

Hospice Care



VA Butler Healthcare provides home and inpatient hospice care *for Veterans*

What is Hospice Care?

Hospice is not a place, it is a model of care. Hospice care is provided by a team of professionals who consider the unique situation of each Veteran and family. The Veteran's physical, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs are considered when end-of-life care and support are provided. Hospice care is not about giving up. It is about providing comfort, control, dignity, hope, and the best quality of life possible for terminally ill Veterans and their loved ones.

Hospice Care Admissions

Veterans who have been honorably discharged and are eligible for hospice care based on Medicare Guidelines can receive hospice care without paying a co-pay. The Veteran can receive hospice care regardless of income or priority category.

Medicare Guidelines include:

- A terminal disease with a prognosis of less than six months if the disease runs its normal course
- The diagnoses include cancer and non-cancer. Non-cancer diagnoses are end-stage heart, lung, liver, kidney disease, or dementia.
- Treatment goals focus on making the Veteran comfortable rather than curing the disease.
- The Veteran accepts the hospice philosophy of care. Examples include not wanting CPR or transferring the Veteran to the hospital when the Veteran's condition declines.

The Veteran's condition will be assessed regularly. There are times when a Veteran medically improves and no longer meets hospice criteria.

Home Hospice Care

VA Butler understand Veterans may want to remain at home for their final days, so we help fulfill their wishes. We coordinate services with community hospice care agencies to provide home hospice care.

Hospice care can be paid for through the Veteran's insurance or the VA. Veterans can keep their VA doctor while receiving community hospice care. Home hospice care agencies also follow Medicare guidelines.

Inpatient Hospice Care

VA Butler admits Veterans who want or need inpatient hospice care to our Community Living Center. The hospice team develops a care plan involving the Veteran and family. The care plan includes:

- Symptom control
- Personalized daily care and food choices
- Diverse activities
- Spiritual, emotional and psychosocial support
- Assistance with practical issues (i.e., what important papers are needed, funeral arrangements, VA death/burial benefits, etc.)
- Education about what to expect as a Veteran's condition declines, especially the final days
- Bereavement care

CONTACT US

For more information about VA Butler's inpatient and outpatient Hospice Care program, contact the Palliative Care Coordinator at **724-285-2763** or at **1-800-362-8262, ext. 2763**.

www.butler.va.gov/services/hospice.asp