

Differences between Palliative Care and Hospice Care



Question	Palliative Care	Hospice Care
Who can receive this care?	Anyone with a serious illness, regardless of life expectancy, ideally beginning at time of diagnosis.	Anyone with a life expectancy of 6 months or less.
What is the goal of this care?	Improve quality of life by anticipating, preventing, and treating suffering. Can be used to compliment curative care.	Improve quality of life with comfort-based care that neither hastens nor postpones death.
Can I continue to receive treatment to cure my illness?	Yes. Palliative care can be provided throughout the continuum of illness and can be used concurrently with curative treatments.	It varies. Treatments and medicines aimed at relieving symptoms and improving quality of life are provided, including certain palliative treatments.
What services are provided?	It depends on the provider but typically involves symptom management, emotional and spiritual support, advance care planning and care coordination to match treatments with the patient's goals and wishes, and support for family.	Hospice services include: expert pain and symptom management; medical and personal care; grief support; emotional and spiritual support; necessary medications, equipment, and supplies; 24-hour telephone support; guidance on funeral arrangements; education for families to help provide care; and volunteers for companionship and caregiver support.
Who provides care?	Palliative treatments are typically provided by a team of doctors, nurses, and other specialists who work with the patient's primary care physician. Social workers and chaplains can also be involved.	End-of-life care is provided by an interdisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, social workers, hospice aides, chaplains, volunteers, grief counselors, and the patient's primary care physician.
Where are services provided?	Home, assisted living facility, nursing facility, or hospital.	Wherever you reside – home, nursing home, assisted living facility, the hospital, or Gosnell Memorial Hospice House, Hospice of Southern Maine's inpatient facility.
Does Medicare or Medicaid pay?	Some treatments and medications may be covered.	Yes. Medicare and Medicaid pay for all services, treatments, and medications related to your hospice diagnosis.
Does private insurance pay?	It depends.	Most insurance plans have a hospice benefit. Hospice of Southern Maine cares for all patients, regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay.