



Hospice Help Foundation Strategic Plan 2025-2027

INTRODUCTION

Since 2008, Hospice Help Foundation (HHF) has been working to improve the comfort and quality of life for hospice patients and their families by providing urgent financial relief when they need it the most. Over this time, the organization has worked with more than 70 hospices and hundreds of hospice staff in New Hampshire, Maine, and other U.S. states to allocate over \$500,000 in financial relief to 900+ hospice patients of all ages and backgrounds.

Demand for this assistance has been steadily increasing, driving significant growth for HHF over the past several years. Although income to support this demand has also risen, its inconsistency has made long-term planning a challenge. With this in mind, HHF board and staff are focused on the future, setting clear goals and priorities to ensure the organization can continue advancing its mission for years to come.

PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning occurred between September-December 2024. The process incorporated the input of all staff and board members, as well as several external stakeholders. Oversight and guidance were provided by a Steering Committee composed of two HHF board members and 1 staff member, and all work was supported and facilitated by Brightspot Consultants.

Key activities included:

- September - October 2024
 - Review of background documents
 - Interviews with staff, board members, and external stakeholders
 - Steering Committee meetings (2)
 - Synthesis of findings
- October - November 2024
 - Retreat with staff and board focused on co-creation of strategic vision
 - Steering Committee meeting
 - Offline work by Brightspot and staff to draft 2025 budget and key operational assumptions
- November - December 2024
 - Retreat with staff and board focused on fundraising and governance
 - Synthesis of information and creation of Strategic Plan and Tactical Workplan

STRATEGIC VISION

HHF board and staff members established a long-term vision (~10 years) of expanding HHF into a national organization. To prepare for this future growth, the organization's current priority is to strengthen its operations (and particularly development efforts). In the near-term, HHF will concentrate on these efforts in order to lay the groundwork for its broader goals.

Key Strategic Choices

Through the strategic planning process, board and staff made several strategic choices to help guide HHF and clarify its vision going forward. These choices are as follows:

- **Geographic scope** – Given the long-term vision of achieving national reach, HHF will continue to be geographically responsive–i.e. the organization will not set specific patient assistance targets for New England versus other geographies.
- **For-profit partnerships** – HHF will continue to work with for-profit hospice agencies but will examine key indicators (such as specific star ratings and the avoidance of fraud cases / negative press) to ensure that organizations are values-aligned.
- **Role in expanding access to hospice** – Board and staff reaffirmed HHF's mission, centered on providing urgent financial relief to hospice patients. While HHF will focus on this core work, leaving awareness-building efforts to other organizations, it will continue to track and share demographic data to highlight who is accessing hospice care and requesting financial assistance.
- **Grantmaking criteria** – HHF will continue to support last wishes. Support for funerals/cremations will be provided only when this assistance is important enough to effectively represent a last wish. Finally, support for family members is only provided if they are a caregiver. There will be financial caps for certain support, as follows:
 - Last wishes – \$250 per request
 - Funerals/cremations – \$500 per request; no more than \$5,000 annually
 - Fuel assistance – \$600 per request
 - Rent/mortgage – aim to lower the award amounts but with no specific cap

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

To establish a solid foundation for sustainable growth and impact, HHF will focus on two key areas: financial sustainability and engaged governance. These priorities will guide operational efforts over the coming year, ensuring alignment with HHF's mission and long-term vision.

Financial Sustainability

Strengthening financial sustainability is critical to maintaining and expanding HHF's impact. To achieve this, HHF will prioritize the following:

1. *Meet Patient Assistance Targets*

- a. HHF will adhere to pre-established patient assistance targets, ensuring a balanced approach that meets community needs while safeguarding financial health.
 - b. Progress will be monitored quarterly, with adjustments made as necessary to stay within budgeted allocations.
- 2. *Expand Staff Capacity to Enhance Development Efforts*
 - a. Hiring a dedicated Patient Assistance Coordinator will allow HHF to streamline operations related to grantmaking, relationships with social workers, and administrative tasks such as check-cutting.
 - b. This additional capacity will enable the Executive Director (ED) and Foundation Coordinator to dedicate more time to strategic development efforts, including donor cultivation and fundraising initiatives.
- 3. *Build Development Capacity to Increase Revenue*

To diversify and grow HHF's income streams, the organization will:

 - a. Cultivate major donors through targeted relationship-building strategies.
 - b. Introduce a new fundraising event that generates sponsorship revenue and increases visibility.
 - c. Maintain existing efforts, including grant applications, annual appeal campaigns, and facility memorial donations.

Engaged Governance

For a nonprofit of HHF's size, the board is a cornerstone of its operational capacity and strategic success. To strengthen governance, HHF will pursue the following priorities:

- 1. *Board Recruitment and Onboarding*
 - a. HHF will actively recruit new board members, focusing on individuals with diverse expertise, networks, and a passion for HHF's mission.
 - b. A review of board recruitment messaging and onboarding processes will ensure clarity around the expectations, responsibilities, and time commitments required of new members.
- 2. *Enhance Board Leadership in Development*

Board members will play a pivotal role in expanding HHF's development capacity by:

 - a. Taking leadership roles in major donor cultivation efforts.
 - b. Assisting with planning, logistics, and sponsorship acquisition for the new fundraising event.
 - c. Supporting the ED in grantwriting through idea generation, connections, and review processes.

By addressing these operational priorities, HHF will position itself to achieve sustainable growth, improve service delivery, and amplify its impact in the community.

MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT

This strategic plan is a “living document” that will evolve as HHF’s work progresses. It will serve as a guiding framework, continually revisited and refined to ensure alignment with the organization’s mission, goals, and emerging opportunities. The ED and board will share responsibility for monitoring and evaluating progress against the plan’s objectives, ensuring that HHF remains adaptive and proactive in its approach.

Income and Patient Assistance Targets

- Staff and board members will track progress toward HHF’s annual financial and patient assistance grant targets.
- Metrics and milestones will be reviewed quarterly to evaluate whether HHF’s income projections and grant distribution remain on track. Adjustments will be made as needed to address shortfalls or capitalize on new opportunities.

End-of-Year Strategic Review

- By Q4 of each year, HHF will discuss the accuracy of income assumptions and overall progress. This review will serve as a foundation for the next year’s planning.
- Key questions to guide this review may include:
 - *To what extent have our income assumptions come to pass?*
 - *What is our capacity to apply for additional grants outside of NH?*
 - *How effectively has HHF engaged and cultivated major donors?*
 - *Is there additional income generation potential for the new event?*
 - *What is our Patient Assistance Target, in light of our income assumptions?*

CONCLUSION

With this plan, Hospice Help Foundation prepares to build upon its established history, inspired and ready to create the foundation for future growth, so that hospice patients in need of assistance will always have the help they need.

APPENDIX A - FULL LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

The following stakeholders provided input to inform the strategic planning work:

Steering Committee Members:

Board: Anne McSally, Julie Stone

Staff: Marsha Filion

Board Members:

Marta Hurgin

Janice Kanteres

Michele Lovell

Briana Marshall

Vanessa McElroy

Anne McSally

Dimitrios Panacopoulos

Julie Stone

Staff Members:

Kathy Borsh, Office Manager

Marsha Filion, Executive Director

Former Board Members

Betty Fortuin

Kate Swenson Tuttle

National Expert

Edo Banach, Manatt Health, Previous CEO and President at National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization

Consultant Support

Strategic planning was supported by Katherine Errecart and Melia Coletta of Brightspot Consultants.