCare New Beacon Montgomery
- SouthernCare New Beacon N. Birmingham, AL
- SouthernCare New Beacon Quad Cities
- SouthernCare New Beacon S. Birmingham
- SouthernCare New Beacon Selma
- SouthernCare New Beacon Sylacauga
- Vitas - Dothan
- Vitas Mobile and Daphne

Registration Form



[Click to Register Online](#)

| Days Attending | Member | Non-Member |
|-----------------|--------|------------|
| Full Conference | \$600 | \$750 |
| Two Days | \$400 | \$550 |
| One Day | \$200 | \$250 |

AHPCO member hospices receive one three-day registration as part of their annual dues. All registrations are non-refundable, but they are transferrable. Registrations after September 15 subject so \$100 late fee.

Board Member Registration YES NO Member Hospice Name: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Discipline: RN LPN SW Other _____

Days Attending: All _____

Tues Board Meeting Wednesday Thursday Friday _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

T Shirt Size: _____ Dietary Restrictions : _____

Total Number of Registration _____ AHPCO Member YES NO TOTAL AMOUNT _____

Payment Type: Invoice Check Credit Card

Name on Credit Card: _____

Credit Card Number: _____ EXP Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Credit Card Mailing Address: _____

EMAIL Receipt to: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Discipline: ___ RN ___ LPN ___ SW Other _____

Days Attending: All _____

___ Tues Board Meeting ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

T Shirt Size: _____ Dietary Restrictions : _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Discipline: ___ RN ___ LPN ___ SW Other _____

Days Attending: All _____

___ Tues Board Meeting ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

T Shirt Size: _____ Dietary Restrictions : _____

Name: _____ Title: _____

Discipline: ___ RN ___ LPN ___ SW Other _____

Days Attending: All _____

___ Tues Board Meeting ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

T Shirt Size: _____ Dietary Restrictions : _____