

Understanding Hospice

Common Questions About Hospice

What is Hospice?

Hospice is a special type of care which helps patients and families deal with a terminal illness. Even though no cure is possible, hospice helps patients to be comfortable and fulfilled during this stage of their life.

When to Consider Hospice?

- When medical care and treatments are difficult and painful or require hospitalization, but provide no real curative value
- When patients want to spend their remaining time at home (or wherever they live) in the comfort of family and friends

How Does Hospice Care Work?

At VNA of Somerset Hills, our hospice team includes a doctor, nurse, certified home health aide, pharmacist, social worker, grief counselor, chaplain and specially trained volunteers, all of whom are focused on the person — not the illness. They manage the patient's pain and ensure their comfort — both physically and emotionally. Trained volunteers provide companionship and support. Social workers help patients come to terms with their illness and work to fulfill patients' last wishes.

Do Families Receive Support?

Providing emotional and spiritual support for family members is an important part of hospice. Family members are taught to provide much of the daily care for patients, assisted by regular visits from the hospice team. In addition, we help families access needed community resources such as meals, transportation and financial services. Respite Care and Geriatric Care Management services are available, if needed. Grief counseling and bereavement support are provided to comfort family members and loved ones.

Who is Eligible for Hospice Care?

A patient is eligible when a physician indicates that a patient has a life expectancy of six months or less and curative treatment is no longer desired. Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance plans cover hospice care.

Can a Patient Change Their Mind about Hospice?

Yes. Individuals may go on and off hospice as needed, based on their condition. They can voluntarily stop hospice care at any time. VNA Hospice works with the family and their doctor to ensure the patient's and family's wishes are being met.

How Do You Start Hospice Care?

While physician approval is required to be admitted to hospice care, family, friends and health care providers can begin the conversation with a hospice provider. Anyone can make a referral.



Illnesses Appropriate for Hospice Care

Hospice supports patients with many life-limiting illnesses, including:

- Cancer
- Heart, Lung and Kidney Disease
- Stroke
- AIDS
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Parkinson's Disease
- Alzheimer's Disease

Types of Services Provided by Hospice

- Doctor Coordinated Services
- Nursing Care
- Medical Equipment & Supplies
- Pain and Symptom Management
- Home Health Aide Services
- Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Social Worker Services
- Nutrition Counseling
- Emotional and Spiritual Counseling
- Short Term Relief for Families