

What is Palliative Care?

By Family Hospice and Palliative Care, Pittsburgh

Along with hospice services, Family Hospice and Palliative Care offers a Palliative Home Care program. So, what is it?

“The word ‘palliative’ means ‘alleviating pain,’ “ explains Family Hospice Clinical Supervisor Pete Reinhart. “The Palliative Home Care Program helps patients and families manage illness and medical treatments so that they can carry on with daily life comfortably and fully.”

In order to receive palliative home care services, a patient must have:

- a life-limiting illness;
- be home-bound, meaning that leaving home requires a considerable effort;
- have a skilled nursing need. This includes teaching and training related to new medication, wound care and observation and assessment of the effects of new medications and treatments.

A patient receiving palliative home care may:

- pursue more aggressive treatment for his or her illness;
- have a prognosis that exceeds six months,
- have the flexibility to transition between palliative home care and hospice as his or her needs change without disrupting continuity of care. At Family Hospice, the same clinical team follows patient, be it under hospice or palliative home care.

Family Hospice’s Palliative Home Care Program provides nursing, personal care, spiritual and emotional support, physical therapy, caregiver education, expressive arts, massage and pet therapy, service from volunteers and bereavement support. This care is available to patients and families throughout the nine Western Pennsylvania counties served by Family Hospice.

Reimbursement for palliative home care is available through most insurance providers.

If you have questions regarding eligibility for palliative home care, please call 1-800-513-2148.

Family Hospice and Palliative Care was invited to contribute a feature article on “Palliative care” in the winter/spring 2011 issue of *New Lifestyles* magazine.

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