



Choosing a Hospice

CAN I RECEIVE HOSPICE CARE IN MY HOME?

Hospice Care takes place in the home. For some, “home” may mean a house or an apartment. For others, it may be some form extended care facility, such as a nursing home or assisted living facility. In addition, there is one hospice residence operating in Illinois and several others under construction exclusively for hospice patients.

IF I STAY IN MY HOME, WHO WILL CARE FOR ME?

The majority of hospice patients live in their own home with the help of a family member or friend who serves as the “primary caregiver”. Your caregiver, however, is not alone. Nurses, social workers, doctors, volunteers, bereavement counselors and others comprise the hospice team and help the caregiver provide for the patient’s daily needs.

HOW CAN I FIND A HOSPICE NEAR ME?

The Illinois State Hospice Organization maintains a complete and current listing of hospices within the state, as well as a national listing in the event you are seeking help for a loved one living elsewhere in the country. You may call ISHO at 888-844-7706.

ARE ALL HOSPICES THE SAME?

All Full Service licensed hospices in Illinois provide the same basic core services. Please make sure the provider is licensed as a FULL SERVICE. Hospices may be freestanding, community based organizations, or they may be affiliated with hospitals, home health agencies, health care facilities, or health care systems. Both non-profit and for-profit hospices are required to provide the same core services.

ARE THERE STANDARDS FOR HOSPICE PROVIDERS?

Medicare certifies the majority of hospices nationwide and Illinois licenses providers in the state. In addition, most Illinois hospices currently belong to the Illinois Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, a non-profit organization, which promotes access to quality hospice care in our communities. Many hospices also maintain membership in the National Hospice Organization, which encourages sharing of ideas and solutions at the national level. Many hospices have become accredited by the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Health Organizations or by Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc. (CHAPS), to further ensure quality care.

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How to Chose a Hospice Continued

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR HOSPICE?

Hospice serves patients with a terminal illness resulting in a life expectancy of six months or less as determined by the patient's physician. Care is provided regardless of diagnosis, age, gender, nationality, race, creed, sexual orientation, disability or ability to pay. The patient makes the decision to choose hospice in partnership with his or her physician and the hospice team, after a thorough review of all the care options. In the state of Illinois, the time frame has been extended to one year, although Medicare and Medicaid is restricted to six months.

WHEN IS IT TIME FOR HOSPICE?

When the goal of treatment begins to shift from curing the illness to providing comfort, it is time to consider hospice. This time may come well before a physician indicates that the patient's life expectancy is six months or less. Sadly, many people wait until their final days to involve hospice. By contacting the hospice early in the diagnosis, the patient and family reserve time to understand their options and choose the path that will have the most positive impact on quality of life. The best time to learn about hospice is *before your need it*.

- (or one year in Illinois for non Medicare, non Medicaid patients)

WHY SHOULD WE CHOOSE HOSPICE?

The decision to choose hospice is a very personal one. It directly involves the patient, family physician, and any loved ones that may serve as caregivers. Here are a few things you should consider.

- Hospice's expertise in palliative, or "comfort" care, assures the patient of state-of-the-art pain control and symptom management.
- Hospice enables patients to focus on living their remaining days fully at home, among family and friends.
- Hospice's emphasis on family involvement—understanding that everyone's definition of "family" is unique—helps individuals to support each other during this time of life.

WHAT MAKE HOSPICE CARE UNIQUE?

Hospice care centers on the patient and family. The goal of the professional hospice care team is to empower you to make your own choice with its support and assistance. The team serves as your advocate, helping you to access the information and resources you need during this very challenging time. In addition to providing the care directly, hospice team members serve as teachers, enabling the family to care for their loved one at home. Hospice recognizes that the family and caregivers need extra measures of support both during and after their experience of caring for a terminally ill patient.