



CareDimensions

HOSPICE | PALLIATIVE CARE | SUPPORT SERVICES

Volume 1 | Issue 1

*Living* with  
Advanced Illness

Community Education Newsletter

Formerly Hospice of the North Shore & Greater Boston

888-283-1722

## When Should A Family Call Hospice?

People facing a serious illness are often overwhelmed by a multitude of physical, financial, emotional and spiritual concerns. All too often, a simple call to hospice is delayed because of the misconception that hospice services are only for patients about to die within a few days. So many times, we hear from families, “We wish we had called hospice sooner.” When the goal of treatment begins to shift from curing the illness to providing comfort, it is time to consider hospice. By contacting hospice early in the diagnosis, it enables the patient and family to have additional time to understand their options and choose the path that will have the most impact on quality of life.



### *What is hospice?*

Hospice is a multi-disciplinary approach to providing medical, spiritual, practical and emotional support to patients with advanced illness who have a prognosis of living six months or less. The patient-centered care plan includes expert medical care, coordination of medication and equipment, 24/7 nursing support, pain management, education and complementary therapies. Care is provided by a team that includes a physician, nurse, hospice aide, social worker, chaplain and trained volunteers.

### *What are some of the signs that it is time to consider a call to hospice?*

- Have you noticed a progression of a serious illness?
- Is treatment becoming more of a burden than a benefit?
- Have you noticed an increase in pain, nausea or breathing distress?
- Have you started taking more medication for pain?
- Have you had repeat trips to the emergency room or hospital?
- Have you noticed significant, unexplained weight loss?
- Have there been several falls in the last six months?
- Is there a need for more help with bathing, dressing, walking or getting out of bed?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, it is very likely that you or your loved one may benefit from hospice services. If you think the additional services and support of hospice could be helpful, do not wait to call. The hospice team will work with the patient, family members and the patient’s physician to develop a plan of care tailored to the patient’s needs and to help get pain and symptoms under control. The sooner hospice services are started, the sooner the patient and family can benefit from the support and resources hospice brings during this challenging time of life.

### Learn more:

The best way to determine if you or your loved one could be helped by Care Dimensions is to call us at **888-283-1722**. To learn more about our services, please visit us at [www.CareDimensions.org](http://www.CareDimensions.org) or email us at [info@CareDimensions.org](mailto:info@CareDimensions.org).

## *Introducing Our New Community Educator*

Care Dimensions welcomes Pam Taylor to our team as a community educator. She will be offering free workshops and seminars to the community on a variety of topics surrounding advanced illness and end-of-life issues to dispel the myths surrounding hospice care and to empower individuals dealing with an advanced illness to access these services sooner so there is more opportunity to improve their quality of life.



Some topics available include:

- Taking the Mystery out of Hospice and Palliative Care
- Living With a Serious Illness: How to Make the Best Possible Choices
- Anticipatory Grief: What Does it Mean and Where Can You Get Help?
- Caring For Yourself When Someone You Love Has an Advanced Illness
- Making Decisions When it Matters Most: Conversations about Health Care Proxy, Five Wishes and More
- Live, Love, Laugh: Life after Loss
- Your Aging Parents: Planning for Care at End of Life
- Am I Just Forgetful or Do I Have Alzheimer’s?
- Dementia: Through the Stages
- Finding Meaning in Life: The Role of Spirituality Today

To schedule a program or to be added to our e-mail list, please call Pam Taylor at **978-223-9744** or e-mail [PTaylor@CareDimensions.org](mailto:PTaylor@CareDimensions.org)

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Care Dimensions, one of the nation’s first hospice programs and the region’s largest, provides services in more than 90 communities in Eastern Massachusetts. As a non-profit, community-based leader in advanced illness care, our services include: hospice, palliative care, specialized care programs, Kaplan Family Hospice House, grief support, education and training.

**Main: 888-283-1722**  
**Referrals: 888-287-1255**



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