



What to Ask When Choosing a Hospice

Choosing a hospice is a personal decision.
It is important to consider *what* is important to you.

Hospice Services

- How long has the hospice been caring for patients? Are they for-profit or non-profit hospice?
- Where will care be provided? i.e. home, loved one's home, long-term care facility or hospice home
- Are there special programs offered by the hospice? i.e. assisting with pet care if pets are in the home
- How is the hospice paid? Does the hospice accept my insurance or offer care if there is no insurance?
- What equipment and supplies will the hospice provide? i.e. hospital bed, oxygen, briefs and bed pads
- Can a patient continue to go to their primary care physician?

Hospice Team

- How many patients are in the nurse's case load? Will the patient see the same nurse?
- Who is on the hospice team and how often do they visit?
- Is there a number to call after business hours? What is the availability of staff on nights, weekends and holidays?
- How long will it take staff to respond to an urgent need?

Medication and Symptom Management

- Can current medication still be taken? Does medication have to be picked up at the pharmacy or is it delivered?
- How will pain and symptoms be managed? If symptoms are uncontrolled at home, what happens next?
- How will medication changes be communicated?

Communication and Education

- How are questions and concerns communicated?
- How will the hospice relay changes in a patient's condition? Are loved ones involved in the communication?
- How are the patient and their loved ones educated to prepare them for what to expect?

Caregivers

- Does the hospice offer breaks for caregivers in addition to the hospice respite benefit? i.e. for errands, medical appointments, or rest?
- What if a caregiver can no longer provide care in the home?
- What grief support is offered by the hospice?