



## WHAT IS PALLIATIVE CARE?

### PALLIATIVE CARE

- Focuses on relief from physical suffering. The patient may be being treated for a disease or may be living with a chronic disease, and may or may not be terminally ill.
- Addresses the patient's physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being, is appropriate for patients in all disease stages, and accompanies the patient from diagnosis to cure.
- Uses life-prolonging medications
- Uses a multi-disciplinary approach using highly trained professionals. Is usually offered where the patient first sought treatment.

### WHAT IS PALLIATIVE CARE?

Palliative care is comprehensive treatment of the discomfort, symptoms and stress of serious illness. It does not replace your primary treatment; palliative care works together with the primary treatment you're receiving. The goal is to prevent and ease suffering and improve your quality of life.

#### **If you need palliative care, does that mean you're dying?**

The purpose of palliative care is to address distressing symptoms such as pain, breathing difficulties or nausea, among others. Receiving palliative care does not necessarily mean you're dying.

#### **Palliative care gives you a chance to live your life more comfortably.**

Palliative care provides relief from distressing symptoms including pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite, problems with sleep, and many other symptoms. It can also help you deal with the side effects of the medical treatments you're receiving. Perhaps, most important, palliative care can help improve your quality of life.

#### **Palliative care is different from hospice care.**

Palliative care is available to you at any time during your illness. Remember that you can receive palliative care at the same time you receive treatments that are meant to cure your illness. Its availability does not depend upon whether or not your condition can be cured. The goal is to make you as comfortable as possible and improve your quality of life.

**Palliative care also provides support for you and your family and can improve communication between you and your health care providers.**

Palliative care strives to provide you with:

- Expert treatment of pain and other symptoms so you can get the best relief possible
- Open discussion about treatment choices, including treatment for your disease and management of your symptoms
- Coordination of your care with all of your health care providers.
- Emotional support for you and your family.

#### **Where are services provided?**

Palliative care may be provided in any care setting.

- Home
- Hospice Facility
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Long-Term Care Facility
- Long-Term Acute Care Facility
- Assisted Living Facility
- Hospital
- Group Home
- Clinics

#### **Who provides these services?**

Palliative care may be provided by an interdisciplinary team. However, most palliative services are provided by a physician, nurse practitioner or nurse with consultative support from social worker and chaplaincy services

These services are performed in collaboration with the primary care physician and specialists through consultative services or co-management of the patient's disease process.

### PAYMENT

- Does Medicare pay?  
Palliative care is covered through Medicare Part B. Some treatments and medications may not be covered. May be subject to a co-pay according to the plan.
- Does Medicaid pay?  
Palliative care is covered through Medicaid. Some treatments and medications may not be covered. May be subject to a co-pay according to the plan.
- Does private insurance pay?  
Most private insurers include palliative care as a covered service. Each payer is different, and their palliative services will be outlined through the insurer's member benefits. Some treatments and medication may not be covered. May be subject to a co-pay according to the plan.
- When should I refer?  
Patients with advanced chronic illness that have received maximum medical therapy and are at risk of using the hospital for decompression.