

*Hospice: It's not about how you die. It's about how you live.*

# What is Hospice?

## Facts for Physicians and Care Providers

**Providence Hospice of Seattle** provides hospice and palliative care services to adults and children with life-limiting illnesses and their families throughout King County. We strive to provide culturally appropriate care.

### **Our diverse team includes:**

Hospice medical director, nurses (visiting and 24-hour on-call), medical social workers, home health aides, chaplains, pharmacist, occupational therapists, grief support counselors and volunteers

### **We offer:**

- Rapid response time for admissions
- Innovative care team model that promotes coordinated care
- *Open access* philosophy that expands access to palliative treatments
- Expertise in pain control and symptom management

### **Additional services include:**

- Three- to five-day nursing home respite
- Short-term in-patient care for pain/symptom management
- Durable medical equipment
- Medications for symptom management
- Supplies needed for comfort

### **Specialized programs include:**

- *Grief Support Services:* Grief support for families of hospice patients and community members
- *Safe Crossings:* Anticipatory grief and bereavement program for children
- *Transitions:* Support and resources for people with life-limiting illness who are not ready for hospice services
- *Stepping Stones:* Pediatric palliative care and hospice program

### **What is hospice?**

- **Hospice is a concept of care, not a place.** Hospice services are provided in the patient's home, or in a nursing home, assisted living facility, or adult family home.
- **Hospice focuses on relief of suffering and quality of life.** Hospice affirms life and regards dying as a normal process; it neither hastens nor postpones death.
- **Hospice offers emotional and spiritual support, as well as medical care.** Hospice also provides support to the patient's family, including grief support services.

### **Who is eligible for hospice?**

- **Anyone living with a life-limiting illness with an estimated prognosis of six months or less** if the disease runs its expected course.
- **Patients with an end-stage condition**, such as end-stage cancer; liver, heart, pulmonary, or renal disease; stroke; HIV; diabetes; and neurological conditions (including dementia, ALS, and Parkinson's disease).
- **Patients receiving palliative treatment for symptom management** (chemotherapy, radiation, IV antibiotics, transfusions, TPN, hydration).

### **What are the guidelines for determining prognosis?**

- **Patient's condition is life-threatening.**
- **Patient and family's primary goal is comfort.**
- **Documented disease progression:** multiple ER visits/hospitalizations; more than 10% weight loss in a six-month period; significant functional decline.

### **What is the role of the primary care physician?**

- **Certify hospice appropriateness and write treatment orders.**
- **Bill for office visits** under Medicare Part B or other applicable insurance.

### **How is hospice paid for?**

- **Medicare (all Medicare HMO programs) and Medicaid**
- **Private insurance**
- **Charitable donations**

**To make a referral, please call 206.749.7701,  
or view our Web site at [www.providence.org/hospiceofseattle](http://www.providence.org/hospiceofseattle)**