



**HUMMINGBIRD  
HOSPICE**  
BECAUSE EVERY MOMENT MATTERS

# Hospice Care for Cancer Patients

## Information for Cancer Patients and their Families

Cancer patients and their families may often have tremendous emotional, spiritual, and psychological issues to deal with, even after treatment has ended. Hummingbird Hospice was designed to be of service to these patients and families.



## Time for Hospice

When a person's health care team determines that the cancer can no longer be controlled, medical testing and cancer treatment often stop. But the person's care continues, with an emphasis on improving their quality of life and that of their loved ones, and making them comfortable for the following weeks or months. Physicians look at certain indices that show that the disease has progressed to this point, such as:

- Treatment is less effective or not effective at all, and no change is expected
- The malignancy or cancer is worsening
- The emotional, physical, and spiritual costs of treatment on the patient and the family are greater than the expected benefits

## Hospice Services for the Patient

Medicines and treatments people receive at the end of life can control pain and other symptoms, such as constipation, nausea, and shortness of breath. Some people remain at home while receiving these treatments, whereas others enter a hospital or other facility. Either way, services are available to help patients and their families with the medical, psychological, social, and spiritual issues around dying. Hospice programs are the most comprehensive and coordinated providers of these services.

Sometimes people think of hospice only as an ending. Hospice is really about changing the focus from curative treatment to comfort and quality of life. Hospice is designed to bring acceptance, peace, and moments of joy to the patient and family, even when the circumstances are dire.



## Our Skilled Staff

Hummingbird Hospice has significant experience working with patients who have cancer. We understand the challenges and the issues our patients and families face. Our journey is to support you and your family through a very difficult stage of life with grace and dignity.

Our team, in conjunction with the patient and family, will create a plan of care that will be regularly updated

to reflect the patient's current status. As symptoms and conditions change, so will the plan. In the plan of care, we will outline comprehensive services for patients with cancer, including:

- Pain Management
- Place of Service
- Multidisciplinary Team
- Hospice Services for the Family
- Educating Caregivers

## Support during Tough Decisions

The period at the end of life is different for each person. The signs and symptoms people have may vary as their illness continues, and each person has unique needs for information and support. Questions and concerns that family members have about the end of life should be discussed with each other, as well as with the health care team, as they arise.

Hummingbird Hospice staff work with families to assist with the legal and emotional issues when they have to make tough decisions for the patient. Communication about end-of-life care and decision-making during the final months of a person's life are very important. Individuals with advanced cancer may experience decreased levels of stress and a stronger ability to cope with their illness if they discuss their care options with a physician in the early stages of their diagnosis. Studies show that patients prefer an open and honest conversation with their doctor about choices for end-of-life care.

Our social workers have significant experience with hospice care and are available to meet with the patients and families to discuss these choices and provide support.

*Choosing hospice care doesn't mean that you've given up hope. Instead, hospice care means you're changing what you hope for.*

