



Hospice of the Twin Cities

Hospice Insights

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*“How long does it take
for you to stop, smile and
lift someone’s spirits?
Just a tiny little minute.
But Eternity is in it.”*

~Mary Augustine~

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Don't Wait to Talk About Hospice

It's an all too common situation. A family is at the bedside of a loved one who is seriously ill and nearing the end of life.

Each member of the family has a different idea of what should be done and what the patient would have wanted.

Far too many people wait until they are in the midst of a health care crisis before thinking about what options are available or what care they or their loved ones would have wanted. Hospice professionals deal with these challenging situations every day – that's what they are trained to do.

When a family is coping with a serious illness and a cure is no longer possible, hospice provides the type of care most people say they want at the end of life: comfort and dignity.

Considered to be the model for high-quality, compassionate care for people with a life-limiting illness, hospice care includes expert medical care, pain management, and emotional and spiritual support. Care is provided by an inter-disciplinary team of professionals and trained volunteers. The wishes of the patient and family are always at the center of care.

Most hospice care is provided in the home – where the majority of Americans have said they would want to be at this time. Care is also provided in

nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospice centers.

Care is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, Veterans Affairs, and most private insurance plans and HMOs.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization reports that more than 1.4 million people received care from our nation's hospices last year.

Hospice providers can help with information about care options and choices and ensure you live as fully as possible throughout your entire life. They will make sure your loved ones receive support as well.

One of the best ways to make sure you and your loved ones benefit fully from hospice, should you ever need this care, is to talk about it before it becomes an issue.

For more information, contact **Hospice of the Twin Cities** at (763) 531-2424 or contact the Caring Connections HelpLine at 800-658-8898 (the Multilingual Line at 877-658-8896) or visit www.caringinfo.org.

This information is provided by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization and **Hospice of the Twin Cities**.

**NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL
HOSPICE MONTH**

Specific Guidelines for Determining Prognosis End-stage Renal Disease

- **Acute Renal Failure (1 and either 2 or 3 must be present. Factors 4 will lend supporting documentation.**
 1. The patient is not seeking dialysis or renal transplant;
 2. Creatinine clearance <10 cc/min (<15 cc/min for diabetics.); or <15 cc/min (<20 cc/min for diabetics) with co-Morbidity of congestive heart failure;
 3. Serum creatinine >8.0 mg/dl (>6.0 mg/dl for diabetics);
 4. Comorbid conditions:
 - A. Mechanical ventilation.
 - B. Malignancy (other organ system);
 - C. Chronic lung disease;
 - D. Advanced cardiac disease;
 - E. Advanced liver disease;
 - F. Sepsis;
 - G. Immunosuppression/ AIDS;
 - H. Albumin <3.5 gm/dl'
 - I. Cachexia;
 - J. Platelet count <25,000;
 - K. Disseminated intravascular coagulation;
 - L. Gastrointestinal bleeding.
- **Chronic Renal Failure (1 and either 2 or 3 must be present as outlined above. Factors from 5 will lend supporting documentation.)**
 5. Signs and symptoms of renal failure:
 - A. Uremia;
 - B. Oliguria (<400 cc/24 hours)
 - C. Intractable hyperkalemia (>7.0) not responsive to treatment;
 - D. Uremic pericarditis;
 - E. Hepatorenal syndrome;
 - F. Intractable fluid overload, not responsive to treatment.

Hospice and the Family Caregiver

Caring for a loved one at the end of life is one of the most physically and emotionally demanding situations a family member may ever face.

There is a sense of loss and sadness that begins when a family learns of a serious or life-limiting diagnosis. And the levels of stress can continue to grow throughout an illness. There can be a financial toll that caring for a dying loved one brings. Even when the role of caregiver ends, there are new issues that arise as the person incorporates the loss in their life and faces living without their loved one.

For family members thrust into the role of caregiver without warning or little preparation, the experience can be frightening.

Yet care exists that address many of these concerns: Hospice.

Hospice care provides high-quality care and services to the patient while offering invaluable support to the family caregivers. Through bereavement care and services, ongoing assistance for family caregivers continues even after the death of their loved one.

In addition to expert medical care and pain management, hospice focuses on the quality of life for patients and families. They help the people they serve live life to its fullest. The wishes of the patient and family are always a priority and hospice brings hope, dignity and peace to all they care for.

Support, caregiving training and assistance are made available by hospice professionals and trained volunteers. The entire hospice team brings compassion and empathy when they are needed most.

Many families concerned with the costs of care are often surprised to find out that hospice is fully covered by Medicare. Medicaid, Veterans Affairs, most private insurance plans and HMOs also provide for hospice care. Yet hospices care for all in need, regardless of ability to pay.

Many people do not understand the support and comfort that hospice provides to patients and families at the end of life's journey. A partnership is created between family caregivers and hospice staff, mostly noted for its deep compassion and caring.

Community hospices are ready to help family caregivers learn more about care options and available services. Helping patients and families during one of life's most challenging journeys is what hospice does every day.

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We're on the Web!
www.hospiceofthetwincities.com

Mission Statement

Hospice of the Twin Cities' mission is to enhance the quality of the lives of our patients and their families by providing respectful care based on maintaining dignity, alleviating physical, psychosocial, and spiritual suffering, advocating for fundamental rights, and affirming the sacred value of life.