

# Hospice Basics & Benefits

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# Where Do I Turn for Help?

- When a loved one becomes seriously ill, it can be difficult to know what type of care is best
- Our goal is to answer your questions about what hospice can do for you or your loved ones, how our services can help your family and how we can work with you to achieve physical comfort and peace of mind.
- We will explain reimbursement for hospice
- We will talk about the relevance of advance directives and DNR when discussing hospice services

# Vitas is About Life

- Our organization...offers quality of life
- Our staff...cares for patients and their families
- Our mission...has been to give people choices for more than 35 years
- The name VITAS comes from the Latin word for “life”

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# Vitas Provides Comfort Care

- Pain and Symptom Management
- Appropriate care when curative medical treatments no longer enhance quality of life
- Intensive and active treatment plans that meet the unique needs of seriously ill people who wish to stay at home

# Palliative Care

- Provides relief from pain and other symptoms
- Affirms life and regards dying as a normal process
- Neither hastens nor postpones death
- Integrates the psychological & spiritual aspects of care
- Provides support for patient and family
- Uses a team approach to address needs
- Will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness
- Is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies

—World Health Organization

# Hospice Interdisciplinary Team

- Patient and family
- Attending physician
- Hospice physician/medical director
- Registered nurse
- Hospice aide
- Social worker
- Chaplain
- Volunteer



# Your Caregiver Provides Your Day-to-Day Care

- Continues to provide routine daily care with support from the VITAS team
- Keeps the team aware of your physical and emotional changes
- What if there is no caregiver?

# Vitas and Your Family

- We teach the family how to meet your emotional and physical needs
- We provide ongoing support and education
- We offer bereavement services designed around the unique needs of the family





# There are Four Levels of Care

- Routine Home Care
- Intensive Comfort Care in the Home
- General Inpatient Care
- Respite Care

# Vitas in Other Home Settings

Nursing Home, Assisted Living Community, Residential Care Facility

- VITAS Partners with facility staff to medically manage and enhance care
- Facilities continue to provide routine day-to-day care
- The hospice team provides additional services to promote comfort and support

# Medications, Medical Equipment and Supplies

- Hospice provides medications to manage symptoms related to your illness
- VITAS ensures that each patient receives the medical equipment and supplies necessary to enhance overall comfort and safety.

# Payment for Hospice Services

- Medicare and Medi-Cal cover 100% of VITAS services under an all-inclusive daily rate
- No out-of pocket cost to you or your family
- Your regular Medicare or Medi-Cal benefit covers medical services unrelated to your primary illness
- Insurance Coverage
- Private pay
- There is no need to delay hospice care due to financial concerns



# How Vitas Continues to Support Loved Ones

- Hospice provides care for the family after a patient dies, through bereavement services
- For at least one year following a death, hospice provides:
  - Letters, cards
  - Annual memorial services
  - Phone calls (visits)
  - Memory Bears
  - Bereavement support groups

# Do Not Resuscitate Orders (DNR)

- DNRs **communicate a patient's wishes** regarding the use of cardio-pulmonary resuscitation
- Patients **are not required** to sign a DNR in order to elect or receive hospice care

# When to Refer to Hospice

- 99% of families wish they had known about hospice sooner
- Some symptoms to look for
  - Repeat trips to the E.R. or hospital admissions
  - Unrelieved pain
  - Frequent infections
  - Weight loss/difficulty swallowing
  - Inability to move about on your own
  - Nausea/vomiting
  - Shortness of breath/oxygen dependence
  - The burden of treatment outweighs the benefits

# What Happens Once One is Referred to Hospice

- Admission Liaison will contact you and set up an appointment
- A Registered Nurse from the Admissions Team will meet with you and your family to discuss your individual needs
- Clinical Evaluation
- Consent Forms
- Medications, Equipment and Supplies are Ordered
- Your Own Team Starts to Visit



# Hospice Myths

- Isn't hospice for people who have given up?
- Hospice is just for cancer patients
- Isn't hospice for the elderly?
- Hospice is for the wealthy
- You have to be bed-ridden
- You have to stop all of your medications
- Hospice pushes morphine and hastens one's death

# Questions ?

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