

Differences in Palliative vs. Hospice Care

There are differences between Palliative Care and Hospice Care ... and yet, there is a relationship between the two.

By definition,

Palliative Care focuses on relieving symptoms that are related to chronic illnesses, such as cancer, cardiac disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's and other dementias, AIDS, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) and other neurological diseases.

Palliative Care can be used at any stage of illness — not just the advanced stages.

Hospice Care is palliative by nature. The illness, however, has progressed to a point where curative treatment is no longer desired or beneficial. Hospice Care supports the patient and their families while focusing on relieving symptoms and offering comfort from pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, nausea, anxiety, insomnia, constipation, etc.

Treatment Differences:

Treatments are not limited with Palliative Care and can range from conservative to aggressive/curative.

Hospice Care treatments are limited and focus on palliation of symptoms. The goal is no longer to cure, but to promote comfort.

Treatment Timing:

Palliative Care can be considered at any time during the course of a chronic illness.

With Hospice Care, Medicare requires that a physician certify that a patient's condition is terminal. The physician must certify that a patient's life expectancy is six months or less.

Place of Treatment:

Both Palliative and Hospice Care can be delivered at any location.

Differences in Types of Services:

Palliative Care services are typically provided through regular physician and nursing visits.

Hospice Care services are more inclusive than Palliative Care services. Hospice Care includes physician services, nursing services, social worker, spiritual care, bereavement care and volunteers for the individual and their family.

<http://www.stcam.com/hospice/palliative-vs-hospice/>