

# Palliative Care Consult Service



at Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital

## Palliative Care Services

Palliative care offers special medical care for patients with long-term, progressive illness like heart disease, lung disease, end-stage kidney disease, cancer or dementia. The treatment seeks to relieve the symptoms, pain and stress of serious illness and to improve the patient's quality of life. The palliative care team includes the special skills of a doctor, nurse practitioner, social worker, chaplain and case manager.

## Care Management and Communication

The palliative care team helps with communication and care management among doctors, nurses, counselors and other care providers. They set clear treatment goals and support them through hard medical decisions. They keep the family updated on the patient's condition.

The team assesses the patient's pain and symptoms, makes treatment recommendations specific to the situation, and finds community support services.

## How Does a Palliative Care Consult Help?

- Expert pain and symptom management
- Time for listening and being there
- Guides patients and families in hard treatment choices



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- Social worker access eases concerns and distress through support and service management
- Assists in end-of-life decisions like CPR, resuscitation, breathing and feeding tubes, and repeat hospital stays

## How is Palliative Care Different than Hospice?

Any patient with any long-term, progressive illness can have palliative care.

A patient receiving palliative care can have both aggressive medical treatment and palliative care for symptoms.

A patient receiving hospice care has made the decision to focus on comfort care instead of the cure of the illness.

## How Does a Patient Receive Palliative Care?

A patient's doctor will order a palliative care consult. A team member may ask the doctor to order a consult. The team meets with the patient and family and talks about topics unique to their situation. The team then discusses their findings and makes recommendations to the referring doctor. The palliative care team follows the patient in the hospital with the medical team and provides ongoing support.