



 United in Healing with
The US Oncology Network

HOSPICE

*"What lies behind us and what lies before us are
tiny matters compared to what lies within us"*

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



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WHAT DOES END-OF-LIFE CARE MEAN?

End-of-life care means providing physical, mental, and emotional comfort, as well as social support, to people who are living with and dying of advanced illness. The goal of end-of-life care is to improve one's quality of life and that of their loved ones, and make them comfortable for the following weeks or months.

Medicine has made magnificent strides in treating diseases and helping people to live longer, but our bodies can't live forever. Some people experience this through old age and others are affected at an all too early age when treatments are no longer helpful. Regardless the time in one's life, it is a change for all people involved—the patient, family, and friends. Once this phase of life is accepted, we can turn our focus to how we want to live and how family and friends can best support these wishes. This allows for time at home visiting with family and friends versus traveling to doctor appointments and undergoing multiple procedures.

WHAT IS HOSPICE?

Hospice is an option if you and your health care team feel that you are no longer benefiting from your cancer treatments. Hospice is not about giving up. It simply means that your treatment goals have changed. The goal at this point is comfort care. Comfort care means that medical interventions that cause distress will no longer be performed. However, you will be

aggressively treated for any symptoms that you may experience—pain, nausea, shortness of breath, or psychological-emotional distress. Comfort care provides the support you need to allow you to do the things that you wish to do for whatever amount of time remaining. It is about *quality of life*.

To qualify for hospice, the healthcare team must state that due to the type and stage of disease, that end-of-life can be expected in 6 months if the disease follows its normal course. Hospice, however, can extend beyond this time frame if the healthcare team states your condition remains life limiting. Hospice is typically provided in the home by the family or in a skilled nursing facility.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY HOSPICE INCLUDE:

- Doctor services (but you also keep your own doctors), nurses, social worker, chaplain, volunteers, and nursing aides.
- Medical equipment (i.e. hospital beds)
- Medical supplies (i.e. bandages)
- Medications for symptom control and pain relief
- Bereavement counseling and support
- Short-term in-patient care for symptoms not managed at home
- Respite services for caregivers (someone else helps with care for a while so the caregiver can have a break)
- Volunteer services
- Available "on-call" 24 hours/day, 7 days/week

If you have questions about Hospice Care or need additional information please contact us at (757) 466-8683, Southside or (757) 873-9400, Peninsula.

