Palliative Care and Hospice

What is palliative care?

Palliative care improves the quality of life of patients and their families who are facing life-threatening illness.

The focus is on preventing and relieving suffering through early identification, assessment and treatment of pain and other problems:
- Physical
- Psychosocial
- Spiritual

Palliative care is for:
- Anyone with a serious illness
- Both children and adults
- Not dependent on prognosis
- Can be provided alongside a curative treatment

Improving daily life during illness

Potential benefits:
- Help you find strength in facing your daily life
- May improve your ability to tolerate medical treatments
- May help you have more control of your care by improving your understanding of your choices

Serves to alleviate symptoms such as: pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite, difficulty sleeping, depression

Improving understanding

By improving the understanding of treatment options and matching personal needs with those options, palliative care helps patients have more control over their care.

Physicians and staff can help navigate medical decisions:
- Where do you want your treatment to take place?
- How do you want to manage your pain?
- How much technological intervention do you want to include in your care?
- Do you want to participate in research?

What is hospice care?

Hospice is a philosophy of health care that addresses the needs of patients and families facing end-of-life decisions.

Common benefits:
- Can be provided in a private residence, inpatient setting, nursing facility or assisted living facility
- Care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the patient at the end of life
- Provides comfort, dignity, hope and support
- Serves patients of all ages

810 Americans would want to be cared for in their homes at facing a life limiting illness

Compassion

Hospice is another form of palliative care.

Hospice care focuses on quality of life and pain control when disease progresses to the point when cures are no longer possible.

In both approaches, the wishes of the patient are front and center.