

Palliative Care and Hospice

- ✓ Palliative care and hospice both focus on managing symptoms and improving quality of life.
- ✓ A key difference is that individuals can receive palliative care along with treatments to control or cure the illness. Hospice focuses on comfort and support when control or cure is no longer the goal.
- ✓ More differences between palliative care and hospice are described below.

Key Differences

- ✓ **Timing**
 - ☐ Palliative Care: Can be provided at any stage of a serious illness.
 - ☐ Hospice: For individuals nearing the end of life, usually defined as life expectancy of six months or less.
- ✓ **Access to augmentation therapy and other treatment options**
 - ☐ Palliative Care: Can be provided along with treatments to control or cure the illness, such as augmentation therapy.
 - ☐ Hospice: Treatments to control or cure the illness are stopped. Augmentation therapy is usually discontinued.
- ✓ **Location**
 - ☐ Palliative Care: Typically provided in a healthcare provider's office or a hospital. Services also may be available in your home or in a nursing home.
 - ☐ Hospice: Most hospice care is provided in your home. Hospice care can also be provided at nursing homes, retirement centers, hospitals, or a hospice center.
- ✓ **Insurance coverage**
 - ☐ Palliative Care: Palliative care typically is billed like a standard visit with a healthcare provider. Co-payments for palliative care services depend on the insurance plan.
 - ☐ Hospice: Hospice is paid at a set daily rate. Typically, hospice benefits are designed to cover nearly all costs. Hospice pays for all medication costs.

Palliative Care is An Addition to Your Medical Team

- ✓ Anyone diagnosed with a serious or life-limiting illness can receive palliative care, regardless of age or stage of illness.
- ✓ You do not need to be near the end of life or stop your existing treatments to receive palliative care.
- ✓ Palliative care is added to your existing medical care. It does not replace appointments with your current healthcare providers or restrict your access to treatments such as augmentation therapy.
- ✓ There are doctors and nurses who specialize in palliative care. Other professionals who provide palliative care include nutrition experts, social workers, and counselors.
- ✓ To enroll in palliative care, ask one of your healthcare providers for a referral.

Hospice is End-of-Life Care

- ✓ Individuals are eligible for hospice if they have a life expectancy of six months or less. Your healthcare provider can renew enrollment in hospice if you live longer.
- ✓ Hospice care usually requires a signed contract, an agreement not to call emergency medical services (EMS), and a do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order.
- ✓ The hospice contract usually states that you should contact your hospice provider for all care. Hospice does not provide for emergency department or hospital services.
- ✓ To enroll in hospice, talk with one of your healthcare providers.

Additional Resources

- ✓ More information about palliative care and hospice is available from the organizations listed below:
 - ☐ [National Institute on Aging](#)
 - ☐ [National Alliance for Care at Home](#)
 - ☐ [Center to Advance Palliative Care](#)
 - ☐ [Hospice Foundation of America](#)