Hospice Can Help

What is Hospice Care?

Alzheimer’s Disease and Hospice Care

Presented by Hospice Foundation of America, in Partnership with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
What is Hospice Care?

- Occurs where the patient calls home
- Grief support and counseling to survivors

Alzheimer’s Disease and Hospice

- 10% of hospice patients
- Support and care for up to six months and sometimes longer

Alzheimer’s Disease

- Loss and grief
- Increasingly demanding caregiving responsibilities

Alzheimer’s Disease

- Progressive and irreversible brain disease
- NOT a normal part of aging
- Decline in cognitive function
- Treatment can slow the progression
### Alzheimer’s Disease

**First symptoms usually occur after age 60**

**Length of illness varies with age and diagnosis**

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#### Cris Abrams

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#### Alzheimer’s Disease

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<th>First Stages</th>
<th>As it progresses</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Forgetfulness</td>
<td>• Increased memory loss</td>
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<td>• Trouble with normal activities</td>
<td>• Problems recognizing family and friends</td>
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<td>• Mood or personality changes</td>
<td>• Trouble with new situations</td>
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#### Alzheimer’s Disease

**Final Stages**

- Unable to communicate and remember loved ones
- Dependent on others for their daily care
For More Information...

Alzheimer's Association
www.alz.org
Alzheimer's Association Helpline
1-800-272-3900

Hospice Professionals Can Help:

Understand pain and address physical discomfort
Provide compassionate, quality care
Support family and caregivers

How Hospice Care Begins

The first step is a conversation
Requires the patient’s or family’s consent and a doctor’s certification

Alzheimer's Disease and Hospice

Medicare has developed guidelines to determine eligibility
In general, patient has about six months to live if disease runs its natural course
Functional Assessment Staging (FAST) Test--Helps assess Hospice Eligibility

- Increasingly forgetful
- Unable to perform complex tasks
- Unable to walk unassisted

Functional Assessment Staging (FAST) Test

- Unable to bathe or see to personal grooming without help
- Unable to control bowel and bladder functions
- Unable to converse effectively
- May have other medical complications

Choosing Hospice

Once a patient is found eligible for and has opted for hospice care, a plan of care is developed.

Hospice Directory at www.hospicedirectory.org

Choosing Hospice

“Understanding Hospice” at the Hospice Information Center
www.hospicefoundation.org
**The Hospice Team**

**Physician**
- Manages pain and other symptoms
- Works with other physicians

**Nurse**
- Coordinates care
- Communicates needs to other team members
- Educates patient and family

**Nurse**
- Assesses pain and symptoms, often through non-verbal cues
- Assesses what equipment and supplies may be needed

**Social Worker**
- Provides support, counseling and mediation
- Helps navigate health system
- Locates community resources
**The Hospice Team**

**Chaplain**
- Helps find answers to spiritual questions
- Guides in accordance with beliefs
- Can arrange rituals and services

**Persons with advanced Alzheimer's can benefit from support**
- Gentle touch or familiar song can bring comfort

**The Hospice Team**

**Volunteer**
- Offers companionship
- Provides occasional respite for families and caregivers

**The Hospice Team**

**Home health aide**
- Provides practical assistance
- Helps with daily tasks
The Hospice Team

Therapist
- Improves daily function
- Extends independence and ensures safety

The Hospice Team

Additional Services
- Massage or pet therapy
- Journaling, music, or relaxation techniques

The Hospice Team

Hospice is about meeting each patient’s needs

The Hospice Team

Nutritionist
- Identifies ways to ensure nutrition
- Relieves suffering and provides comfort
Nutrition and Hydration

Artificial nutrition and hydration is a medical treatment

Usually through a tube feeding

Insertion requires a surgical procedure

Nutrition and Hydration

Medicare guidelines do not prohibit patients with PEG tubes

Each hospice evaluates patients to assess what care they can provide

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine
www.aahpm.org

The Benefits of Hospice

Care Comes to the Patient

- Private home
- Assisted living centers
- Nursing homes

Hospice Team is available 24/7 by phone

- Unscheduled visits in emergencies

The Benefits of Hospice

As death approaches, the hospice team:

- Usually visits more often
- Works to maintain patient comfort
- Teaches what to expect and what to do next
## Support for the Family

**Advocating for loved one**

Grief and loss are integral to Alzheimer’s experience. Hospice offers grief support to patients and their families.

## Hospice Care and Pain Management

**Palliative** - intended to relieve suffering

Assess discomfort through nonverbal cues

Recognize and monitor symptoms

Families can document observations. Hospice staff can address unexpected pain issues. Visit the Hospice Information Center at [www.hospicefoundation.org/infocenter](http://www.hospicefoundation.org/infocenter)
Medicare

Health insurance provided by the federal government for:
- People aged 65 or older
- People under age 65 with certain disabilities
- People of all ages with end-stage renal disease
- Also covered by Medicaid and private insurance

Medicare and Caregivers

Find online assistance and information on caregiving for patients with Alzheimer’s disease at www.medicare.gov/caregivers

Paying for Hospice Care

www.medicare.gov

- Download “The Medicare Hospice Benefit” in English and Spanish or request one in Braille
- Call at 1-800-633-4227 (MEDICARE)

Medicare Hospice Benefit

Patients with Alzheimer’s disease or their representative can choose the benefit under Medicare Part A, when:

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<th>Eligible for part A</th>
<th>A doctor gives a prognosis of 6 months or less</th>
<th>Written consent is provided</th>
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www.medicare.gov
Medicare Hospice Benefit

- Medical equipment
- Medical supplies
- Medications

Levels of Care

- Routine home care
- Continuous home care
- General inpatient care
- Respite care

Hospice Care at Home

- Most people would prefer to die at home
- Hospice is provided where the patient calls home

Choosing Hospice

- Unlimited number of 90 day periods
- Can change hospice providers or discontinue hospice care

“Understanding Hospice”
www.hospicefoundation.org
Advance Care Planning

Conversation about values, treatment options, and goals of care

Outlines choices if someone else must make decisions

Especially important for those who may eventually be unable to communicate verbally

Advance Care Planning

Explore, discuss and document preferences

Name someone who is trusted

Get support from trained hospice professionals

Advance Care Planning

Advance Directives

- Provide instructions
- Designate a proxy

Each state has specific guidelines and forms
- www.caringinfo.org

Advance Care Planning

Medicare does not require hospice patients to sign a DNR or forgo CPR

- DNR: Do not resuscitate order
- CPR: Cardio-Pulmonary resuscitation
Advance Care Planning
Eldercare Locator at www.eldercare.gov
Hospice Foundation of America at www.hospicefoundation.org

Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer’s
Struggle to balance competing demands
Have feelings of grief and guilt
These reactions are natural and normal

Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer’s
Difficult to take care of one’s own health
Hard to find time for exercise or healthy meals
Provide care and support even when loved one is not at home

Hospice Can Help Caregivers
Providing skilled medical care
Coordinating care
Educating caregivers about what to expect
Hospice Can Help Caregivers

- Offering emotional and spiritual support
- Giving families quality time together
- Providing on-going grief support

Learn More at the Hospice Information Center, www.hospicefoundation.org

Family Caregiving: Facing the Challenges
Understanding Grief

How Hospice Can Help

- Focuses on patient and loved ones
- Improves quality of life
- Relieves suffering
- Comes to the patient

How Hospice Can Help

- Medicare Hospice Benefit almost all costs
- Helps with advance directives
- Support continues after the patient’s death
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For More Information

For more information on hospice care, grief and bereavement, caregiving and end-of-life issues, please visit our website at www.hospicefoundation.org

Or call us toll-free at: 1-800-854-3402

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## Resources

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