River City Hospice

"Our family taking care of your family"



PALLIATIVE CARE VS. HOSPICE CARE

Both focus on comfort and quality of life, but they serve different needs.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Support at any stage of serious illness

WHAT IT IS

Specialized care that relieves symptoms, stress, and the effects of serious illness. It may be provided alongside treatment for the illness.

WHEN IT CAN BEGIN

At any stage of a serious illness, based on the person's needs. A six-month prognosis is not required.

GOAL OF CARE

Improve comfort and quality of life while the patient may continue treatment intended to cure or control the illness.

WHO PROVIDES IT

A palliative care team works with the patient's existing clinicians. Team members and services vary by program.

TREATMENT

Patients may continue treatments such as chemotherapy or dialysis when appropriate to their goals and care plan.

WHERE IT HAPPENS

May be available in hospitals, outpatient clinics, or other settings, depending on the program.

HOSPICE CARE

Comfort-focused care near the end of life

WHAT IT IS

Coordinated care for a person with a life-limiting illness when the focus is comfort, dignity, and quality of life.

WHEN IT CAN BEGIN

For Medicare hospice, a physician must certify a life expectancy of six months or less if the illness follows its normal course. Eligibility is reviewed as required.

GOAL OF CARE

Manage pain and symptoms, support the patient and family, and help the patient live as fully and comfortably as possible.

WHO PROVIDES IT

An interdisciplinary team may include nurses, physicians, aides, social workers, chaplains, volunteers, and bereavement support.

TREATMENT

The patient elects the hospice benefit and generally chooses comfort-focused care instead of curative treatment for the terminal illness and related conditions.

WHERE IT HAPPENS

Often in the patient's home, assisted living, or nursing facility. Other levels of hospice care may be available when medically needed.

THE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE

Palliative care can begin earlier and may be provided alongside treatment. Hospice is a specific benefit for people who meet hospice eligibility requirements and choose comfort-focused care for their terminal illness.

Questions about hospice? Contact River City Hospice. Our team can explain services, eligibility, and next steps.

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