



Guidelines for Choosing a Hospice Facility



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Know before you go. The Facts of Georgia's Health Care.

Hospice Care is a special way of caring for people who are terminally ill (with 6 months or less to live) and for their families. Hospice care includes physical care and counseling. The goal of hospice is to provide comfort for terminal patients and their families, not to cure the illness.

If you qualify for hospice care, you can receive medical and support services, including nursing care, medical social services, doctor services, counseling and homemaker services. As part of hospice care, you will have a team of doctors, nurses, home health aides, social workers, counselors and trained volunteers to help you and your family cope with your illness. In many cases, you and your family can stay together in your home. These guidelines will help you and your family to make the best choices for hospice care.

Hospice facilities are required to apply for and obtain a license from the Office of Regulatory Services. Additionally, agencies that accept Medicare and/or Medicaid patients must be certified by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. For more information related to licensure and compliance history, please visit the ORS Web site at **ors.dhr.georgia.gov**.

Your Hospice Team

Your doctor and the hospice medical team will work with you and your family to set up a plan of care that meets your needs. For more specific information on a hospice plan of care, call your state or national hospice organization. In Georgia, please log onto Georgia Hospice & Palliative Care Organization (GHPCO) Web site at **ghpco.org**.

If you qualify for hospice care, you will have a specially trained medical team and support staff available to help you and your family to cope with your illness.

You and your family members are the most important part of the team. Your team may also include some or all of the following people:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Counselors
- Social worker
- Speech-language pathologists
- Hospice aides
- Homemakers
- Volunteers

In addition, a hospice nurse and doctor are on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to give you and your family support and care when you need it.

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Who Pays for Hospice Care?

Medicare covers hospice care if you qualify. Depending on your condition, you may receive hospice care at home, in a hospice facility, hospital or nursing home. Room and board are not covered by Medicare if you receive general hospice services while you are a resident of a nursing home or a hospice's residential facility. Medicare does not pay for 24-hour assistance if you receive hospice services at home.

For more information about Medicare coverage of hospice care and who qualifies, download a PDF of the booklet *Medicare Hospice Benefits* Located on the **medicare.gov** Web site.

For More Information

Call national hospice associations or visit their Web sites.

- National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)
1700 Diagonal Road, Suite 625
Alexandria, VA 22314
(800) 658-8898
nhpco.org
- Hospice Association of America
228 7th Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
(202) 546-4759
nahc.org
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
(800) MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).
TTY users should call **(877) 486-2048**.
medicare.gov

You can use the "Search For Care" application on the **georgiahealthinfo.gov** Web site to find a Hospice Facility in your area.