



# Understanding Hospice

ANGELA HOSPICE • ANGELA PALLIATIVE CARE • ANGELA GRIEF CARE  
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When is the right time to consider hospice care?

Can a patient leave hospice care if a cure is found or new curative treatments are desired?

Who pays for hospice care?

If you have questions about hospice care, **you are not alone**. There are many questions and misunderstandings about hospice care. As a result, many people put off the decision to choose hospice and miss out on the significant benefits hospice has to offer, including living profoundly more comfortable lives than their counterparts who did not choose hospice. Several studies have shown that hospice patients actually outlive patients with similar diagnosis and life expectancy who are not on hospice.

The information you hold in your hand is intended to help you understand Angela Hospice care better. And whether you are considering hospice care for a loved one or for yourself, after reviewing this information, it is our hope and prayer you will be equipped to make well-informed and timely decisions that are right for you. **If you find you have additional questions, or if you'd simply like to speak with someone who understands what you are going through, please remember we are only a phone call away.** We are here to answer your questions or to lend an ear as you navigate some of the most challenging times of life.

We are available by calling toll free 866.464.7810. Whether your question is specifically about Angela Hospice or hospice care in general, we will be more than happy to help any way we can.

Thank you for the privilege, opportunity, and honor of coming alongside you as you look into this subject further.

Sincerely,

The Angela Hospice Team

**ANGELA HOSPICE HAS BEEN A PROVIDER OF PREMIUM HOSPICE CARE IN SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN SINCE 1985**

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Angela Hospice is a community based not-for-profit

## A NOTE FROM THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR



Dr. James Boal  
Chief Medical Officer

### When should hospice care be considered?

Deciding when to begin hospice care is an important decision. **Selecting hospice care at the earliest opportunity typically affords a patient maximum relief from pain and discomfort**, without hastening the course of their disease.

Many eligible patients, however, are unaware that they qualify for hospice care until fairly late in the course of their illness. Following is a simple list of symptoms which may indicate when hospice care is appropriate.

## *hospice care* MAY BE APPROPRIATE IF THE PATIENT HAS EXPERIENCED:

- Weight loss of 10% or more over the past six months, or enough weight loss that clothing now fits loosely.
- Repeated hospital or emergency room visits over the past six months.
- Recurrent severe infections, including pneumonia, bedsores, or sepsis.
- Not eating enough to maintain their weight.
- Spending the majority of the day in a chair or bed.
- Needing help with two or more activities of daily living, including bathing, dressing, eating, walking, getting in or out of bed.
- Shortness of breath at rest or with any movement.
- Being told by their physician that life expectancy may be limited.
- Being bed-bound.

### Additional indicators for those with specific medical conditions:

- Patient has exhausted or refused all surgical, radiological, and chemotherapy options for treatment of their disease. (Cancer)
- Patient continues to have chest pain or shortness of breath. (Heart Disease)
- Patient has shortness of breath at rest. (Lung Disease)
- Patient is dialysis-dependent and is not seeking or eligible for dialysis. (Renal/Kidney Disease)
- Patient is unable to walk or speak more than six different words each day. (Dementia/Alzheimer's/Stroke)
- Patient has impaired swallowing ability or impaired breathing due to the disease, or unusually rapid progression of the disease. (Parkinson's, ALS, Multiple Sclerosis)

# hospice care

OFFERS MANY BENEFITS FOR PATIENTS & THEIR LOVED ONES



- Angela Hospice was **founded in 1985**, making it one of the oldest hospices in Michigan. We are experts in end-of-life care and the needs of patients and their families.
- Our faith-based heritage inspires us to serve everyone in need, regardless of religious affiliation, and live our values of respect for human dignity, compassion, transformation, solidarity with people in need, justice and peace.
- Angela Hospice has **physicians and nurse practitioners who are board certified in hospice and palliative care** on-call at all times. These medical professionals visit patients and treat for pain and symptom management as needed. This subspecialty of medicine focuses on relief from the symptoms, pain, and physical and mental stress of a serious illness — whatever the diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.
- Angela Hospice's 32 private room hospice **Care Center** is equipped to comfort patients with advanced pain and symptom management needs to a degree that cannot typically be provided in a patient's home.
- One way that Angela Hospice gives back is through our **extensive Grief Care services**, including grief support groups and workshops, which are free-of-charge for anyone in the community. We also provide one-on-one counseling for our patients' families and caregivers, and to grieving children throughout the community.
- Compassionate volunteers support the many programs and services of Angela Hospice. **Volunteers undergo thorough training** and help in many ways — from respite care for families, to patient companionship, assistance with meals, spiritual support, and more.
- Perhaps most important of all, relying on trained hospice staff to provide personalized day-to-day care for your loved one means **you can focus on being family** instead of caregivers. Our team is here to support your loved one day and night.

## The Hospice Team



Each hospice patient has an interdisciplinary team of experts responsible for their care, whether they reside at home, in our Care Center, or another facility.

Hospice focuses on comfort and caring, rather than curing. With hospice, support is provided to the patient's loved ones as well.

### Our Mission:

ANGELA HOSPICE IS DEDICATED TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE, COMPASSIONATE, AND CHRIST-LIKE CARE TO ADULTS AND CHILDREN IN THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE.

## When You're Ready to Begin Hospice Services

**Save this list** of documents you'll want to gather when you decide hospice is right for you. Having these items on hand can help to streamline your admission process:

- Copies of advance directive paperwork
- Medicare/Medicaid numbers
- Copy of insurance cards
- Referral and Hospice Order from your provider
- List of durable medical equipment and/or supplies that may be needed

Remember, our team is here to help. Let us know if you need assistance securing these items, or if you have any questions about starting hospice care.



# compassionate care

IN THE PLACE YOU CALL HOME



Social Worker David

Most often hospice care is provided in a patient's or a relative's home, through home visits and consultations by the hospice team.

## Home Hospice Care

Hospice care can help individuals to focus on living their best quality of life for their final months or weeks. Home hospice care is ideal for patients because it allows them to receive the medical attention they need while in the comfort of home.

Once home hospice care begins, the Angela Hospice team assesses the needs of the patient and works with the patient's family to teach them how to provide day-to-day care for their loved one. Our team of hospice professionals from various disciplines works together, utilizing the latest advances in medications and devices, to ensure relief from pain and other symptoms.

Because hospice focuses on the person, instead of just the disease, hospice team members work to nurture the emotional and spiritual aspects of a person as well. Angela Hospice also assists in providing medication, supplies, equipment, and additional help in the home when needed.

## My Nest Is Best PEDIATRIC HOSPICE

Our family-centered program of care designed for children with progressive life-threatening conditions, My Nest Is Best, focuses on enabling children to remain in the comfort and security of their own home during their illness, surrounded by family and friends who love them. Since 1994, My Nest Is Best has cared for children ranging in age from infant to 25 years old.

These children and young adults, along with their families, receive care and support during some of the most challenging times in their lives. Our hospice team works to keep the child alert and comfortable, helping them to live as fully as possible, and works closely with the child's own doctor (most children maintain contact with their doctors after they are admitted to the program). Our team also provides support to siblings and other family members as they cope with the changes going on around them.

## Home Hospice Services Include:

- Visits by nurses, physicians/nurse practitioners for medication and symptom management
- Training for family caregivers
- Personal care assistance from a hospice aide
- Social work support for access to resources, coordinating documents, and providing psychosocial and emotional support
- Spiritual care services
- Support available for answering questions and managing symptoms anytime of day or night



Nurse Penny

**With Angela Home Hospice Care, your healthcare team comes to you, so you can spend your time living your life your way.**



Nurse Denise

## Angela's Virtual Assist (AVA)

Angela's team is available to answer questions and provide support 24/7. In addition to scheduled visits and phone calls, our AVA telehospice is available to all home hospice patients and families, allowing them to quickly connect with an Angela Hospice nurse any time they need support, day or night.

## PRENATAL HOSPICE

It is heartbreaking for parents to learn their baby may be born with a serious medical condition. Coping with this reality can be especially difficult, and parents who choose to continue their pregnancy may find themselves alone with limited resources.

Angela Hospice developed its prenatal hospice program — the first in the Midwest — to offer specialized support for families with unborn

infants who are expected to have a life-threatening or life-limiting condition or illness at birth.

The My Nest Is Best Prenatal Hospice Program helps families formulate a personalized care plan that addresses individual family goals during the pregnancy, delivery, and the time following the baby's birth. The My Nest Is Best team is available to offer a pronounced level of guidance and caring support.



*around-the-clock*  
COMFORT AND CARE

While most people choose hospice in their own home or a relative's home, Angela Hospice also provides care in hospitals, nursing homes, and other facilities, as well as in our unique Angela Hospice Care Center.



Nurses Emma and Michelle

### The Angela Hospice Care Center

Our Care Center offers a "home away from home" for individuals with more acute caregiving needs, or who cannot remain at home.

Our hospice team works to control pain and manage symptoms. Nurses and hospice aides are available day and night to identify and meet the needs of patients and families. Personalized support and care are also provided by social workers, spiritual care team members, trained volunteers, and other hospice professionals.

### Our Care Center Features:

- Individual patient rooms with private restroom
- On-site dietary services
- 24-hour visiting, pets are welcome during the day
- Cable TV, DVD/CD player, and phone in each room
- On-site lending library and chapel
- Family gathering areas, including a full kitchen and outdoor atrium
- Picturesque grounds, butterfly garden, labyrinth, and walking paths



### Hospice focuses on the person, instead of just the disease...

and hospice team members work to nurture the emotional and spiritual aspects of each person as well.

In addition to compassionate medical services, dignified personal care provided by hospice nurses and aides, and the enriching support and resources provided by medical social workers, patients in our Care Center may benefit from:

- Music Therapy
- Aromatherapy
- Pet Therapy
- Therapeutic Massage
- Spiritual Care Services
- Volunteer Support



Volunteer Jan



Family members can reserve one of our Family Rooms (with a sofa bed) for an overnight stay close to their loved one.

## A Packing Checklist

This list can come in handy when preparing what you need for admission to the Care Center.

### PAPERWORK

Power of attorney, both medical and legal.

### SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Our Care Center has general equipment, but please bring any special equipment you have, for example, if you have an individually fitted bipap mask.

### INSURANCE CARDS

Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid, Prescription, Blue Cross Blue Shield or other private insurance.

### MEDICATIONS

Bring any medications you are currently taking. Please keep medications in their original containers.

### CLOTHES & PERSONAL CARE ITEMS

Bring a few days worth of comfortable day and night clothes. Hospital gowns are provided if preferred. Pictures, special pillows or blankets help the patient to feel at home. The Care Center has basic toiletries, but please bring any favorites as desired.

### ROOM & BOARD PAYMENT

You will be asked to bring a 15-day deposit (check or charge) at the time of admission to the Care Center. Our team can give you further direction about your benefits coverage.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED

# Questions

### Who pays for hospice care?

Hospice care is covered by most private insurers and HMOs. In addition, it is a Medicare Part A benefit to all eligible Medicare recipients age 65 and older. As a result, Medicare pays for all hospice-covered benefits, including costs for the interdisciplinary medical team (services of the doctor, nurses, social workers, spiritual care coordinator, hospice aides), costs for medical supplies and equipment (such as wheelchairs, bandages, etc.), as well as medications for symptom control and pain relief — all related to the hospice diagnosis.

The only hospice related expense not covered by Medicare would be room and board if the patient is living in a nursing home or hospice residential facility — such as our Angela Hospice Care Center. In addition, Medicaid eligible patients and some with hospice coverage in their private health insurance may receive additional benefits.

### How much is room and board at the Care Center?

As of August 2023, our daily rate is \$390. (Our team will confirm current rates at time of admission.) This covers all services including the patient's meals, housekeeping, laundered linens, and bedding.

If you decide the Care Center is the best option for you, you will receive our Room and Board Contract to review. Please note that a 15-day advance payment is due upon admission. Any refund owed will be paid by check following discharge or transfer.

### If I choose Home Hospice Care, how often will the hospice team visit?

With Angela Hospice, each patient's plan of care is unique to them, personalized based on their wishes, diagnoses and circumstances, and the progression of their disease process. The hospice team visits each patient based on their needs in coordination with the plan of care. Usually this means you won't have a visit every day. But when a need or question arises, our Patient Support Center nurses are available 24/7 via phone, video chat, or text messaging, so you always feel supported.

### Do we have to stop treatment of the disease if we choose hospice care?

Hospice care is comfort care for terminally ill patients. One criteria for selection of hospice care under Medicare guidelines is the choice to forego treatments and medicines intended to cure the diagnosed terminal illness. For many with terminal illnesses, choosing to forego physically distressing treatments or medicines which may disrupt sleep and eating patterns is often a relief in itself. This guideline, however, does not mean that treatment is discontinued for medical conditions which are not part of the terminal illness. Those treatments are typically covered under Medicare Part B or the patient's secondary health care plan.

### Can a patient be "kicked out" of hospice?

If a patient's decline continues, we will continue to provide hospice care. If improvement in the patient's condition occurs, it is possible the patient may be discharged from hospice, allowing them to return to rehabilitative therapy, aggressive therapy, or simply go on about daily life.

### Can a patient leave hospice care if a cure is found or new curative treatments are desired?

Yes. A patient always retains the right to leave or discontinue hospice care.

### Can a patient who has left hospice care come back?

Yes. A patient may return to hospice care if their condition continues to warrant it.

### Does hospice remove food and water from patients?

Patients are encouraged to eat or drink as long as they desire, and our dietary team prepares meals based on each patient's dietary needs. Sometimes, because of the disease, food or liquids can begin to cause distress in the patient. When that happens, we will do whatever is possible to satisfy the patient's desire while continuing to provide exceptional end-of-life comfort care.

### Will medications prevent a patient from being able to talk or know what's happening?

When administered appropriately, medications rarely cause the inability to talk or know what's happening. But it is often part of the body's natural decline for a loved one to lose the ability to communicate at some point. Your hospice team can advise you more about the disease process and what to expect.

### Do Angela Hospice patients need to be affiliated with any particular religion?

No. Hospice care itself is not an offshoot of any religion. And while Angela Hospice is a Felician-sponsored ministry, we are honored to serve the entire community of southeast Michigan, regardless of religious affiliation.

# We'll Take You Under Our Wing<sup>®</sup>

To begin services or for more information, call toll free:

866.464.7810

AskForAngela.com



Hospice Aide Angela



Nurse Karmin



a Felician  
Sponsored  
Ministry

My Next Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: