

LAWRENCE HOSPITAL CENTER

## What is Palliative Care?

Palliative Care involves comprehensive medical care for the patient and their family living with a serious illness – at any stage, regardless of prognosis. Palliative Care improves the quality of life by focusing on prevention and relief of suffering through the detailed treatment of pain and other problems – physical, emotional and spiritual. Palliative Care can be provided at the same time as treatment that is meant to cure.

Examples of serious illness include: heart disease, lung disease, kidney failure, cancer, dementias, AIDS, ALS, or multiple sclerosis.



*Palliative Medicine Service*

LAWRENCE HOSPITAL CENTER

914-787-4190

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# What is Palliative Care?

*Palliative Care involves comprehensive medical care that attends to the patient and his/her family while living with serious illness, at any stage, regardless of prognosis.*



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### *Who is part of the Palliative Medicine Team?*

The Palliative Medicine Team includes physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, registered nurses, pastoral care, dietitians, pharmacists and physical therapists, all with a specialized understanding and training in helping people with serious illness.

### *Will my doctor continue to care for me?*

Members of the Palliative Medicine Team partner with the patient's physician/s to provide specialized treatment options throughout the course of illness.

### *When do I ask for Palliative Care?*

- Anytime you are diagnosed with a serious illness
- When you have difficulty with symptoms related to your illness or its treatments. (examples: shortness of breath, anxiety, pain, weakness, fatigue, insomnia, nausea, bowel or bladder problems)
- When you need help in planning how to continue treatment, return to work and approach living with medical challenges
- While receiving chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy
- When you need information on treatment options
- When you need more support and services while living with serious and/or chronic illness

### *What can I expect from the Palliative Medicine Team while in the hospital?*

- Visits from team members
- Assessment and treatment of pain and other distressing symptoms
- Enhanced communication among medical providers
- Support and information needed to make the best decisions

### *Is Palliative Care the same as hospice care?*

Palliative Care and Hospice are similar services. However, Hospice is a subset of Palliative Care and has very distinct differences.

Palliative Care is given throughout the course of an illness, along with curative or life prolonging care, regardless of prognosis or life expectancy. Hospice, on the other hand, is appropriate when life expectancy is thought to be less than six months, and the focus of care is on symptom control rather than active treatment of the underlying disease.

Palliative Care is not a substitute for Hospice. If you are not sure which type of care you might need, please call us. We can help.

### *What type of services does Palliative Care provide?*

- Relief of pain, discomfort and stress
- Help in making difficult medical decisions at every stage of illness
- Assistance in identifying care after discharge from the hospital
- Practical advice and information for both patient and family
- Support and counseling for concerns related to serious and/or chronic illness
- Long term planning while living with serious illness
- Working with the patient's doctor/s to maximize treatment and care options

### *How do I receive Palliative Care at Lawrence Hospital Center?*

Talk with your doctor or nurse about Palliative Care as a part of your comprehensive medical care. The Palliative Medicine Team can be reached at **914-787-4190** and from within Lawrence at extension **4190**.

