



## Breaking Down the Difference: Palliative vs. Hospice Care

Many LTC staff, residents, and families have heard of palliative care but are unclear on what it really means or how it differs from hospice care. Understanding the similarities and differences between palliative and hospice helps us provide our residents and families with the support they need when struggling with the symptoms associated with serious, life-limiting illness. Utilize the following guide to identify ways to provide palliative care to those in your facility.

### Who might be appropriate for palliative care?

#### 1. Has serious, life-limiting illness

- a. Cancer
- b. CHF
- c. COPD
- d. Dementia

#### 2. Pursuing curative or life-sustaining treatment

- a. Chemotherapy
- b. Hemodialysis
- c. Full Medical Interventions on POST

#### 3. Repeated hospitalizations

- a. For symptom management (pain, SOB, etc)
- b. Condition requires inpatient evaluation/treatment
- c. Seeks acute care setting related to fear/anxiety

### How can our staff/providers deliver palliative care?

#### 1. Referral to palliative care medicine consultants as an outpatient or who are able to come to the facility

- a. Visit the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization [website](#) for a list of local palliative care providers
- b. Contact local hospitals to identify if outpatient palliative care services are available
- c. Encourage families/residents to request a palliative care consultation during future hospital stays.

**2. Discuss the symptoms/feelings negatively impacting their quality of life**

- a. Physical - pain, nausea, dyspnea, cough, etc
- b. Emotional - Fear, anxiety, guilt, regret, etc
- c. Spiritual - Seeking religious guidance/support, desires group prayer, etc

**3. Routinely evaluate needs & provide intervention to enhance quality of life**

- a. Coordinate with provider to obtain medical orders for symptom management
- b. Work with the dietary department and family to provide palatable/comforting foods
- c. Reach out to local Bishop/Minister/etc to establish routine visits
- d. Engage with the Social Services and Activities department to provide regular visits to offer support and companionship