

Hospice and Palliative Care Dictionary

Advance Directives

These are documents which give instructions about your health care, what you want done or not done, if you can't speak for yourself, to the caregivers who need to know. A living will, medical power of attorney and pre-hospital medical care directive are forms of advance directives.

Bereavement

Grieving a death. Hospice of The Lakes offers grief support groups, individual counseling and periodic mailings to the bereaved for 13 months following a death.

Caregivers

Family members, friends or paid staff who provide care to a person who is ill.

COPD

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) consists primarily of two related diseases - bronchitis and emphysema. In both diseases, there is chronic obstruction of air flow through the airways and out of the lungs, and the obstruction generally is permanent and worsens over time. People often feel short of breath, especially with activity. Smoking is often the cause of COPD.

Dementia

A general term for diseases that result in impairment of language, memory, personality, behavior and judgment. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia. Others include Lewy Body dementia and vascular dementia.

Do Not Resuscitate (DNR)/Do Not Intubate (DNI) Orders

A DNR/DNI is written by a doctor instructing other healthcare providers in health care institutions not to try to revive a patient whose heart stops beating or who stops breathing or to assure that a patient is not intubated if they do not wish it. The orders are typically written after a discussion with the patient and/or family.

End-of-Life or Hospice Care

A team of health care professionals working together to meet the medical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients with life-limiting illnesses and their families. The focus is on comfort, not curative treatment. Most patients are cared for in their own homes.

Home Health

An insurance benefit that covers skilled care for seriously ill, homebound patients who may later choose hospice services. A physician order is required for patients who need intermittent skilled services in their home. Services may include catheter or feeding tube care, wound care, intravenous fluids or antibiotics.

Hospice Team

Consists of the patient and family, physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains, nurses' aides and volunteers. Other participants may include massage therapists, musicians, pet therapists, and bereavement counselors.

Not-for-Profit

An organization that channels any funds remaining after paying operating expenses back into programs and services rather than sharing profits with owners, shareholders and executives.

Palliative Care

Also known as comfort care. The goal of palliative care is to prevent or treat the symptoms of the disease, side effects caused by treatment of the disease, and psychological, social and spiritual problems related to the disease or its treatment.

Respite Care

Provides a rest for family members or other people caring for the patient at home. Medicare allows the patient to go to an inpatient facility for up to five days, with no limit on how often.