What is Palliative Care?

Palliative Care is a specialized service providing pain and symptom management, psychosocial support, and guidance in navigating health care options and choices. This is not hospice care; it is an entirely different option for those dealing with serious illness. The Palliative Care team’s focus is to provide comfort through the alleviation of symptoms and to offer education, resources and emotional support for patients and their families. Palliative Care is appropriate for patients undergoing treatment for cancer, stroke, diabetes, chronic lung disease, heart disease, chronic kidney disease and/or Alzheimer’s disease but is not limited to these medical conditions.
Our Palliative Team

Our Palliative Care team provides ongoing support through expertise in pain and symptom management, advance care planning, and counseling. These highly skilled specialists are also certified through the Alzheimer’s Association in Dementia EssentiALZ Advanced Care. Our team works closely with each patient’s primary physician to provide options to enhance quality of life.

- **Medical Directors:**
  Our Medical Directors have a combined total of more than 50 years of experience in providing pain management and symptom relief to our community and are highly regarded in this specialized field.

- **Advanced Practice Nurses:** Clinical experts with advanced training in pain and symptom management guide and support patients and their families in making choices that impact health and well-being.

- **Licensed Clinical Social Workers:** These compassionate and caring professionals have undergone in-depth training and possess knowledge of community resources. They provide Advanced Care Planning, offer emotional support and assist patients and families with their needs and concerns.

Support through life’s journey

**Symptom Management**
Patients receive expert advice in the management of pain, shortness of breath, nausea, anxiety, depression, poor appetite, weakness, and other challenging day-to-day symptoms. Medication-free methods of addressing dementia-related challenges are explored.

**Advance Care Planning**
We assist patients and their families in identifying goals and translating them into a plan of care. We do this by evaluating the prognosis of the illness, discussing the kinds of challenges that are likely to arise over time, and reviewing the pros and cons of each medical intervention. Together we create a care approach that honors each patient and their family’s goals and wishes.

**Psychosocial Support**
We help to adjust to changes and challenges such as modifications to daily living and routines, coping with symptoms, and navigating insurance and financial concerns. Additionally, we can assist each patient with education and connections to community resources. Palliative Care can help to better manage this potentially difficult time in life.

Who is eligible for Palliative Care?
Anyone with a serious or chronic illness who is struggling with unmanaged symptoms or in need of guidance and support with their medical condition. Palliative Care may be beneficial at any age and any stage of an illness, regardless of whether or not curative treatment is pursued. This service is covered by Medicare, Medicaid and most insurance plans with applicable co-pays.

Can I keep my Primary Physician?
Yes, each patient’s primary physician continues to direct care with input from the palliative care team. We believe your needs are best met through coordinating care with your primary physician.

How do I get a Palliative Care Referral?
Ask your primary physician for a Palliative Care referral to Pathways. Call Pathways at (970) 663-3500 to schedule an appointment or feel free to visit our website and print a referral/order form to take with you to your appointment. It’s that easy.