



# Hospice Care



## What is it?

Hospice care focuses on the care, comfort, and quality of life of a person with a serious illness who is approaching the end of life. Comfort care and support for the family continue when a patient joins hospice care, but attempts to cure the person's illness are stopped.

## Why might a patient start hospice care?

At some point, it may not be possible to cure a serious illness, or a patient may choose not to undergo certain treatments. Patients who begin hospice care understand that their illness is not responding to attempts to cure it or slow its progress.

## How does a patient begin hospice care?

Hospice is provided for a patient with a terminal illness whose doctor believes he or she has six months or less to live if the illness runs its natural course.

## Who is part of the hospice care team?

The care team includes nurses, doctors, social workers, spiritual advisors, and trained volunteers. Everyone works together with the patient, caregiver and/or family to provide medical, emotional, and spiritual support.

## Where is hospice care provided?

It can be offered at home, or in facilities such as a nursing home, hospital, or hospice center. It may be covered by Medicare or other insurance companies. Contact your insurance company to find out if

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**Sources:** <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/what-are-palliative-care-and-hospice-care>

