

## WHAT WILL I DO WHEN MY LOVED ONE IS ON HOSPICE?

Caring for a loved one with a serious illness is one of the most important roles you can play. As the primary caregiver while your loved one is on hospice, your tasks range from buying groceries and cooking meals, to arranging medical appointments, to providing hands-on care such as bathing and changing bed linens.

## WHAT DOES HOSPICE PROVIDE FOR MY LOVED ONE AND OUR FAMILY?

- Medications that are needed for comfort
- Medical equipment and supplies
- Short-term inpatient care at approved facilities for symptoms that cannot be controlled at home
- Temporary care away from home, also called respite care.
- Other complimentary services such as volunteers, music therapy, massage, and pet therapy may be available.

## YOUR WELL-BEING IS IMPORTANT.

It is natural to feel isolated and burdened by the responsibilities of caregiving. You may feel unsure about the decision-making that comes with being a caregiver. You may feel doubts about your ability to care for your loved one.

## HOW CAN HOSPICE HELP?

Hospice professionals can show you how to do many of these important tasks. You will have a team, including a nurse, doctor, social worker, home health aides, and spiritual care, that will help you with the physical responsibilities of caregiving and support your emotional needs. You may reach out to your hospice team whenever you need them.

Hospice can also help you develop a plan to meet your own needs and find other resources. Reaching out to family, friends, your church, or your social groups can also be especially helpful.

## WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

Enrolling your loved one in hospice is optional. Hospice care can be cancelled or changed for any reason at any time.

Talk about hospice with your family and friends. Sharing this pamphlet might help you to start the conversation. You can request a hospice informational visit that may help you to make a choice between hospices.

**Ask about hospices in your area.**

# Is HOSPICE Right for MY LOVED ONE and Me?





### **WHAT IS HOSPICE?**

Hospice gives care, comfort, and support to someone who is living with a serious disease.

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THAT HOSPICE IS THE RIGHT CHOICE?**

Sometimes chemotherapy and radiation treatments can no longer cure cancer. The goal of hospice is to help your loved one reach the best possible quality of life in the final months, weeks and days.

Hospice professionals control symptoms like pain, nausea, and shortness of breath. They can help reduce anxiety and offer spiritual and emotional support. The focus is on helping your loved one live longer, in comfort and with dignity.

Hospice does not mean giving up. Your loved one will continue to receive the highest quality of care while on hospice.

### **WHEN SHOULD I TALK TO MY LOVED ONE ABOUT HOSPICE?**

Knowing when to make a decision about hospice for a loved one who is seriously ill can be difficult.

It's natural to face strong emotions and to have fears about the future. The decision can be difficult, but going over these questions with your loved one may help you to start the conversation

- What do you want to experience in your final days?
- Who do you want to spend time with?
- What are your goals?
- Is hospice care an option you'd like to consider?
- What would being on hospice mean to you?

### **WHAT HAPPENS TO MY LOVED ONE IF THEY ENROLL IN HOSPICE?**

While on hospice your loved one will –

- Continue to receive care for other conditions they may have, such as diabetes.
- Continue to receive pain medications, antibiotics and other medications as they need them.
- Be able to keep in contact with their oncologist and regular doctor.
- Receive emotional, psychological, and spiritual support.

### **WHERE IS HOSPICE PROVIDED?**

Care will be provided wherever you may live (e.g. home, friend's home, skilled nursing facility, assisted living facility, adult foster care, hospice house). You can contact the hospice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by telephone for support.

