

12.8 Hospice

Health Plan of Nevada contracts with Medicare/Medicaid certified hospice agencies, licensed by the State of Nevada.

The mission of hospice is to compassionately meet the needs of individuals and their families and loved ones living with a life limiting condition or terminal condition by providing comprehensive patient centered care. Families will be supported with quality medical care in a professional and ethical manner, while supporting them emotionally and spiritually.

Hospice care for terminally ill patients can be provided in the home, in a custodial residence, or in contracted inpatient facilities, depending on the needs of the patient.

Who is eligible for hospice services?

Hospice care is a covered benefit for all Health Plan of Nevada members.

When should hospice be considered?

Patients are eligible for hospice care when the attending physician and hospice medical director make a clinical determination that life expectancy is six months or less, if the disease follows its usual course.

Examples include:

- Any terminal cancer diagnosis
- End-stage chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- End-stage cardiomyopathy
- End-stage renal failure (dialysis has been stopped)
- End-stage congestive heart failure (CHF)
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS)
- End stage peripheral vascular disease (PVD)
- HIV/AIDS
- End stage dementia
- Stroke
- Parkinson's

These indicators can suggest eligibility but do not replace professional judgment, CMS regulations or local coverage determinations (LCDs).

What Is the Admission Criteria?

- The patient has been informed by their physician that they have a terminal diagnosis with a prognosis of six months or less.
- The patient has elected no additional curative treatment for their terminal disease and all intervention will be directed toward the provision of comfort.

Note: Referrals may come from the physician, patient, family, friends, social workers or clergy.

Services may include:

- Skilled Nursing Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Home Care Aide

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- Pastoral/Spiritual Counselors
- Bereavement Services
- Nutritional Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Medical Social Service
- Trained Volunteers
- Respiratory Therapy
- Clinical Pharmacy Services
- Medical Supplies
- Inpatient care for symptom control
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Medications for symptoms related to the terminal diagnosis

Patients will receive care and services consistent with the needs identified in the continuing evaluation process and consistent with their benefit plan description.

Who Provides the Hospice Services?

An interdisciplinary team with shared responsibility for cases. The hospice Medical Director, hospice providers, registered nurses, social workers, therapists, home care aides, pastoral counselors and trained volunteers work together to provide physical, emotional and spiritual support to the patient and family.

How Do I Initiate a Referral?

Place a call to a hospice contracted agency (found in our Health Plan of Nevada online directories). Individualized care is available 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week.