

Avera@Home

Choosing Hospice Guide





Hospice for Your Loved One

Choosing hospice can be a difficult decision. You may not even know what questions to ask or where to start. Avera@Home cares about getting you the information you need to make the best decision for you and your family and supporting the choices you make. We understand that many aspects of services may be new to you, so we hope this booklet will assist you.

Avera@Home has patient care coordinators available to answer all your questions, and provide free in-home, no-obligation consults and education to patients, families and community groups. You do not need a physician's order — just a simple phone call!

You'll receive Christian-based care and support from a comprehensive team — **so you can continue to live how you want with purpose, comfort and dignity with the support of our professional team.**

Our Mission

Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Our mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.



Compassion

Compassionate care is expressed through sensitive listening and responding, understanding, support, patience and healing touch.

Hospitality

A welcoming presence, an attentiveness to needs, and a gracious manner, seasoned with a sense of humor, are expressions of hospitality in and by the Avera community.

Stewardship

Respect, truth and integrity are fundamental qualities needed to create relationships among those who serve, and those who are served.



Make the Most Out of Hospice

Hospice is a benefit typically covered 100% by Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurance. Despite these facts, statistics from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) show that some families and their loved ones use those services for about 70 days. That's just the average; at least half of all hospice patients implement hospice services for less than 23 days.

Get Help When It's Time to Talk

Starting the conversation can be easier for families if they turn to Avera@Home specialists. People are encouraged to start talking now, before the time comes when action is needed. Hospice professionals are known to be good listeners, able to work with your schedule to answer questions and provide information to the family.

Look at Hospice in a New Way

One metaphor to use is travel. You can certainly get your tickets and pack your bags and fly to Europe, finding your way as you go. Or you can get a tour guide for your trip who will help you navigate it for a better experience.

Avera@Home listens to what is important to you, providing you with information about the options available so you can make good decisions.

ABCs of Hospice

A

Anyone who has a life-limiting illness can begin hospice. They can stop or restart hospice should their health status change.

B

Benefits of hospice are comprehensive and include physical, emotional and spiritual support. It also includes nursing care, medications, equipment and other options to support you. The earlier hospice begins, the more time an individual can enjoy these benefits. This includes access to regular visits and on-call assistance 24/7.

C

Coverage includes Medicare, Medicaid and most private insurers. Avera@Home helps navigate coverage with your health insurance plan and your condition.

D

Depending on your preference, you can receive hospice services wherever you call home. This includes your home, a family member's home, a long-term care facility or an assisted living center.

When to Call Avera@Home Hospice

When things have changed and you're not sure what to do. The Avera@Home team is experienced in helping families understand how changes in health and behaviors could be better managed with hospice services.

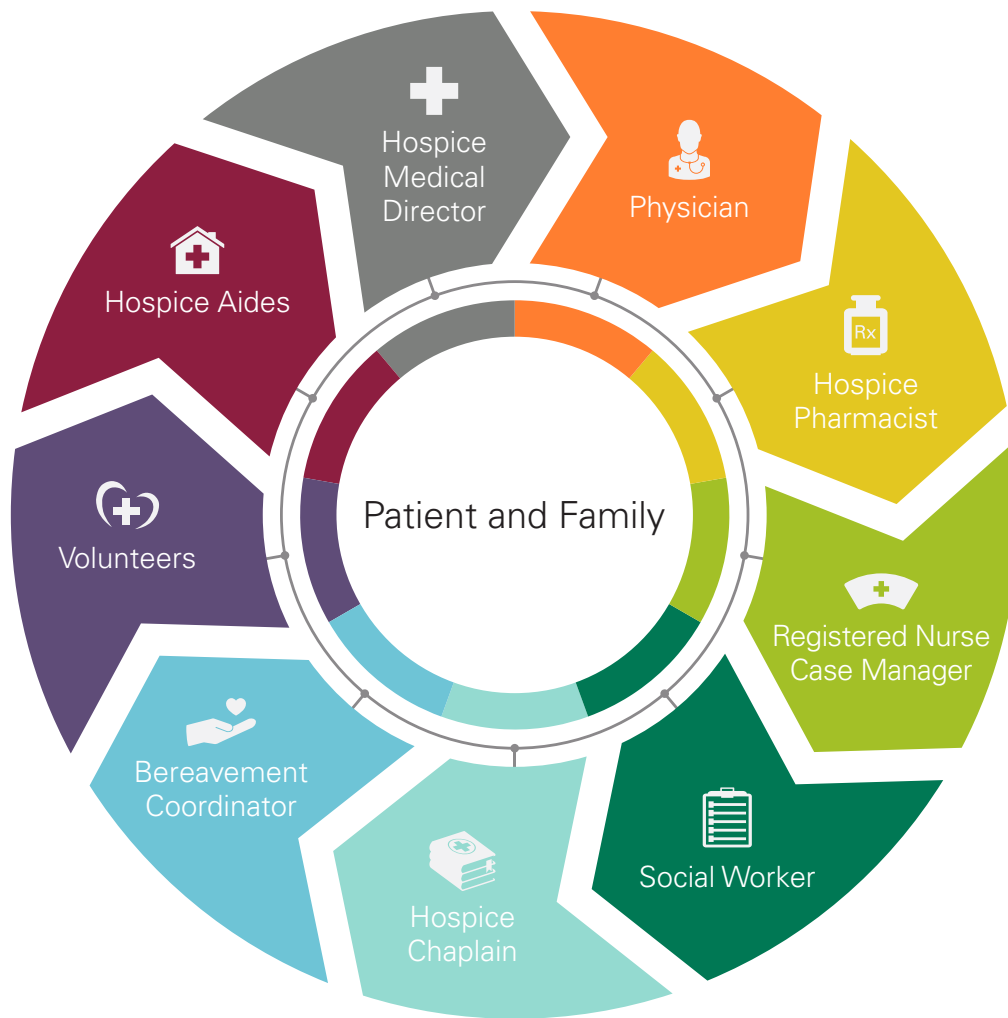
Some signs to look for include:

- Increased visits to the hospital, ER or the physician
- Additional reliance on others for activities of daily living, such as dressing
- Fear of falling and balance concerns
- Noticeable isolation from friends and family
- Wounds that aren't healing or are increasing
- Weight loss or lack of interest in eating



You Are at the Center of Hospice Care

Hospice is designed to focus on quality of life, symptom control and helping to keep you in your home (where most people prefer to be). Hospice is a large team with various disciplines. A comprehensive plan includes coverage for comfort medications, needed equipment and access to a nurse 24/7 for emergencies.



Together, we're bringing comfort to families, helping them face end of life with dignity.

Hospice Medical Director

The hospice medical director is the physician who will assist in the care of your physical, emotional and spiritual symptoms on a regular basis while working closely with the interdisciplinary team.

Physician

Your chosen provider will continue to lead your care. The hospice medical director will support and make recommendations to your attending or primary care physician.

Hospice Pharmacist

The pharmacist provides support and recommendations regarding medication and symptom control, assesses appropriateness of medication orders and provides options for pain management.

Registered Nurse Case Manager

The hospice nurse makes regularly scheduled visits and coordinates the patient's care plan with the interdisciplinary team. The nurse will assess your comfort and any symptoms that need attention, teach family members and friends about caregiving, manage medications and provide health education.

Social Worker

The social worker is available for listening, counseling and offering practical support with assessments, consultations, education, referral services, financial questions and discharge planning.

Hospice Chaplain

The spiritual dimension is an important part of one's journey toward wholeness and meaning in life. Our chaplain is available to offer compassionate listening, comfort and spiritual support to patients and family members of any or no faith tradition, respecting the diversity, dignity and worth of each person's beliefs.

Bereavement Coordinator

The hospice bereavement coordinator supports your family with a plan to navigate through the grief and loss of a loved one. All families are supported for one year with a variety of opportunities, such as phone calls, one-on-one visits and support groups.

Volunteers

Volunteers provide companionship and conversation. A volunteer may read to a patient, play cards, or just provide a friendly face and listening ear.

Hospice Aides

Hospice aides work closely under the supervision of nurses and other team members to provide assistance with personal care needs, such as walking, bathing and grooming.



A Unique Hospice Experience

Avera@Home wants to help patients and families celebrate each day with love, life and purpose. We do our best to go beyond typical hospice care so you can experience hospice in a meaningful, beautiful way.

We Honor Veterans

Avera@Home is a certified Level 4 We Honor Veterans organization. We honor veterans during their hospice course with such activities as pinning ceremonies, flag events, and Veterans Day programs. We work closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to care for their patients in the community and assist families with securing benefits, education on funeral/burial benefits offered to veterans, and connecting them with resources such as the Disabled American Veterans.

Comfort Therapies

Art therapy | Massage therapy | Music therapy | Pet therapy

**Availability of each of these therapies is dependent on locations.*

Swan Songs

Swan Songs™ is a program offered at certain locations that fulfills music wishes by providing private concerts for patients receiving hospice care. At their request, a favorite genre of music is brought directly to the patient. A short concert is performed which allows the patient, along with his or her family and friends, to focus beyond the illness and come together through music.

The Hospice Benefit in Long-Term Care Facilities

When a long-term care facility is the patient's home, the staff and hospice team offer professional services and support uniquely appropriate for the patient and family. Hospice does not replace the care your facility is providing, but can be seen as an additional layer of support.

- ✓ Help the patient and his or her family find meaning and fulfillment at the end of life while honoring personal beliefs and philosophies
- ✓ Provide expertise on the physical and emotional aspects of advanced illness
- ✓ Provide access to a 24-hour on-call nurse
- ✓ Provide equipment, medications and supplies
- ✓ Focus on pain management and symptom control
- ✓ Provide a peaceful, secure and comfortable experience
- ✓ Address the emotional and spiritual needs of the patient, whole family and facility
- ✓ Offer volunteer services of companionship, support and correspondence
- ✓ Comfort families during the time following the passing of a loved one

What's the Difference Between Hospice and Palliative Care?

| Palliative Care | Hospice |
|--|--|
| Comfort care with or without curative intention | Comfort care without curative intention |
| Whole-person care (mind, body, spirit) | |
| Begins at diagnosis and at the same time as treatment | Begins when aggressive measures have been exhausted or are too burdensome |
| Offered for a wide range of serious or chronic illnesses | Offered for a wide range of serious or chronic illnesses with a limited time prognosis |
| Focuses on patient for care and support | Focuses on patient and family for care and support |
| Can be stopped at any time | |

Both palliative care and hospice care provide comfort. Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with serious illness, aimed at optimizing quality of life and symptoms. Patients in palliative care may receive medical care for their symptoms, **ALONG** with treatment intended to cure serious illness. For example, a patient with a serious illness may follow with palliative care to help with symptom management during treatments.

Hospice care is intended for those individuals who are **NO** longer treating to cure an illness — but focused on aggressive symptom management, comfort and quality of life as the goal.



What Hospice Covers

Hospice benefits are generally covered if:

- Your hospice physician and/or your regular primary care provider certify that your health condition qualifies for the hospice benefit
- You accept palliative care (for comfort) instead of care to cure your illness

The hospice benefit covers the hospice care you get for your illness and related conditions, but the care you get must be paid for by a Medicare-approved hospice provider, such as Avera@Home.

Important: Once you choose hospice care, the Medicare hospice benefit should cover everything you need. Original Medicare* will still pay for covered benefits for any health problems that aren't part of your terminal illness and related conditions, but this is very rare. Hospice can be suspended at any time to pursue treatment for the condition.

Hospice care is usually given where you call home. Depending on your terminal illness and related conditions, the plan of care your hospice team creates can include any or all of these services:

- Physician services
- Nursing care
- Medical equipment (like wheelchairs or walkers)
- Medical supplies (like bandages and catheters)
- Prescription drugs
- Hospice aide and homemaker services
- Social worker services
- Grief and loss counseling for you and your family
- Short-term inpatient care (for pain and symptom management)
- Short-term respite care
- Any other Medicare-covered services needed to manage your terminal illness and related conditions, as recommended by your hospice team

Please note: Medicare hospice does NOT cover room and board at the nursing facility.

*Hospice services are also covered by other payers including Medicare, Veterans Affairs (VA), most private insurance and medical assistance. Check with your hospice team to find out about your hospice coverage options.



Avera@Home

If you would like to learn more about services that may benefit you or your loved one, Avera@Home patient care coordinators can meet with patients and/or their family to evaluate and discuss hospice options.

**A free, no obligation meeting is provided
by Avera@Home as part of supporting our mission.**

Contact us in any of the following ways.



CALL

Avera@Home at **605-322-4663**
or toll free 833-360-0117 (option 2)



ASK

your local long-term care facility
staff to reach out



TALK

with your primary care provider

AveraAtHome.org