



Hospice Palliative Care: Living Well Until End of Life

For many of us it is not easy discussing or even thinking about end of life, though it's a reality we all face. If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with a life-limiting illness, hospice palliative care can help.

What is hospice palliative care?

Hospice palliative care aims to relieve suffering, while improving the quality of living and dying.

Does receiving hospice palliative care mean that death is coming soon?

Hospice palliative care is not just for the final days or months of life. It's care that should begin when a life-threatening condition is diagnosed so that individuals and their families are supported as they manage the often complicated journey at the end of life.

How is hospice palliative care different from the health care I am receiving now?

Hospice palliative care professionals work with the health team you already have, and together they focus on lessening the burdens of suffering, loneliness, and grief for those living with chronic and life-limiting illnesses.

What does *integrated* hospice palliative care mean?

Although we have treatments for many life-limiting illnesses, a cure isn't always possible. As an illness progresses, what people need and want changes. An integrated palliative approach to care is one that focuses on an individual's need at any given point in time. It can be provided in a hospital, residential hospice, at home, in long-term care homes or in another community setting. Personal values, wishes and desires can be considered. Advance Care Planning, a discussion about individual plans at the end of life, is an important part of an integrated approach to care.

Does hospice palliative care also apply to families?

Hospice palliative care supports families as they navigate the difficulties that can arise when a loved one is struggling with a life-limiting illness. Through hospice palliative care, families can gain a better understanding of a loved one's wishes, which can ease the way when there are difficult decisions to make.

What difference will hospice palliative care make?

Hospice palliative care manages pain and symptoms, and thanks to the important conversations and planning that hospice palliative care encourages, patients can make informed decisions about their own care, ensure that their families understand their goals, and have a better quality of life.

What's next?

If you would like more information about hospice palliative care services in your area, or help in starting a conversation about hospice palliative care with a loved one, please visit www.chpca.net. The website for the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association offers valuable resources and links.