



# QI Weekly



## Hospice and Palliative Care

### End-of-Life Care

- Healthcare costs in the last year of life account for about **25% of total healthcare spend for Medicare beneficiaries.**
- Seriously ill patients and their families often receive inadequate care, characterized by: untreated pain and physical symptoms, spiritual and emotional distress, high family caregiving burdens, and unnecessary or unwanted treatments inconsistent with their previously stated preferences for care.

### Impacts of Hospice Care

- Research indicates that hospice reduces the use of hospital-based services—including emergency department visits and intensive care unit stays—and the likelihood of death in the hospital.
- It can also reduce psychological distress and improve patient and family satisfaction.



### Understanding Hospice Care:

- Applies to patients who are **expected to live 6 months or less** and have subsequently **ceased curative treatments**
- Focuses on providing pain and symptom management to improve chronically ill, terminally ill or seriously ill patients' quality of life
- Utilizes a multidisciplinary care team of physicians, nurses, social workers, and chaplains to care for the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of patients and their families

### Understanding Palliative Care:

- Applies to seriously ill patients who are **continuing to have curative treatment** and **do not have a prognosis of less than 6 months to live.**
- Focuses on providing patients relief from pain and other symptoms of serious illness, regardless of the diagnosis or stage of the illness

### Initiating Patient Conversations about Hospice

While it may be difficult to initiate conversations with your patients about hospice, having a better understanding of its overall philosophy can help you feel more comfortable and informed.

- Hospice is an *approach to care*, not a specific place.
- Hospice can be provided in any setting—home, nursing home, assisted living facility, or inpatient hospital.

### Ordering a Hospice Referral in Allscripts:

