

Physician Education Express

Palliative Care Education

October 2017



Audience: Providers

Education Level: YELLOW

Effective: October, 2017

Palliative Care

Palliative Care, and the medical subspecialty of palliative medicine, is specialized medical care for people living with serious illness. The focus is on providing relief from symptoms and stress from the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and their family.

The Palliative Care Team is an interdisciplinary team which includes: Physician, Advanced Care Provider, RN, Medical SW and Chaplain.

Hospice versus Palliative Care



Palliative Care	Hospice
Provided at any point of the disease	Prognosis of 6 months or less. Requires the plan of care to shift to a comfort focus – curative treatments cease. Not required for those <21 years old with Medicaid.
Not prognosis dependent	Requires the plan of care to shift to a comfort focus – curative treatments cease.
Used with curative treatment	Medicare program and benefit has to be selected by patient or loved one. Not required for those <21 years old with Medicaid.
Covered by standard insurance	Two golden rules: 1. Patient must meet criteria 2. Patient must choose hospice
Provided in a hospital or outpatient setting	Largely delivered at home.

Where palliative care programs and hospice care programs differ greatly is in the care location, timing, payment, and eligibility for services.

Purpose of Advance Care Planning (ACP)

Patients use ACP to direct their medical care and treatment in the event that they are unable to communicate for themselves.

Communicating with Patients and Families

A key component of the provision of palliative care is effective communication skills. You can use these questions to relate to patients and their families.

- Has this been a good day or a bad day for you?
- How are things going today?
- How can I help you today?
- This must be very hard.
- I'm so sorry to hear that.
- I can't imagine what you are going through.

For more detailed information:

[IU Health Palliative Care Education](#)

Highlights

What is Important to Patients?

- To be pain free
- Spiritual peace/live a meaningful life
- Family presence
- Remain mentally alert
- Honoring their choices
- Finances in order
- Resolve conflicts
- Die at home

Goals of Palliative Care

- Pain relief
- Care for serious or chronic illness
- Integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care
- Support system for patient
- Support system for families
- Enhance quality of life
- Used early in the course of illness