



**HUMMINGBIRD  
HOSPICE**  
BECAUSE EVERY MOMENT MATTERS

## Hospice Care for Lung Disease Patients

For those struggling with lung disease, the decision to continue medical treatment after it ceases to appear effective is one of the hardest choices imaginable. Whether you're the suffering patient or the hurting loved one, it's hard to even bring up the subject of end-of-life care, much less plan a course of action. Diseases like cystic fibrosis, COPD, bronchiectasis, pulmonary fibrosis, chronic asthma, or even tuberculosis can take their toll on a family, and it's vital to understand that there is a solution. Hospice care can provide the support and guidance needed in the tender period after the doctor has announced he's done all he can. Hummingbird Hospice provides an alternative to despair for many thankful families, and it's important for you to know whether it might be right for you and your loved one.



### **At What Point Should Hospice be Considered?**

In many cases, hospice care is sought once a patient has been told he has less than six months to live. Whether a doctor has made this prognosis or a patient has become convinced that his condition has deteriorated to a point of no return, it's probably time to consider hospice care. Here are some ways to determine whether it's time to consider hospice:

1. Does the patient wish to remove all breathing apparatus?
2. Has the patient undergone respiratory distress occasionally resulting in trips to the ER several times in the past year?
3. Is the patient weary of hospitalization?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, it may be time to ask a physician or pulmonologist whether hospice is indeed the next step you need to take. It's a good idea to be proactive in bringing up the subject since no doctor knows how a patient is feeling like that patient and his or her loved ones. Even if your doctor hasn't yet brought up hospice, it's completely acceptable for you to broach the issue. If you are contemplating this course of action, feel free to contact us to request an evaluation.

### **How does Hospice Benefit those Suffering with Lung Disease?**

With hospice care, ongoing evaluations allow for daily adjustments to whatever plan is developed, allowing patients to live out their final days in the most pain-free environment possible. Rather than being a choice to give up, hospice is a unique, tailor-made strategy to ensure comfort and dignity after all other medical resources have been exhausted. Here are some comforts that patients can expect to receive from hospice:



## **Safe, Familiar Surroundings with Medical Assistance**

One of the greatest things about hospice is that it eliminates hospital stays that can wreak havoc on a patient's emotions and nerves. Of course, if the need arises to transfer the patient to a medical center, that's still an option if the patient and/or his family so desires.

## **A Coordinated Care Plan**

Our Patient Care Coordinator can take a load off of loved ones by coordinating with each participant in the patient's case and keeping each one informed of the progression and status of the patient. This includes passing along updates among doctors, hospital staff, social workers, and even the patient's spiritual advisors. The hospice team also provides all the medical supplies necessary, releasing loved ones from the pressure of keeping up with prescriptions and complicated medical equipment.

## **Breathing Inability Preparation**

In the event the patient becomes unable to breathe, the hospice team knows exactly what measures should be taken. Not only does this provide reassurance to the patient and family, it also allows the patient to remain at home to receive the care typically required in an emergency room visit. A well-designed plan makes it much less likely for patients to experience respiratory distress, and when those episodes do occur, round-the-clock medical personnel are available to provide relief.

## **Dignity and Respect**

Many times, after being bounced around from nursing home to hospital to home to emergency room, patients and their families can feel powerless, as though their feelings have no value. When Hummingbird Hospice enters the situation, the process becomes intensely personal as great care is taken to determine the exact wishes of the patient and the loved ones for those tender last days. Hospice gives a voice to ensure that the end of life is as comfortable and as meaningful as possible.

## **Information for Patients**

The first thing you must do is be completely certain that you are making the right decision. If you feel certain that recovery is still a possibility, you probably are not ready for hospice. Take the time to thoroughly explore all that hospice means; try to find a way to speak with other families who have chosen this path already with their loved ones. Be ready to explain to your loved ones what you learn so you can quell any fears and faulty assumptions they may have about hospice. And finally, contact us with any questions.

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

