



# What services come with **Hospice**?

A team of specialists offer patients holistic support, which treats the whole person, rather than focusing on single symptoms or body parts. Hospice provides for each patient's unique needs, nurturing their physical, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being.

## Care may include:

- Around-the-clock, daily access to nursing staff
- Periodic visits by a registered nurse (RN) or licensed practical nurse (LPN)
- Personal care assistance by a certified home health aide (HHA)
- Care oversight by a hospice medical director
- Support from a social worker for emotional and practical issues
- Spiritual and faith-based support
- Medical equipment and medications
- Assistance, support, and companionship from trained volunteers
- Grief support and counseling

## Where is Hospice Provided?

- In the patient's or caregiver's home
- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Assisted living facilities
- Hospice residences

## Who Pays for Hospice?

- Medicare, through the Medicare hospice benefit
- Medicaid
- Most commercial health insurance
- Because most hospices are non-profit, gifts and donations often help pay for programs, projects, and care

# Who Qualifies for Hospice Services?

## People who have:

- Two or more emergency department visits and/or hospital admissions in the past 6 months
- Steady decrease in ability to function
- Unplanned weight loss of more than 10% over the past 6 months
- Worsening or recurring swelling of body parts
- Chest pain associated with shortness of breath
- Difficulty swallowing, or choking while swallowing, due to a stroke or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- Irregular heartbeats that don't get better after treatment
- Dementia with inability to communicate and walk
- Uncontrollable pain, nausea, shortness of breath
- Desire to stop uncomfortable or ineffective treatments
- Desire to focus on comfort and quality of life
- **Physician confirmation of a life expectancy of fewer than six months**

## How Can a Patient Get Hospice Care?

- Referrals to hospice can be made by anyone familiar with the patient. This includes the patient themselves—as well as their family members, friends, health care providers, and social service agencies.
- If you are the patient, you need a health care provider or nurse practitioner to follow you while receiving hospice care. This often means that you can keep your health care provider.

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