

## When families are reluctant to choose hospice care clearing up myths may help

### **Myth: Calling hospice means giving up hope.**

**Truth:** Facing the physical and emotional challenges of a life-limiting illness is overwhelming. When curative treatments are no longer effective, and it seems like all hope is gone – there is something you can do. Calling hospice does not mean giving up hope – it means *letting hope in, for help and support, when you need it most.*

Hospice care is designed to help residents *live more fully and comfortably* – working with your team, our team manages pain and unwanted symptoms. It is choosing compassionate care and support so that your residents remain comfortably in place.

### **Myth: If we use hospice – he may die sooner.**

**Truth:** Most patients and families who choose hospice care report feeling better, emotionally and physically, almost immediately. With this improved quality of life, patients actually live longer! A study published in March 2007 in the *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management* showed that patients who choose hospice care live an average of 29 days longer than patients who do not have hospice care.

### **Myth: Hospice care is too expensive.**

**Truth:** Remarkably, there is rarely any out-of-pocket expense for hospice care. It is paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, most private insurance, or donations. Most patients have ‘pre-paid’ for hospice care during their working years through federal tax deductions. Therefore, in addition to easing physical and emotional burdens, using hospice at end of life can ease financial burdens.

**The Medicare Hospice Benefit is available to all patients with the Medicare part A benefit.**

### **Myth: Hospice is only for people with a few days to live.**

**Truth:** The number one comment we hear from patients and families with hospice care is – *“We wish we had called sooner.”* Hospice care is not simply for patients in the final days or weeks, but rather months. Patients can receive hospice care as soon as a physician believes that life expectancy is six months or less.

### **Myth: Hospice is a place.**

**Truth:** Hospice care is provided in the patient’s home – wherever the patient calls home. This includes assisted living facilities and/or skilled nursing facilities.

***Hospice care is not about helping people die. It’s about helping people live well, until the very end – because every moment matters.***