



## What is Pediatric Palliative Care?

**Pediatric palliative care** is a philosophy and program of care for children with life-threatening conditions focusing on enhancing quality of life and relieving suffering for the child, family members and other significant people in the child's life. To "palliate" means to make comfortable by treating a child's symptoms from an illness or medical condition.

Pediatric palliative care:

- Is delivered by an interdisciplinary team which includes the child, family caregivers and healthcare professionals including doctors, nurses, aides, social workers/counselors, chaplains, therapists and other specialties.
- Seeks to reduce pain and other distressing symptoms
- Focuses on the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of the child and family.
- Can begin at any point in the child's care and continue throughout the entire course of a child's life.
- Is often provided at the same time as life-prolonging care or as the main focus of care.
- Supports the child and family's goals for the future including hope for cure or life prolongation.

## What is Pediatric Hospice?

**Pediatric hospice** is a program and philosophy of care for children facing a life-limiting illness or condition who have a life expectancy of months, not years.

Hospice care:

- Involves a team-oriented approach to expert medical care, pain management, and emotional and spiritual support expressly tailored to the child's and their families' needs.

- Focuses on caring, not curing and, in most cases; care is provided in the person’s home but can also be offered in freestanding hospice centers and hospitals.
- Is available to patients of any age, religion, race, or illness.
- Relies on the belief that each of us has the right to die pain-free and with dignity, and that our loved ones need support to allow us to do so.

## What is the Difference between Pediatric Palliative Care and Hospice?

| Question                                                                  | Palliative Care                                                                                                  | Hospice Care                                                                                         |
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| <b>Who can receive this care?</b>                                         | Anyone with a serious illness or condition, regardless of life expectancy.                                       | Someone with an illness or condition with a life expectancy measured in months, not years.           |
| <b>Can my child continue to receive treatments to cure their illness?</b> | You may receive palliative care and curative care at the same time.                                              | Treatments and medicines aimed at relieving symptoms are provided.                                   |
| <b>Does Medicare pay?</b>                                                 | Some treatments and medications may be covered.                                                                  | Medicare pays all charges related to hospice.                                                        |
| <b>Does Medicaid pay?</b>                                                 | Some treatments and medications may be covered.                                                                  | In 47 states, Medicaid pays all charges related to hospice.                                          |
| <b>Does private insurance pay?</b>                                        | No, there is no ‘palliative care’ package, the services are flexible and based on the patient’s needs.           | Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit.                                                         |
| <b>Is this a package deal?</b>                                            | No, there is no ‘palliative care’ package, the services are flexible and based on the patient’s needs.           | Medicare and Medicaid hospice benefits are package deals.                                            |
| <b>How long can my child receive care?</b>                                | This will depend upon your care needs and the coverage you have through Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance. | As long as you meet the hospice’s criteria of an illness with a life expectancy of months not years. |

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| <b>What organization provides these services for children?</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Hospices</li> <li>• Nursing Facilities</li> <li>• Healthcare Clinics</li> </ul>                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospice organizations</li> <li>• Hospice programs based out of a hospital</li> <li>• Other health care organizations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Where are services provided for children?</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital Home</li> <li>• Home</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually, wherever the child resides, in their home or hospital.</li> <li>• Some hospices have facilities where children can live, like a hospice residence, or receive care for short-term reasons, such as acute pain or symptom management.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Who provides these services?</b>                            | <p>It varies. However usually there is a team including doctors, nurses, social workers and chaplains, similar to the hospice team.</p>                                                                                    | <p>A chaplain, volunteer, home health aide and others</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Where can I find these services for my child?</b>           | <p>Ask your children’s hospital about who provides pediatric palliative care services. To locate a children’s hospital in your area, visit <a href="http://www.childrenshospitals.net">www.childrenshospitals.net</a>.</p> | <p>To locate a hospice in your area that cares for children, call the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organizations’ HelpLine at 800.658.8898.</p>                                                                                                                                           |