



CareDimensions

HOSPICE | PALLIATIVE CARE | SUPPORT SERVICES

Formerly Hospice of the North Shore & Greater Boston

Guidelines For **HOSPICE REFERRALS** For Patients with Non-Cancer Diagnoses

Two or more items in any category should generate a hospice referral

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Life-limiting condition
- Patient/family focus on symptom relief rather than cure
- Progression of disease(s)
- Evidence of weight loss; serum albumin < 2.5g/dl
- Symptoms & signs that paint a picture of decline
- Karnofsky or Palliative Performance Scale score < 50%
- Dependence in at least 2 ADLs
- Need for frequent hospitalization, office or ER visits
- Progressive/unhealing stage III or IV pressure ulcers

PULMONARY DISEASE

- Severe chronic lung disease
 - Disabling dyspnea at rest, poorly responsive to bronchodilators
 - FEV1 after bronchodilator < 30%
- Progression of end-stage pulmonary disease
 - Recurrent pulmonary infections
- Hypoxemia at rest, on room air: $pO_2 < 55\text{mmHg}$ - or $O_2 \text{ sat} < 88\%$
- Right heart failure secondary to pulmonary disease
- Unintentional progressive weight loss >10%
- Persistent resting tachycardia

STROKE AND COMA

- Karnofsky Performance < 40%
- Inability to maintain nutrition/hydration
 - Weight loss > 10%, serum albumin < 2.5 gm/dl, pulmonary aspiration, severe dysphagia
- Coma with any 3 of the following on day 3 of coma
 - Abnormal brain stem response
 - Absent verbal response
 - Absent withdrawal response to pain
 - Serum creatinine > 1.5 mg/dl

CARDIAC DISEASE

- Symptomatic despite optimal treatment with diuretics and vasodilators
- Recurrent CHF
 - Ejection fraction < 20%
- New York Heart Association Class IV
- Supporting factors
 - Arrhythmias are resistant to treatment
 - History of cardiac arrest or resuscitation
 - History of unexplained syncope
 - Cardiogenic embolic disease (e.g., CVA)

To Make A Referral Please Call

888-287-1255

Fax: 978-774-4389

Please call with patient name, location and diagnosis as well as your name, organization and phone number.

RENAL DISEASE – ACUTE RENAL FAILURE

- Patient is not seeking dialysis or transplant
 - Creatinine > 8mg/dl (> 6mg/dl for diabetics)
- GFR < 10ml/min
 - Creatinine clearance <10cc/min (<15cc/min for diabetics)
- Co-morbid conditions

RENAL DISEASE – CHRONIC RENAL FAILURE

- Patient is not seeking dialysis or transplant
- Creatinine clearance <10cc/min (<15cc/min for diabetics)
 - Creatinine > 8mg/dl (> 6mg/dl for diabetics); GFR < 10ml/min
- Symptoms: uremia; oliguria; confusion; nausea; vomiting; pruritus; restlessness; hyperkalemia > 7.0, not responsive to treatment; intractable fluid overload, not responsive to treatment

LIVER DISEASE

- PTT > 5 seconds over control
- Serum Albumin < 2.5gm/dl
- End-stage liver disease
 - Ascites refractory to treatment
 - Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis
 - Hepatorenal syndrome
 - Hepatic encephalopathy, refractory to treatment
- Supportive factors
 - Progressive malnutrition
 - Continued alcoholism
 - Hepatocellular carcinoma

DEMENTIA

- Functional Assessment score = 7
 - Unable to ambulate without assist
 - Unable to dress or bathe without assist
 - Urinary and fecal incontinence, intermittent or constant
 - No consistently meaningful verbal communication
- Complications such as aspiration pneumonia, UTI, septicemia, recurrent fevers
- Decubitus ulcers stage 3 or 4
- Weight loss of >10% over last six months

ALS

- Critically impaired respiratory function
 - Dyspnea at rest
 - Use of accessory muscles
 - Respiratory rate > 20
 - Reduced speech / vocal volume
 - Unexplained headaches, anxiety or nausea
- Severe nutritional insufficiency
 - Progressive weight loss of at least 5% of body weight
 - With or without gastrostomy tube insertion

HIV

- CD4 count < 25 cells/mcl or persistent viral load >100,000 copies/ml
- Decreased performance status
- Supporting factors
 - Chronic persistent diarrhea
 - Persistent serum albumin < 2.5
 - Concomitant substance abuse
 - Age > 50
 - Advanced AIDS dementia complex
 - CHF or advanced liver disease

Source: Current CMS and NHPCO guidelines

Main: 888-283-1722 ■ 24/7 Referrals: 888-287-1255
Fax: 978-774-4389 ■ CareDimensions.org

Serving over 90 communities in Eastern Massachusetts.