

## What is Hospice?

When your loved one is faced with a life-limiting illness, you want a care team who treats them with compassion, dignity, and respect. It's perfectly normal to consider curative care. But maybe your family has decided against treatments that could make your loved one uncomfortable in the time they have left. The team at Hope is here to provide guidance and answer your questions about the hospice option.

### When is the Time Right for Hospice?

When the patient's doctor feels that the underlying condition indicates a life expectancy of six months or less, the patient qualifies for hospice care. At any point during a life-limiting illness, it's appropriate to discuss all of an individual's care options, including hospice. Making the choice to discontinue medical treatment is often made when curative measures have been exhausted and the patient wants the comfort and dignity offered by hospice care. Starting hospice sooner than later provides the patient and family with the full breadth of our services. Care can continue beyond six months as long as the patient still meets the medical criteria.

### Who Provides Care?

We begin by listening to the patient's and family's questions, concerns, and choices about care. With quality and service as our top priorities, we create an individualized care plan that is carried out by various members of the hospice team:

- Hope Hospice physician
- The patient's personal physician
- RN case manager
- Visit nurse
- Home health aide
- Dementia specialist
- Social worker
- Pharmacist
- Dietitian
- Spiritual care counselor
- Grief support
- And trained volunteers

### Does the Nurse Stay in the Home?

No. The nurse initially visits to ensure the patient has all needed medical equipment (like a hospital bed), personal care supplies, and pain/comfort medication. Follow-up visits are performed as needed in between phone check-ins. Additionally, home health aide services for personal care are scheduled according to a patient's individual needs. Family care partners play a big role in providing quality care to the patient. Our team will educate the family on how to care for the patient on their own in between nurse visits. In addition to regular visits, we provide an on-call nurse available by phone for medical advice or for emergency visits 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. When you need us, we will be there.

### What Does Hospice Care Cost?

In most cases, hospice care is fully covered by Medicare or a private insurance plan. That means there's no out-of-pocket costs for nurse visits, pain/comfort medications, personal care supplies, or rented medical equipment like a hospital bed. Hope does not deny care to anyone due to lack of finances or insurance.

### How Does Hospice Care Begin?

A referral from the patient's personal physician is required to start our evaluation process. The physician can call our Admissions team or use the online referral form on our website. Alternatively, the patient/family can contact us directly, and we will follow-up with the patient's doctor to confirm the diagnosis. Call us at (925) 829-8770.

### An Extra Layer of Support

Sometimes, patients who are on hospice experience stabilization of their disease to the point that they no longer meet the Medicare requirements for hospice, and they must be discharged. We designed our Advanced Illness Care program to ease the transition from hospice by continuing to provide guidance on care solutions, and to connect the family with needed resources. This program is offered to our clients at no charge. When the time is right to resume hospice care, and if you want to continue with Hope, we make the transition seamless.

Not all hospice organizations are the same. You have the right to choose your provider.

Why should you choose Hope Hospice?

- Hope is a community-based, non-profit provider that has served the Tri-Valley and adjacent East Bay cities since 1980.
- Certified dementia-care specialists on staff for family caregiver assistance.
- A robust grief support program.
- Accredited by The Joint Commission and Medicare.
- Committed to quality; see how we are rated at [HospiceCompare.org](http://HospiceCompare.org) and [CalQualityCare.org](http://CalQualityCare.org).