

Palliative Care and Hospice Definitions

Organization	Palliative Care Definition
World Health Organization (1)	“Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients (adults and children) and their families who are facing problems associated with life-threatening illness. It prevents and relieves suffering through the early identification, correct assessment, and treatment of pain and other problems, whether physical, psychosocial, or spiritual.”
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (2)	“Palliative care focuses on improving a patient's quality of life by managing pain and other distressing symptoms of a serious illness. Palliative care should be provided along with other medical treatments.”
Center to Advance Palliative Care (3)	“Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.”
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (4)	“Sometimes referred to as ‘comfort care,’ palliative care is a specialized approach to the treatment of patients with a serious or life-threatening illness. The goal of palliative care is to provide relief from the symptoms, pain and stress of serious illness. It is also designed to improve the quality of life of both the patient and the patient’s family.”
National Institute on Aging (5)	<p>“Palliative care is a resource for anyone living with a serious illness, such as heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cancer, dementia, Parkinson’s disease, and many others. Palliative care can be helpful at any stage of illness and is best provided from the point of diagnosis.</p> <p>In addition to improving quality of life and helping with symptoms, palliative care can help patients understand their choices for medical treatment. The organized services available through palliative care may be helpful to any older person having a lot of general discomfort and disability very late in life. Palliative care can be provided along with curative treatment and does not depend on prognosis.”</p>
Organization	Hospice Definition
American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (2)	“ <i>Hospice</i> is palliative care for patients in their last year of life. Hospice care can be provided in patients’ homes, hospice centers, hospitals, long-term care facilities, or wherever a patient resides.”
National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (6)	“Hospice focuses on caring, not curing, and in most cases, care is provided in the patient’s home. Hospice care also is provided in freestanding hospice centers, hospitals, and nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Hospice services are available to patients of any age, religion, race, or illness. Hospice care is covered under Medicare, Medicaid, most private insurance plans, HMOs, and other managed care organizations.”
National Institute on Aging (5)	“The patient beginning hospice care understands that his or her illness is not responding to medical attempts to cure it or to slow the disease’s progress.

	Like palliative care, hospice provides comprehensive comfort care as well as support for the family, but, in hospice, attempts to cure the person's illness are stopped. Hospice is provided for a person with a terminal illness whose doctor believes he or she has 6 months or less to live if the illness runs its natural course.”
American Cancer Society (7)	<p>“Hospice care is a special kind of care that focuses on the quality of life for people and their caregivers who are experiencing an advanced, life-limiting illness. Hospice care provides compassionate care for people in the last phases of incurable disease so that they may live as fully and comfortably as possible.</p> <p>The hospice philosophy accepts death as the final stage of life: it affirms life, but does not try to hasten or postpone death. Hospice care treats the person and symptoms of the disease, rather than treating the disease itself. A team of professionals work together to manage symptoms so that a person's last days may be spent with dignity and quality, surrounded by their loved ones. Hospice care is also family-centered—it includes the patient and the family in making decisions.”</p>
Hospice Foundation of America (8)	<p>“Hospice is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical care to help someone with a terminal illness live as well as possible for as long as possible, increasing quality of life. • An interdisciplinary team of professionals who address physical, psychosocial, and spiritual distress focused on both the dying person and their entire family. • Care that addresses symptom management, coordination of care, communication and decision making, clarification of goals of care, and quality of life.”

References

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