

Taking the Mystery Out of Hospice Myths

Many of us may need hospice services someday – if not for ourselves, for our loved ones. Hospice has been shown to be one of the best options in the last months of life because it offers a wide variety of benefits, not only for those who are dying, but for their loved ones. Despite hospice' many advantages, hospice is often misunderstood and many myths exist about what it is and who needs it.

Only patients with cancer can be in hospice.

Patients have many diagnoses, such as congestive heart failure, dementia, and neuromuscular diseases. Only about half of the patients in hospice have cancer.

Hospice is a place.

Hospice is not a place. Hospice is a philosophy that allows most people to stay in their familiar surrounding at the end of life.

Hospice moves into your home to be the caregiver.

Hospice staff is available for assistance or visits 24 hours a day and will help families make arrangements for caregivers as needed.

Hospice means a patient has six or less months to live.

Patients receive hospice benefits based on the following criteria: health is declining and death could occur within six months or less.

Patients cannot have hospice if they live in an extended care facility.

Hospice compliments the care in the extended care facility. Professional expertise in end-of-life care is provided to patients, family and the facility staff.

Patients are taken off all of their medications.

Patients are not taken off all of their medications. The benefit of each medication is carefully evaluated and with help of the physician, the hospice team will manage the pain and symptoms with the appropriate medications and treatments.

Hospice is just for people close to death, within days or hours.

Patients and families who choose hospice sooner are better prepared and know what to expect at the end of life.

Hospice patients can't call 911 or receive emergency services.

Hospice staff educates patients and their families about their choices for emergency care.

People die sooner with hospice services.

Many patients live longer than expected because they have the support of hospice services. Hospice care doesn't hasten death.

Hospice is for people who have given up hope.

Hospice is not about giving up hope, it's changing what you hope for. The hospice team is able to help the patient and family focus on what truly matters to them.

Call us for more information on Mercy Hospice:
St. Louis: 314-729-4400 | Washington: 636-239-7128