

## **Care Partners of Cook County History and Context**

Care Partners of Cook County is a well-respected, community-based nonprofit located in Grand Marais, Minnesota. Care Partners provides support and companionship to those on the journey of aging and serious illness. With a small, part-time staff and over fifty volunteers, it provides care coordination, coaching, companionship and practical help for older adults and the people who care for them.

### **The Lay of the Land**

Cook County, with a population of 5,376 (27% over age 65), is uniquely rural. Located in the northeastern tip of Minnesota, it sits between the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and Lake Superior and includes the tribal lands of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa situated on the Canadian border. Cook County has a tourist-based economy, with a flourishing artists' community, growing number of broadband-based remote workers, and large population of retirees.

One of the challenges of its small and remote population is the lack many ancillary and for-profit services, including eye care, hospice, surgery, homecare agencies and assisted living. Often the nearest source is 110 miles away in Duluth. In response, local agencies have developed close, cooperative working relationships to strategically meet the community's basic needs. Care Partners was created and continues to evolve as part of that collaboration.

### **The Beginnings**

Care Partners of Cook County began as a community effort in 2006 to start a hospice. The effort was led by Dr. Sandy Stover with support from the North Shore Health Care Foundation, Sawtooth Mountain Clinic and Cook County North Shore Hospital (now North Shore Health), with the training of hospice volunteers in 2007. When it was determined that a licensed hospice was not feasible, the focus shifted to providing palliative care and support of older adults through a community-based approach. Care Partners of Cook County was formed in 2010 under the leadership of Kay Grindland (then Volunteer Coordinator) as a program of the North Shore Health Care Foundation.

Through funding from a Minnesota Department of Human Services grant in 2010 and federal Older Americans Act grant in 2012, Care Partners hired an RN Care Coordinator, expanded its focus to helping elders remain in their home and added Caregiver Consulting services. In 2013 volunteer-assisted transportation and group respite were added. Care Partners also presented public programs and professional trainings on palliative care, caregiving, and advance care planning.

### **A Growing Nonprofit**

With growing programs and broad community support, CPCC incorporated as a separate 501(c)3 nonprofit in 2015. Funding from the Northland Foundation Rural Aging Initiative supported CPCC with board development, policies, a new fiscal system, and marketing and fundraising tools. Kay assumed the role of Executive Director. With a part-time RN Care Coordinator/Caregiver Consultant, Program/Volunteer Coordinator, Service Coordinator, active nine-member board, and cadre of fifty volunteers, Care Partners has continued to respond to community needs and funding opportunities to build programs. These include a chore service in 2016, a one-time grief group, ongoing Caregiver Coffee

programs, and an Aging Mastery class. Ongoing programs to create a more dementia-capable community have included Dementia Friends classes, training for 1<sup>st</sup> responders and caregivers, Mindfulness-based Dementia Care, and piloting of a Memory Café. Special events include an annual Light Up a Life and Tree Lighting Ceremony, Ice Cream Social, and Quilt Raffle.

In response to the pandemic, Care Partners moved for a year to remote work, replaced paper processes with online ones, reduced rides to essential medical rides with careful protocols, and moved in-person visits to outdoor or telephone connections. A delivery service, telephone companion program, and online volunteer trainings were added.

Throughout its development, Care Partners has remained committed to its values, focusing on respect, confidentiality, and the needs of the whole person as we help individuals stay in their homes and community, receive the health care they want, and improve quality of life. Collaboration with other providers in Cook County remains strong. Recently a third grant from Northland Foundation's Rural Aging Initiative has allowed Care Partners to play a leadership role in developing a Cook County Aging Coalition. With support and involvement from the coalition, Care Partners is building a unified information hub for aging services that is 'owned' by the coalition. Branded as *Aging Well Resources*, it includes a resource website and Care Navigator services maintained and provided by Care Partners staff.

## **Care Partners of Cook County (CPCC) Executive Director Job Description**

### **Job Summary:**

The Executive Director is the lead staff person of the organization and works closely with the Board and staff to strategically lead and manage the organization.

Duties include: leadership, operations, public relations, fundraising, fiscal management, personnel and office management. Reports to the Board President.

### **Responsibilities:**

#### Leadership (in conjunction with the Board)

- works with the Board on the direction of CPCC including vision and mission
- works with partners, service providers, builds coalitions
- frames issues of aging for the community
- supports a strong board of directors and builds board involvement

#### Operations

- maintains the office including: equipment, central files and data base, space, phones, computers, supplies, insurance, space rental and areas in MOU
- works with Board on policies
- ensures the organization runs smoothly and in accordance with local, county, state and federal regulations when appropriate
- assists with program tasks when necessary

#### Fiscal management

- works with Board on yearly budget and forecasting
- manages the yearly budget
- manages finances of the organization
- supports a yearly audit
- ensures the appropriate financial accounting tools are in place
- enters expenses, deposits, donors and tracks grant funds
- works with a bookkeeper on monthly statements and bank reconciliations
- pays all taxes and expenses in a timely manner

#### Fundraising

- works in collaboration with the Board to ensure CPCC has the resources it needs for a balanced budget
- writes, monitors and reports on grants
- oversees special events
- researches new sources of revenue on an ongoing basis including cost sharing
- works with Board on community solicitations and individual donors

External public relations (in accordance with the Communications Policy)

- represents the organization at public meetings and events
- cultivates relationships with the media for the benefit of CPCC
- increases the visibility of CPCC through a wide variety of marketing strategies (website, brochures, newsletter etc.)

Strategic Planning (in conjunction with the Board)

- program planning and development / evaluation
- organizational planning / needs

Human Resource Management

- recruits, hires, trains and supervises CPCC staff
- leads, coaches, develops and evaluates CPCC staff
- oversees the recruitment, training, supervision of volunteers
- monitors personnel files and other confidential employment files in accordance with legal and regulatory rules
- keep current on state and federal laws

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's Degree from an accredited college or university; or equivalent experience is required.
- Demonstrated excellence in organizational, financial and personnel management as well as past experience in these areas.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Experience or willingness and desire to learn grant writing, fundraising, and grant administration.
- Prefer experience in healthcare or social services. Experience in aging services or palliative care concepts is desirable.
- Prefer experience and knowledge within non-profits.



# Touchstones

**Vision:** *We envision a community that is fully supported to navigate through our shared journeys of aging, chronic illness and end-of-life.*

**Mission:** *Care Partners: Provides support and companionship on the journey of aging and serious illness.*

## Values:

Client-centered: We focus on the goals and needs of the whole person.

Respect: We maintain healthy boundaries & honor the journey of each person we encounter.

Confidentiality: We hold the privacy of client information as paramount.

Collaboration: We support and work with the continuum of elder services in Cook County.

## Goals:

Allow older adults to stay in their homes and community.

Improve quality of life for people suffering from serious illness.

Support family caregivers and activate compassionate volunteers.

Help people plan and get the healthcare they want.

Educate and advocate on aging, dementia, and end-of-life issues.

## Services:

- RN Care Coordination (palliative care)
- Caregiver coaching and support
- Dementia Education & Coaching
- Resource & Referral
- Advance Care Planning
- Volunteer companionship, respite and presence at end of life
- Senior Rides (volunteer assisted transportation)
- Senior Chore Program

*Cook County is a wonderful place to live & we want to stay here as we age.*

*Care Partners provides companionship and practical help for older adults and the people who care for them.*

*Our work depends on volunteers and funding from people in our community, if you know someone who can benefit from our services or if you have an interest in joining or supporting us, let me know!*