

HOSPICE CARE FOR PATIENTS WITH **ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE** AND **OTHER FORMS OF DEMENTIA**



When is the right time to ask about hospice?

The first step on a long road to recovery is receiving a dementia diagnosis. Alzheimer's disease, which causes 60 to 80 percent of all dementia cases, worsens over the course of eight years on average, but it can take much longer than that. 1,2 There are stages of decline in the patient's condition, roughly equivalent to those of an infant and a child. Over time, children's early learning skills are forgotten. This includes the ability to walk, sit up, and control one's bowels and bladder, as well as the ability to speak coherently.

Knowing when a patient's condition is severe enough to consider hospice is one of many challenges for loved ones, caregivers, and even physicians. There is a six-month life expectancy cutoff for hospice patients to be eligible for care. Melodia Care recommends that patients with dementia be assessed for hospice care if they meet the following criteria:

- Can say only a few words
 - Dependent on others for all of one's basic needs (toileting, feeding, dressing)
 - Are unable to walk due to their medical condition.
 - Have been in a downward spiral for several years
- Anyone can find out more about hospice care by contacting the organization directly. Evaluators will look at your situation and your loved one's medical history to determine if hospice would be a good fit for your loved one. Call Melodia Care right away to learn how we can help.

Because all hospice organizations receive the same reimbursement, there is no price competition. The quality of care and range of options available at each hospice are what set them apart from one another.

Hospice for Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia

Melodia care has set the bar high for palliative dementia treatment. Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia hospice care plans are specifically designed to address a wide range of issues, including:

- Pain
- Hydration and nutrition
- Skin care
- Agitation

- Recurrent infection

Melodia care uses a team approach to care that aims to do more than just keep patients healthy. We provide the emotional and spiritual support so many family members and caregivers need when caring for a loved one who has dementia. Symptoms and stresses such as fatigue, depression, isolation, and guilt can all be addressed with the help of hospice care. Melodia care offers the following services:

Support for tough decision making—

When a loved one has dementia, the family must make difficult decisions. When it comes to hydration and nutrition, what should you do? Is it advisable to keep taking antibiotics if you have recurrent infections? Patients and their families can work with hospice experts at Melodia Care to develop individualized care plans that take into account the patient's overall health as well as his or her quality of life.

Education—It's difficult to watch a loved one deteriorate due to dementia. In order to give patients and families a better sense of control, Melodia care teaches them about the disease process.

Emotional and spiritual assistance—

When a loved one has dementia, the person they once knew suffers from chronic grief. Personalized psychosocial and spiritual care is available through Melodia care.

Bereavement support—Bereavement is the period of time following a death in which one is in mourning. As the grieving process unfolds, the hospice care team works closely with the patient's surviving family members. After a death, there are resources for grieving and bereavement that are available for up to a year.

Levels of hospice care

Melodia care is proud to be a pioneer in the field of end-of-life care, and to provide unmatched service at each of the four hospice levels:

Routine Home Care—

available no matter where the patient calls home (a house, a nursing home, an assisted living facility).

Intensive Comfort Care (continuous care)—

if medically necessary, home health care management for up to 24 hours a day

Inpatient Care—

when a patient's medical needs are too complex to be managed at home.

Respite Care—provides caregivers with "respite" by allowing a brief inpatient stay for the patient.

Who pays for Melodia Care services?

Hospice services provided by are covered by Medicare, Medicaid/Medi-Cal, private insurance, and other funding sources.

Melodia Care Healthcare may be able to assist you in your search. Visit our website at melodiare.com or contact us by phone at 1-888 635-6347.

Your Melodia care team

A highly skilled interdisciplinary team coordinates the care of end-stage cancer patients because they have a wide range of needs.

Physician: In addition to the primary care physician, the patient's pain and symptoms are managed by this physician

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- **Registered nurse:** A licensed practical or vocational nurse with expertise in the assessment and management of pain.
- **Social worker:** A social worker who offers emotional support as well as assistance with money management and budgeting issues.
- **Hospice aide:** Personal care and hygiene assistance, light housekeeping, light laundry, and shopping as needed are all responsibilities of a hospice aide.
- **Chaplain:** A chaplain who works with the patient's existing clergy to provide spiritual support for the patient.
- **Community volunteer:** Melodia care-trained community volunteer offers time and companionship as a service to the community.
- **Bereavement specialist:** An expert in bereavement care and support who helps with memorial services as well as caring for departed loved ones.



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