

## *When is it Time for Hospice?*

Managing your loved one's End-of-Life care is never easy. If you're considering hospice, it's important to know when and how to begin the process to ensure the most comfortable, compassionate care experience possible.

### *When to Engage Hospice*

Hospice is appropriate for anyone at any age suffering from a life-threatening condition. Most often, a physician has estimated a prognosis of six months or less.

Many people are understandably uncomfortable shifting the focus from curative measures to improving the quality of remaining life. Be sure to talk with your healthcare and hospice providers as openly as you can about your loved one's concerns, options and goals.

Hospice is most helpful if it is engaged soon after a physician's referral, when there is adequate time to care for the unique needs of your loved one. This process requires trust, sensitivity and time.

Some people engage hospice when treatment is no longer an option, yet symptoms aren't fully developed. This allows your loved one to benefit most from hospice, especially to improve the quality of their remaining life.

### *How-to Engage Hospice*

Hospice can begin once a physician makes a referral. You can request that your loved one's physician make a hospice referral any time.

Once you choose a hospice program, you'll need to formally enroll your loved one in it. The first step is to setup an initial assessment of the patient's needs.

A hospice staff member will schedule a visit to assess your loved one's eligibility, condition, needs, and pain and symptom management options. Hospice staff will advise you and your loved one on End-of-Life care options. They may also discuss End-of-Life planning, including the need for legal documents like an Advance Healthcare Directive (AHD).

Hospice staff will help you manage their program's paperwork and answer questions you and your family members have. If your loved one isn't physically or mentally able to give consent or information, a Healthcare Proxy or Medical Power of Attorney (MPOA) will need to enroll them. If no Healthcare Proxy or MPOA is appointed, you, another family member or physician may do it.

### *Does Hospice Care Always Mean End-of-Life?*

Hospice does not always mean End-of-Life is imminent. Due to the services and support hospice provides, people often live longer than expected. A physician may suggest hospice simply as a care option. Hospice may lengthen the prognosis by increasing the quality of life. If your loved one's condition stabilizes or improves, they may be discharged from hospice and choose to return to curative treatment and typical daily life.

Everyone deserves a comfortable, peaceful End-of-Life care experience. Hospice is an enriching option because it offers a broad range of services to benefit loved ones who are nearing End-of-Life, and it offers support to your family .

Please visit: [www.passare.com/resources/experts](http://www.passare.com/resources/experts) for more information and expert resources on many End-of-Life Management topics.