

# Hospice 101



## What is Hospice?

Hospice provides compassionate support for patients in the final stages of life and their loved ones, ensuring they navigate this challenging period with grace. The services aim to alleviate physical discomfort and promote a serene mental state, enhancing patients' overall well-being. At Anova Hospice, we are committed to delivering considerate and respectful care that upholds comfort and dignity for patients and their families during this significant phase of their life journey.

Our dedicated Hospice Team offers supportive assistance to families, helping them care for their loved ones within the comforting environment of their own homes whenever possible. Anova Hospice goes beyond addressing the patient's specific needs and provides substantial support to their families as well. Our comprehensive team of healthcare professionals strives to cater to the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of both the patient and their family members.



## Who is appropriate for Hospice?

Hospice care supports individuals with life-limiting illnesses that significantly impact their daily lives. The primary goals of hospice care are to improve the patient's quality of life, effectively manage pain, and provide emotional support to both the patient and their family. The focus lies on delivering comfort-oriented care rather than pursuing a cure.

Specific symptom counts are not necessary for eligibility, although certain criteria can assist individuals and families in determining if hospice care is suitable. If there are any uncertainties about qualifying for hospice care, we recommend contacting our team for guidance.



## What are the benefits of Hospice?

If appropriately implemented, hospice care can enhance the overall quality of life and increase contentment among both patients and their caregivers. Our team of hospice experts is comprehensively trained in providing holistic care to ensure comfort, aid, and respite throughout the end-of-life journey. Apart from providing medications, equipment, and supplies required for end-of-life care, our services include round-the-clock availability, assistance with personal hygiene and care, support with routine activities, and emotional backing.



## What is the difference between Hospice vs. Palliative Care?

Are hospice and palliative care identical? Not quite. Palliative care differs from hospice care in that it can be offered to non-terminal patients at their homes. Whereas hospice care is centered on providing comfort for terminal patients, palliative care emphasizes relief. Hospice concentrates on comforting patients with terminal conditions, while palliative care extends help to anyone grappling with chronic or life-limiting illnesses, even those not in the terminal phase. Therefore, individuals who are currently undergoing treatment for a disease can simultaneously receive palliative care.



## FAQ's

### Who is eligible for Hospice?

Hospice care eligibility typically requires a physician's certification of a terminal illness with an estimated life expectancy of six months or less, though care can be extended if the patient's condition remains life-limiting. Hospice is suitable for patients at different stages of numerous diseases, including cancer, heart disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's, AIDS, ALS, etc. Besides clinical criteria, the decision to opt for hospice care should ideally involve the patient, their family, and their physician, considering the patient's preference for comfort care when curative treatment isn't beneficial or desired anymore.

### Who bears the cost of Hospice?

Patients who fulfill all the prerequisites of the Medicare program can have their hospice services covered by Medicare.

### Isn't it redundant to offer hospice care to residents of assisted living or skilled nursing facilities?

Hospice care provides unique end-of-life services to residents and their families, differing considerably from general medical services. Assisted living and skilled nursing facilities offer residential care, while hospice caters to end-of-life needs. The roles are distinct yet complementary. Hospice offers an additional level of care, appreciated by families and Anova Hospice partners. While facilities provide services like rehabilitation and dementia care, our team focuses on comfort care. The hospice expertise enhances quality of life and complements the care in the facility.

### When is the best time to start Hospice?

Individuals aiming to spend their final days in peace and respect should contemplate starting hospice care at the earliest. Experts suggest initiating this care about two to three months prior to the terminal stage of an illness. By delaying, individuals may miss the substantial support and benefits that hospice care provides.

### How does Hospice manage a patient's pain?

Hospice care adopts a holistic approach for pain management, involving a team of medical professionals and specialists dedicated to alleviating pain and symptoms. They employ a personalized mix of medications and therapies for each patient. Besides physical pain relief, hospice includes mental health experts and spiritual advisors to cater to emotional and spiritual distress. Through counseling, music and art therapy, massage, and other holistic practices, they strive to enhance comfort and wellbeing. This comprehensive strategy aims to elevate the patient's quality of life by mitigating all dimensions of their discomfort.

### Does opting for Hospice signify that a patient is "giving up"?

Choosing hospice care does not signify surrender. Even if a disease is incurable or treatments have severe side effects, numerous strategies exist to promote comfort and positivity in life's final stages. Our team effectively manages pain using appropriate medications, allowing patients to focus less on their health and more on cherished relationships. Therefore, hospice care provides a more relaxed passage through this inevitable life phase for patients and their families.

### Is Hospice exclusively for individuals with cancer?

Anova Hospice, while offering care and respite for cancer patients, does not limit its services based on the type of life-threatening disease a patient has. Apart from cancer patients, we extend our support to those grappling with a range of terminal conditions, such as Alzheimer's disease, Lou Gehrig's disease, AIDS, cirrhosis, and others.

### How long can a patient stay on Hospice?

A patient's stay in hospice care primarily depends on their prognosis and eligibility. Initially, Medicare covers a six-month hospice period for patients with a certified terminal condition and an estimated life expectancy of six months or less. Should the patient remain eligible, the hospice care can be extended in subsequent 60-day periods without a limit, provided the patient continues to meet the necessary requirements.

### Can a patient leave Hospice care?

Certainly, patients may choose to exit hospice care for various reasons like trying new medications, seeking experimental treatments, or pursuing curative therapies before their health declines. They may return to hospice care if their condition deteriorates later. Exiting hospice is not always final; patients could be discharged if their health improves and may be readmitted if their health takes a downturn.