



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **WHAT IS HOSPICE CARE?**

Hospice care is a specialized type of care for those facing a life-limiting illness. Hospice care focuses on the quality of an individual's life and their physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs.

### **IS HOSPICE JUST FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS OR WEEKS OF LIFE?**

No, individuals are eligible for hospice care if a physician believes they have 6 months or less to live. Though this is a requirement for eligibility, this is an estimation, and some individuals may live much longer. Unfortunately, many people wait to go on hospice until they clearly have only days or weeks to live missing out on several months of care, comfort, and quality time.

### **DOES INSURANCE COVER HOSPICE?**

Medicare, Medicare Advantage, and most private insurers cover hospice care.

### **IS PHYSICAL THERAPY INCLUDED IN HOSPICE?**

Physical therapy is a common hurdle when deciding if you should transition into hospice care. Having therapy gives a very tangible feeling of doing something positive and working towards a goal. We get that. If you are hospice qualified, there is not a shift in this mentality. Hospice works towards the goal of living a quality life. Some agencies know this transition can be hard, and can partner with your therapist to develop a transition plan that suits you best.

### **WHAT BENEFITS AM I ENTITLED TO WHEN UTILIZING HOSPICE CARE?**

There are many benefits to take advantage of while on hospice care. You may decide to utilize all the benefits or just a few. It is your decision to make. The majority of hospice patients utilize the Medicare benefit, which is covered at 100% and include:

- The Hospice team - The most important benefit of hospice is the trained staff members, including a Hospice Physician, Nursing staff, Certified Nurse Assistant, Social Worker and the Spiritual Care Coordinator. Although, these are the primary staff members, there are many other team members to assure you are receiving the best care.
- Respite care - this may be utilized when the primary caregiver is exhausted or overwhelmed caring for their loved one and needs a short-term break (5 consecutive days). Respite care must be provided in a licensed Medicare certified facility.

- DME (Durable medical equipment) - Each patient's needs for equipment will vary. The hospice case manager will assist you in determining what is appropriate. Equipment may include: hospital bed, shower chair, wheelchair, walker, or oxygen.
- Medical Supplies - Medical supplies are covered, and depending on each patient's need may include: briefs, bandages, or catheters.
- Medications - medications related to the terminal illness and related diagnoses that the hospice physician deem medically necessary are included.

### **WHAT DOES A HOSPICE DOCTOR DO DIFFERENTLY FROM MY OTHER DOCTOR?**

Your other doctors focus on general health and treatment of specific diseases or conditions you have. Hospice physicians focus on preventing and alleviating suffering, improving your quality of life, and helping you and your loved ones cope with the stress and burden of your illness. If you have a general care physician, the hospice team will work and communicate with him/her on your care plan.

### **I'M READY FOR HOSPICE/MY DOCTOR RECOMMENDED HOSPICE, WHAT NOW?**

Hospice care can be provided at a hospital, nursing home, assisted living facility, other long-term care facilities, or at home. Your physician, hospital, nurse, or friend may be able to recommend an agency or you can search in your local area. You will choose a hospice agency you believe will provide the best care for yourself or a loved one. A hospice team member will then be in contact with you, determine if you qualify for hospice care, and go over the next steps.

### **IF I AGREE TO HOSPICE CARE, DOES THAT MEAN I'M "GIVING UP?"**

Absolutely not. Hospice care is designed to improve your quality of life physically, mentally, and emotionally. If anything, it's the opposite- hospice care allows you to do more with the time you have.

### **WHAT DOES ACHC ACCREDITED MEAN?**

Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC) is a third-party accreditation organization that has developed the highest national standards hospices are measured against in order to illustrate their ability to effectively and efficiently deliver quality healthcare. By choosing a healthcare provider that has achieved ACHC accreditation, you will know that you will receive the highest quality of care.

Tranquility is ACHC accredited.



### **I WOULD LIKE TRANQUILITY HOSPICE CARE, HOW DO I BEGIN?**

We appreciate you choosing Tranquility Hospice Care. You can contact us at 512.688.5607 or email us at [admin@tranquilityhospicecare.org](mailto:admin@tranquilityhospicecare.org) and we will happily discuss with you the next steps. If you are still unsure about hospice, we are also happy to answer any questions you have, or visit us at [tranquilityhospicecare.org](http://tranquilityhospicecare.org)