

I remember November 1, 2010 as if it just happened. That was the day we admitted our first patients to Bobby's Hospice. It was a sunny, cool day and there was nervous anticipation and excitement in the air. We looked like children at Christmas with our noses pressed to the windows as we awaited the ambulances to arrive with our first patients.

We admitted two patients that day and I remember them both very clearly. My story is about the second patient we admitted that day, an amicable gentle man with a broad smile and a quick wit. "D" told me that his life had been periodically hard due to prolonged substance abuse and drinking. His eyes filled with tears as he glanced around his room at Hospice. He told me that he had never lived in a place so nice. Due to his addictions, he had faced homelessness and now he felt he was in a "palace."

"D's" brother's life had taken a different road – marriage, children, nice house and a career as a lawyer. They had not always been close, but "D" could not wait to show his brother his new home. Tears filled everyone's eyes when he proudly showed his brother and wife around. "D's" terminal illness had brought them back together and given him his own "palace." When "D's" visitors left, happiness and sorrow were palpable. Even though "D" died in just 11 days, he was able to walk his last steps in dignity and comfort in one of the nicest places he had ever lived.

For me, this case confirmed that I had made the right decision to come to work at Bobby's Hospice. Our doors are wide open to all people regardless of social, economic or ethnic diversity. It is a place of non-judgement where all people are respected and cared for equally.

Tim Hawkes
Licensed Practical Nurse

