

緩和療護

PALLIATIVE CARE

What is Palliative Care?

You may have heard of a new medical term – palliative care (pronounced PAH-LEE-UH-TIVE). For the last thirty years, palliative care has been provided by hospice programs for dying Americans. Currently these programs serve more than 1 million patients and their families each year.

Now this very same approach to care is being used by other healthcare providers, including teams in hospitals, nursing facilities and home health agencies in combination with other medical treatments to help people who are seriously ill.

Palliative care is care for persons with a serious illness, regardless of life expectancy. The goal of palliative care is to improve the quality of a seriously ill person's life and support that person and their family during and after treatment.

Many of the providers of palliative care are also the same doctors, nurses, social workers and other professionals who provide hospice care.

To palliate means to make comfortable by treating a person's symptoms from an illness. Hospice and palliative care both focus on helping a person be comfortable by addressing issues causing physical or emotional pain, or suffering. Hospice and other palliative care providers have teams of people working together to provide care.



Hospice focuses on relieving symptoms and supporting patients with a life expectancy of months not years, and their families. However, palliative care may be given at any time during a patient's illness, from diagnosis on. Most hospices have a set of defined services, team members and rules and regulations. Some hospice providers provide palliative care as a separate program or service, which can be very confusing to patients and families. The list of questions below provides answers to common questions about the difference between hospice and palliative care.

Question	Palliative Care	Hospice Care
Who can receive this care?	Anyone with a serious illness, regardless of life expectancy.	Someone with an illness with a life expectancy measured in months not years.
Can I continue to receive treatments to cure my illness?	You may receive palliative care and curative care at the same time.	Treatments and medicines aimed at relieving symptoms are provided.
Does Medicare pay?	Some treatments and medications may be covered.	Medicare pays all charges related to hospice.
Does Medicaid pay?	Some treatments and medications may be covered.	In 47 states, Medicaid pays all charges related to hospice.
Does private insurance pay?	Some treatments and medications may be covered.	Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit.
Is this a package deal?	No, there is no palliative care package, the services are flexible and based on the patient's needs.	Medicare and Medicaid hospice benefits are package deals.
How long can I receive care?	This will depend upon your care needs, and the coverage you have through Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance.	As long as you meet the hospice's criteria of an illness with a life expectancy of months not years.
What organizations provide these services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitals Hospices Nursing facilities Healthcare clinics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospice organizations Hospice programs based out of a hospital Other healthcare organizations
Where are services provided?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Assisted living facility Nursing facility Hospital 	<p>Usually, wherever the patient resides, in their home, assisted living facility, nursing facility, or hospital.</p> <p>Some hospices have facilities where people can live, such as a hospice residence, or receive care for short-term reasons, such as acute pain or symptom management.</p>
Who provides these services?	It varies. However usually there is a team including doctors, nurses, social workers and chaplains, similar to the hospice team.	A team – doctor, nurse, social worker, chaplain, volunteer, home health aide and others.

HELPFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING PALLIATIVE CARE

Getting Palliative Care

- Why is palliative care being recommended to me?
- When am I eligible for services?
- Are there treatments I must stop, and why?
- Which ones may I continue?

Setting

- Where is the palliative care team or program based?
- Where can I receive this care?

Staffing

- Who is on the palliative care team?
- How does the team work together to provide care?

Volunteers

- Are there volunteers available to me?
- What can volunteers do?

You and Your Family

- How will my family and loved ones be included in my care?
- How can my loved ones and I get information and learn caregiving skills to meet my care needs?

Comfort and Pain

- How does the care team talk with my doctor?
- How do I get emergency treatment for pain and other symptoms during the day and after hours?
- How will the care team address our spiritual and emotional needs?

What if I don't live at home?

- Can care be delivered to me in a nursing home or other facility?

Other Services

- What other services will be offered to me?

For more information contact CaringInfo:

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