

HOSPICE CARE & PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

What is the difference?

Both hospice care and palliative medicine strive to provide the best care possible for those with illnesses that are potentially life-limiting. Care is patient-centered and family-focused. The goals are to relieve physical, emotional and spiritual suffering through symptom management, education, and support, achieving the best quality of life for the patient and their loved ones.

Hospice Care	vs.	Palliative Care
For patients with a life expectancy of six months or less , if the illness takes its expected course.	Prognosis	For patients with advanced serious illnesses and an overall decline in their function and/or quality of life.
Focus is to provide comfort measures to treat symptoms of the illness rather than to cure the illness.	Treatment	Focus is on improving quality of life through clarification of goals and treatment options, patient/family support, and management of symptoms related to the advanced disease. <i>Patients who are continuing to seek cure-oriented treatment of their disease are appropriate for palliative medicine services.</i>
A team approach is the hallmark of hospice care. All patients receive direct care from a hospice nurse and evaluation by a medical social worker . Other team members include: a hospice physician, nursing assistant, chaplain, volunteer, and grief counselor . The care team works in collaboration with the patient's attending physician to develop a plan of care specific to the needs and desires of the patient and their loved ones.	Care Team	A palliative medicine physician or a nurse practitioner, and a registered nurse provide palliative medicine consultative services.
Services include physical, emotional and spiritual support and pain and symptom management . Visits are made based on the needs of the patient. Care is provided wherever the patient resides : private residence, nursing home, assisted living community, or group home. The patient and his or her loved ones are included in the plan of care. 24-hour after-hours availability , including home visits, if needed.	Service Overview • Location • On Call	Consultation includes assessment of patient knowledge of disease trajectory, treatment options, and quality of life preferences. Symptoms not responsive to disease-specific treatments may be managed. Patients are seen in most area long-term care communities, some home settings, and in our outpatient palliative medicine clinic. 24-hour on-call assistance is available, by phone.
Medicare/Medicaid certified ; Licensed in North and South Carolina; Accredited by ACHC.	Certification & Licensure	Medicare/Medicaid certified , and in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations.
Both Medicare and Medicaid have a designated hospice benefit. The Hospice Medicare and Medicaid Benefits covers services at 100% , including such items as medications, medical supplies, and durable medical equipment related to the hospice diagnosis, with little or no out of pocket expense to the patient. Many commercial insurance plans also have hospice benefits. VIA Health Partners has contracts with most of the local plans. Services are provided regardless of ability to pay. <i>VIA Health Partners is a nonprofit organization.</i>	Reimbursement	Physician/nurse practitioner consultations are billed under Medicare Part B, Medicaid, and commercial insurance , if available. Services are equally available to eligible patients regardless of payer source. Services are provided regardless of ability to pay. <i>VIA Health Partners is a nonprofit organization.</i>