Refer Hospice-Eligible Patients Sooner

Research consistently shows that hospice care results in improved patient and family satisfaction.\textsuperscript{1,2} A study of 904,000 patients who died between July 2018 and June 2019 assessed the timing of hospice enrollment across care settings. The authors found\textsuperscript{3}:

- **Access**: While hospice elevates care satisfaction, only 7% of eligible patients were referred to hospice for an optimal length of time. This presents a significant opportunity for many providers to positively impact patients’ end-of-life care.

- **Healthcare utilization**: Patients who received hospice services for < 2 months were 5 times more likely to visit the ED during the last month of life than hospice patients who had longer lengths of stay.

- **Costs**: Patients who enrolled in hospice during the last 3-6 months of life consumed an average of $23,600 less in healthcare costs than patients who received no hospice.

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Trust VITAS® Healthcare to deliver care to your patients that meets and exceeds the requirements of the Medicare hospice benefit.

**Complex Modalities**

VITAS offers aggressive symptom management in any setting via traditional treatments along with parenteral interventions, high-flow O\textsubscript{2}, inotropic therapy, and more. Medicare-covered supplies include BiPAP, CPAP, home ventilator, etc.

**High-Acuity Care**

For patients with acute symptoms, VITAS offers higher levels of care to stabilize their condition.

**24/7/365 Clinical Care Support**

Caregivers have access to clinicians who can treat by phone or dispatch a clinician to the patient when necessary. VITAS offers telehealth for 24/7/365 admissions of hospice-eligible patients.

**Open Formulary**

VITAS offers an open Rx formulary, including continuation of disease-directed medications such as beta blockers, ace inhibitors, diuretics, inhalers, cholinesterase inhibitors (i.e. donepezil), etc., with VITAS nurse supervision.

**Advanced Illness Specialists**

Experienced clinicians assist with goals-of-care conversations, specialist consults, medication reconciliation, and more to enhance prognostication of patients with advanced illness.

**Expanded Team**

The VITAS expanded care team includes respiratory therapy, dietary support, PT/OT/speech therapy, music, pet visits, and massage.

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Studies show that most patients with advanced illness would benefit from being referred to hospice sooner for comprehensive care.\textsuperscript{2,3} Don’t delay hospice referrals.

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### General Hospice Eligibility Guidelines

Consider hospice if a patient meets 2 or more:

- Dependent in 2-3 of 6 ADLs
- SOB or fatigue at rest/minimal exertion
- Multiple ED visits or hospitalizations
- 10% weight loss in 6 months
- Recurrent falls with injury
- Decreased tolerance in physical activity

### Diagnosis-Specific Hospice Eligibility Guidelines

#### Sepsis
- Hospice-eligible but not previously identified
  - Cancer, solid tumor and hematologic
  - Advanced cardiac disease
  - Advanced lung disease
  - Dementia
  - Eligibility at hospital discharge

- Pre-hospital functional ability
  - Physical impairment
    - 1 of 6 ADLs or 1 of 5 IADLs
  - Cognitive status
    - Any degree of dementia

#### Lung Disease
- Consider hospice if patient meets both:
  - Dyspnea at rest and/or with minimal exertion while on oxygen therapy
  - One of these disease progressions:
    - Frequent ED visits and/or hospitalizations
    - Cor pulmonale

#### Cancer
- Consider hospice if patient meets both:
  - Spends 50% of time in bed or chair during waking hours
  - No longer pursuing chemotherapy and/or immunotherapy

#### Heart Disease
- Consider hospice if patient meets all:
  - NYHA Class III or IV (fatigue, angina, or dyspnea at rest and/or with minimal exertion)
  - Multiple ED visits and hospitalizations
  - Not a surgical candidate

#### Liver Disease
- Consider hospice if patient meets both:
  - INR > 1.5 and serum albumin ≤ 2.5 g/dL
  - One of these complications:
    - Recurrent ascites
    - Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis (SBP)
    - Hepatic encephalopathy
    - Variceal bleed
    - Weight loss 10%
    - HRS