



# 15 Facts

## You Need to Know About Our Hospice Care

*When making a decision about hospice care, it helps to have a good understanding of what hospice is and what it isn't. Here are the true facts about our special kind of care.*

People are clear about their priorities at the end of life.

Research shows that they want home-based care, control over their treatment, emotional and spiritual support for themselves and their loved ones, effective pain management and freedom from financial worries.

What stands in the way of more people choosing hospice care is limited awareness of which services it offers and how to find it.

These "15 Facts" about our Hospice care are why patients and families say that we are the best.

For answers to your specific questions, please feel free to contact Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast at 866.642.0962.

**1** Hospices are not the same.

Accredited by the Joint Commission, we are a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization, licensed in 1985. We provide medical, psychological, spiritual and social support for patients with life-limiting illnesses and their families. Specialized pediatric services and community grief support are also provided. We emphasize good care, frequent visits, community-based service, keeping the patient in his or her home, and providing choices for patients and caregivers.

**2** Patients may be referred by anyone.

Professional staff are available to discuss Hospice services with anyone who needs more information. Physicians may request Hospice staff to talk with patients or families about end-of-life services.

**3** Hospice is not a place.

Hospice care is provided anywhere: your home, a skilled facility, an assisted living facility, group homes, Hospice Facility or hospital.

**4** Hospice patients may live alone.

Hospice will assist patients with creating a plan of care when they are no longer able to care for themselves. Hospice maintains the

patient's independence. Hospice will assist patients with applications for community resources, if needed.

**5** There is no cost for Hospice care.

Hospice Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance cover the cost of Hospice services, medical equipment, medical supplies and medications. If the patient does not have Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance, he or she still receives all of the services provided by Hospice. Donations and contributions support the cost of these services.

**6** Hospice serves Veterans.

The Veterans Administration partners with Hospice for all enrolled Veterans and can pay for care through contract agreements with Hospice. Non-enrolled Veterans have access to Hospice care through Medicare, Medicaid or private insurance.

**7** Hospice is not sudden death.

Hospice care does not mean giving up. Hospice care means that you make choices and can actively be involved in your care decisions. The sooner an individual receives support and good care, the greater the opportunity to improve the quality of life for the patient and caregiver.

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**8** Hospice is not just cancer patients.

Hospice patients may have heart disease, respiratory disease, Alzheimer's or dementia, liver or kidney failure, or any disease that is life limiting and not curable.

**9** Patients may keep their doctor

The Hospice Physician and the Care Team work with the patient, caregiver, family and physician to create an individualized plan of care. If the patient does not have a doctor, a Hospice Physician will become the patient's doctor.

**10** Hospice is not limited to 6 months.

If the disease is still present and continues to be life threatening, Hospice care can continue beyond 6 months.

**11** Hospice is not just for the patient.

Hospice teaches the caregiver and provides emotional and spiritual support. Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Volunteers assist with errands and offer companionship. Quality of life for the patient, family and caregiver is a priority.

**12** Hospice does not "take over."

Hospice teaches the patient and caregiver what to do and what to expect. Patients and caregivers may choose their medical equipment, pharmacy and other services.

**13** Hospice manages medications.

The Hospice Care Team evaluates medication reactions and interactions so that patients are comfortable. The Hospice Physician Team has expertise in managing pain and symptoms.

**14** Hospice is not just "old people."

Children with life-threatening illnesses may receive Hospice or Palliative (comfort) services and alternative therapies for them and their families through Herry's Kids Pediatric Services, a program of Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast.

**15** Hospice is comfort.

Hospice services provide physical, emotional, spiritual and social support so that the death can occur comfortably and naturally. Education and grief services are provided to anyone who needs assistance, including children and teens.

For more information about Hospice and the programs we offer, please call 866.642.0962 or visit us on the web at [www.hospiceofcitrus.org](http://www.hospiceofcitrus.org).

**– ABOUT US –**

Hospice of Citrus and the Nature Coast, licensed 1985, is a nonprofit charitable organization providing comprehensively responsive and compassionate end-of-life services to the terminally ill and their families in North Central Florida.

[www.hospiceofcitrus.org](http://www.hospiceofcitrus.org)