



Community Based Palliative Care: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is Palliative Care?

- Provides relief from pain, stress and other symptoms related to serious illness.
- Focuses on patients and supports families and caregivers.
- Can be used at any stage of serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment.
- Goal is to improve quality of life as illness evolves over time.

Where is Palliative Care Provided?

- ✓ All six hospitals in Montgomery County have inpatient palliative care programs.
- ✓ Hospice is a particular form of palliative care for those who choose to forego curative treatment and whose life expectancy is 6 months or less.
- ✓ *Community Based Palliative Care (CBPC)* is a relatively new and growing part of care. *CBPC* is provided in community clinics, physicians practices, and wherever a patient calls home.

“The largest segment of those living with serious and advance illness is substantially broader than those who are hospitalized and those who qualify for hospice”

Community-Based Models of Care Delivery for People with Serious Illness, Discussion Paper National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine, April 13, 2017

Is *CBPC* Right for Me?

CBPC is for patients with serious and advanced illness. *CBPC* may be right for you if you have any of the following:

- Recent diagnosis of a serious illness such as cancer, kidney or liver failure, ALS, Parkinson’s disease, congestive heart failure
- Difficulty managing illness or side effects of treatment, like shortness of breath, nausea, anxiety, depression
- Frequent emergency room visits
- Three or more hospital admissions in the past 12 months

What Should I Expect From *CBPC*?

- Individualized and unique plan of care that meets your needs.
- Support for your family and/or caregivers.
- An interdisciplinary care team including doctor, nurse, social worker, chaplain, and others as needed.
- Access to someone on the care team between scheduled appointments.
- Periodic advance care planning conversations to determine goals and wishes for treatment and care.
- Coordination of care with primary and specialists and other health care providers.
- Facilitated connections to community and social supports to stabilize patients at home.

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Who Pays for CBPC*?

This is an important question to ask when speaking to your healthcare provider about starting palliative care.

- ❖ **Medicare Part B:** This covers outpatient medical care and can be used by CBPC providers to cover some treatments and medications including visits with doctors, nurse practitioners and social workers.
- ❖ **Medicare Advantage:** This is Medicare Part C. Plans may offer coverage for CBPC, in home support as well as training and support for caregivers.
- ❖ **Medicaid:** This is insurance for people with lower income and assets. It may cover some palliative care treatments in the same way Medicare Part B does.
- ❖ **Private Insurance, HMO's, Managed Care Programs:** Many private health insurance plans provide some palliative care as part of their hospice or chronic care benefits. As example: Care First of the Mid-Atlantic offers "concurrent care" for those needing extra support during treatment. Kaiser Permanente offers palliative care. Long term care policies may cover palliative care.

***NOTE:** There may be co-pays or a deductible that apply. CBPC is evolving so make sure you ask about your financial obligation before agreeing to receive services.

Who Do I Talk to About Receiving CBPC?

- ◆ Healthcare providers make the initial referral. If you or a loved has a serious illness talk to your provider about palliative care.
- ◆ A growing number of community-based providers specifically address the needs of those with serious or advanced illness.
- ◆ Visit the Coalition website for more information on local providers: www.mccelc.org



For more information on documented benefits of community based palliative care and its growth across the country, visit [Get Palliative Care](#).