

Why does Palliative Care matter?

Consider these statistics as examples of the impact of Palliative Care.**

- Approximately **90 million** Americans live with serious illness.
- Lung cancer patients receiving early palliative care showed less depression, improved quality of life and survived **2.7 months** longer, according to a 2010 study in the New England Journal of Medicine.
- Approximately **68%** of Medicare costs are related to people with four or more chronic conditions—the typical Palliative Care patient.
- If Palliative Care were fully penetrated into the nation's hospitals, total savings could amount to **\$6 billion per year**.
- According to a 2011 poll, once informed about Palliative Care:
 - **95%** agreed that it is important to educate patients with serious illness and their families about Palliative Care.
 - **92%** said they would be likely to consider Palliative Care for a loved one if they had a serious illness.
 - **92%** said it is important that Palliative Care services be made available at all hospitals for patients with serious illness and their families.

**Source: www.capc.org



Southern West Virginia Community Coalition
Partnering To Raise Health Care To New Heights



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Think PALLIATIVE CARE

The Who, What, When,
Where, & Why to
Referring Patients





Who can get Palliative Care?

Patients with conditions like these could be ideal for Palliative Care. This list is only a sample of the many types of illnesses that could benefit from Palliative Care.*

Cancer

- Patients with metastatic or inoperable cancer

Heart Disease

- Chronic heart failure (CHF) symptoms when resting
- Frequent ER visits for symptoms
- Cardiac arrest, syncope or cerebrovascular accident (CVA)
- New dysrhythmia
- Ejection fraction (EF) of < 20%

Pulmonary Disease

- Signs or symptoms of heart failure
- Dyspnea when resting
- Unintentional weight loss
- Oxygen saturation on O₂ of < 88%
- Partial pressure of carbon dioxide > 50

Alzheimer's

- Inability to walk
- Incontinence
- Fewer than 6 intelligible words on majority of days
- Frequent ER visits
- Albumin < 2.5 or decrease PO intake

Liver Disease

- Refractory ascites
- Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis (SBP)
- Jaundice
- Malnutrition and muscle wasting
- Prothrombin time (PT) > 5 seconds
- Albumin < 2.5

Renal Disease

- Creatinine clearance of < 15 ml/minute
- Serum creatinine > 6.0

What can Palliative Care do?

Palliative Care is an interdisciplinary team approach. It can provide many benefits, including the following:

- Provide relief and improve control of symptoms
- Help relieve worries from emotional, spiritual or social issues
- Help set goals for care
- Connect patients to supportive care services
- Support families and caregivers
- Help with education about diagnosis
- Help with medication management

When should patients seek Palliative Care?

When is it ideal to refer Palliative Care as an option for a patient?

- Appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness
- Can be provided together with curative treatment

Where can patients access Palliative Care?

The following are common places to get Palliative Care, when available.

- Hospitals
- Outpatient Clinics
- Nursing Homes
- Assisted Living Facilities
- Home

*Source: <http://www.promotingexcellence.org/>