Comparing Palliative Care and End-of-Life Care

It is normal for individuals to be concerned when they hear the term palliative care. The term is often confused with imminent death or end-of-life care. When palliative care is provided early it offers extra support while medical treatments continue. Some patients may even be discharged from palliative care once good symptom management is achieved.

Palliative Care	End-of-Life Care
Who is it for?	
Patients and families living with a life-limiting illness.	Patients and families who are in their last days to weeks of life.
What is the focus?	
Helping patients and families have the best quality of life possible so they can live a settled and peaceful life.	Comfort is the focus of care for patients and families to have the best possible quality of life as death approaches.
What do care teams do?	
Prevent and treat distressing symptoms. Coordinate in-home care support services such as help with personal care, equipment. Help you talk with your family about your illness and what's important to you and wishes for future healthcare.	Prevent and treat distressing symptoms. Help determine the best services and location of care. Support you and your family so you can focus on what's most important at this time.
Where are the services offered?	
• your home • hospital • hospice or a long-term care center • assisted living facility or group home	
Who is on the team?	
A palliative and end-of-life care team may have a variety of members depending on what you and your family need. Doctors, nurses, personal care aids, social workers, emergency medical service (EMS) practitioners, recreational and occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dieticians, volunteers and spiritual health consultants are possible team members.	

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Example of someone who could benefit from receiving palliative care:

Jim has lived with multiple sclerosis for 15 years and was recently admitted for recurring skin breakdown and a serious bladder infection. These problems seem to be more frequent and more severe.

While in the hospital, Jim was referred to the Palliative Care Consult Service that provided suggestions to treat and prevent his distressing symptoms. These suggestions were followed while Jim was in the hospital and after he was discharged home.

Example of someone best suited for end-of-life care:

Alice's health has deteriorated over the last 4 months and the healthcare team has told her that signs show she is approaching a time closer to death.

Alice was able to receive end-of-life services and support in her home.

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

Albertans have a variety of choices when it comes to end-of-life care. Calgary Zone PEOLC information focuses on palliative and end-of-life care. Medical assistance in dying (MAID) is a separate healthcare option that is also available to Albertans at the end of life. Albertans that are thinking about or planning for medical assistance in dying can still receive palliative and end of-life-care if they choose. If you are looking for information on MAID visit www.ahs.ca/maid which includes information on how to reach the MAID care team.

279F (2018 08)

Advance Care Planning

A gift for yourself, a gift for your family

Advance care planning (ACP) is the process of thinking about, talking about and documenting your wishes for your healthcare. This process can ensure that your wishes are known, no matter what the future holds and can bring comfort and peace of mind to you, your family, and to those who may have to make healthcare decisions on your behalf.

Who is advance care planning for?

- everyone over the age of 18
- when you are facing changes in your health, such as a chronic illness or before you experience a crisis or become seriously ill

5 simple steps to advance care planning

1) think about your values/wishes
2) learn about your own health
3) choose someone you trust to make healthcare decisions for you
4) communicate your values/wishes
5) document in a personal directive

Benefits of advance care planning

For now

- By going through the 5 steps of ACP, you will be better prepared to participate in healthcare decisions that need to be made based on your current health.
- You will have peace of mind knowing that the decision-maker you want will be the one to make decisions for you if you can't make them for yourself.

For the future

- By having ACP conversations, your decision-maker will be better prepared to make decisions for you should you ever be unable to speak for yourself.
- ACP helps your decision-maker to honor your wishes and helps you feel confident they are making the right decisions for you.

What is a Personal Directive (PD)?

A personal directive is a legal document in Alberta that makes your advance care plan legal (under the Personal Directives Act). It allows you to name a person (agent) you trust to make personal and healthcare decisions and write down healthcare wishes that you want followed. Your personal directive only comes into effect if you lose the capacity to make your own decisions.

What do I do with my PD?

Your personal directive is kept in your Green Sleeve. When you move throughout the healthcare system, your Green Sleeve should go with you so that healthcare providers know about the decisions you have made and your Goals of Care Designation (GCD).

To obtain a Green Sleeve, ask your healthcare provider.

For more information on advance care planning:

ahs.ca and search advance care planning

For more information regarding personal directives:

alberta.ca/office-public-guardian-trustee.aspx

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Alberta Health Services

Goals of Care Designation

The care you want, wherever you are

"Your doctor is trying to do the right thing… they just need to know what it is." — Dr. Charlie Corke, Intensive Care specialist

You are the expert in your own healthcare values and wishes. Having a Goals of Care Designation Order ensures healthcare providers provide treatment that is medically appropriate and right for you.

What is a Goals of Care Designation (GCD)?

A GCD is a shorthand code designed to be recognized by healthcare providers in order to instantly know what type of care to provide.

A doctor or nurse practitioner writes your GCD as a medical order after speaking with you and/or your alternate decision-maker. The form your doctor/nurse practitioner completes is called the 'GCD Order form' which will be given to you.

Who needs a GCD?

Not everyone needs a GCD. In general, a GCD Order is needed when your health changes or if you have a serious or life-limiting illness.

To find out if you need a GCD Order talk to your healthcare provider.

Why is a GCD important?

By knowing and following your GCD, healthcare providers care for you in a way that is timely, medically appropriate, and aligns with your personal values and wishes. Your GCD also provides a way for care teams to communicate about some aspects of your care as you move between care settings.

What do my healthcare providers need to know?

If you need a GCD it is important for you to be part of the discussions with your healthcare provider. It helps the healthcare team determine a GCD that is both medically appropriate and most in line with your values if they know:

- what does "quality of life" mean to you?
- your priorities if your health situation worsens
- if you have had discussions with those close to you about your healthcare wishes
- if you have completed a personal directive, named an agent.

What do I do with my GCD Order form?

The completed GCD Order form should be kept in the Green Sleeve provided to you by your healthcare provider. When you move through the healthcare system the Green Sleeve should go with you so that healthcare providers always know your GCD.

For more information:

ahs.ca and search advance care planning

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Calgary Zone
Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Alberta Health Services

Palliative Home Care – Urban

Living well with a life-limiting illness

Many people want to stay in their own home for as long as possible. Palliative Home Care offers professional and personal healthcare services to patients and families who are living with a life-limiting illness or are at end-of-life.

This service provides:

- Coordination of in-home care and support to the patient and family.
- Assessment and coordination by specialized palliative home care team led by a nurse who works closely with your primary care doctor. The specialized palliative home care team may include occupational therapists, respiratory therapists, physiotherapists and social workers.
- Coordination of care for in-home support services such as help with personal care, caregiver respite or equipment needs. Available services are based on individual client needs.
- Physical, social, psychological and spiritual support for the patient and family.

Where is this service offered?

Your place of residence in the community such as home, apartment or lodge.

Who is this service for?

Adults who are 18 years or older living with a life-limiting, end-of-life illness or diagnosis.

How do I access this service?

Patients can access the service by:

- self-referral by calling Community Care Access at 403-943-1920
- speaking to your assigned home care case manager, if you are an existing home care client

Healthcare providers can access the Alberta Referral Directory for service referral information.

Fees

For any equipment, supplies or medications that the patient or family require, fees may apply.

Patients may be eligible for the following benefit programs:

- Alberta Aids to Daily Living
- Palliative Coverage Program

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

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Calgary Zone
Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Alberta Health Services

Palliative Care Consult Service

Expert help when living with a life-limiting illness

This specialized service helps patients and families who are living with a life-limiting illness or are at the end-of-life.

Consult teams consist of palliative care doctors and nurse specialists who work in many healthcare settings.

Palliative care doctors and nurse specialists work with the patient, family and primary healthcare team to provide:

- advice for complex medical issues in all settings of care
- assessment and symptom management recommendations (for example: pain, nausea)
- patient and family information about how the illness may progress, and care suggestions to enhance quality of life
- psychological and spiritual support
- help with advance care planning and healthcare decision making
- help with exploring care options and best location of care

Palliative Care Consult Service is available in:

- all hospitals
- outpatient clinics including Tom Baker Cancer Center
- home care
- supportive living and long-term care
- hospices

Who is this service for?

Adults who are 18 years or older living with a life-limiting, end-of-life illness or diagnosis.

How do I access this service?

- Patients and family should discuss their palliative care needs with their health professional or call the Palliative Care Consult Service office for more information.
- Healthcare providers should consult the Alberta Referral Directory for service referral information.

Palliative Care Consult Service office:

403-944-2304

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

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Calgary Zone
Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Alberta Health Services

Rural Palliative Care Consult Service

Expert help supporting rural teams

The Rural Palliative Care Consult Service helps patients and families who are living with a life-limiting illness or are at end-of-life, and provides support to their local rural healthcare teams. They provide recommendations and support in person and use telephone or videoconferencing to overcome the barrier of distance when necessary.

Palliative care doctors and nurse specialists work with the patient, family and primary healthcare team to provide:

- assessment and symptom management recommendations (for example: pain, nausea)
- patient and family information about how the illness may progress, and care suggestions to enhance quality of life
- psychological and spiritual support
- help with advance care planning and healthcare decision-making
- help with exploring care options and best location of care

The Rural Palliative Care Consult Service provides support to patients in many locations; home, hospital, supportive living or long-term care.

Who is this service for?

Adults who are 18 years or older living with a life-limiting, end-of-life illness or diagnosis. When needed, the Rural Palliative Care Consult Service works closely with Alberta Children's Hospital palliative specialists to support children and youth living outside of Calgary city limits.

How do I access this service?

Patients and families should discuss their palliative care needs with their doctor or healthcare professional who can initiate a referral to the consult service as needed.

Healthcare providers should contact the Rural Palliative Care Consult Service office for the referral process.

Telephone: 403-995-2714

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

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Calgary Zone
Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Alberta Health Services

Intensive Palliative Care Unit
Unit 47 – Foothills Medical Centre

In hospital help for complex palliative symptoms

This specialized hospital based unit helps patients who are experiencing complex pain and other symptoms that severely affect quality of life. The goal of the Intensive Palliative Care Unit (IPCU) is to use a holistic, team-based approach to address suffering.

This service provides:

- investigation and treatment by a team of expert palliative care healthcare providers who work together on easing your difficult symptoms and improving your quality of life
- physical, emotional, psychological, financial and spiritual support
- discussions about advance care planning and wishes for future healthcare
- help with exploring various care options and best location of care

Who is this service for?

Adults living with a life-limiting or end-of-life illness who are experiencing complex pain and other symptoms that severely impact their quality of life.

Where is this service offered?

IPCU is located at:

Foothills Medical Centre
Unit 47, 4th floor
Special Services Building
1403 – 29 Street NW
Calgary, Alberta T2N 2T9

How do I access this service?

A palliative care consultation is needed to determine eligibility for admission. Speak to your doctor or home care provider who can request a palliative care consultation.

While you are on the IPCU

We recognize the importance of having family present and having the simple comforts of home with you. Therefore:

- Visitors are welcome.
- A fridge, stove, microwave and toaster are available for your use.
- Check with your nurse to see if your pet can visit the unit.

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

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Calgary Zone
Palliative and End-of-Life Care

Alberta Health Services

Hospice Care

Dignity and individuality in a peaceful and supportive environment

Hospice care is a specialized healthcare setting that provides 24 hour palliative care to individuals nearing the end-of-life. When remaining at home is no longer possible, hospice care promotes dignity and individuality through holistic comfort care in a peaceful environment.

Who is this service for?

Hospices are available to those who are in their last days to short months of life and whose care needs can no longer be met at home.

How do I access this service?

Referrals to hospice can only be made by a palliative home care case manager or a palliative care consultant. If you think hospice may be right for you or your loved one, talk to your physician or home care case manager.

Once the decision has been made that a hospice would best meet you or your loved one's needs, you will be asked to identify three or more hospices from the list provided.

Your clinical needs may mean that specific hospices are better choices to meet your care needs.

Your palliative care provider will assist you in the hospice placement process.

When a bed becomes available you will be notified and arrangements will be made for transfer as soon as possible.

NOTE: Once you are on the hospice wait list, transfer may occur very quickly.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the costs associated with hospice care?

- There is no daily accommodation fee charged to the individual or family for hospice care.
- While in hospice you will be responsible for the cost of oxygen and oxygen equipment that is supplied by home oxygen companies. Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) can be accessed to help with these costs.
- While in hospice, you will be responsible for the cost of medications. Ask your healthcare team to explain the Palliative Coverage Program that provides some financial assistance. Your medication costs will be similar to the cost of medications at home.

Do hospices provide in-house rehabilitation and complementary therapies?

- No, check with your hospice team to discuss the use of private rehabilitation or complementary therapies.

Is the cost of ambulance transfer to the hospice covered?

- In some cases this cost may be the responsibility of the individual. Check with your healthcare team.

Is smoking allowed at hospice?

- Access to designated smoking areas varies by site. Some hospices do not allow smoking anywhere on the premises. Volunteers and staff cannot accompany individuals to smoking areas.

If my care needs change and hospice care is no longer my most appropriate care setting, can I be transferred?

- Yes, in such situations, you will be reassessed for transfer to a more suitable care location or program. Receiving the right care at the right time is important. These transfers are usually to home or a continuing care facility such as long-term care or supportive living.

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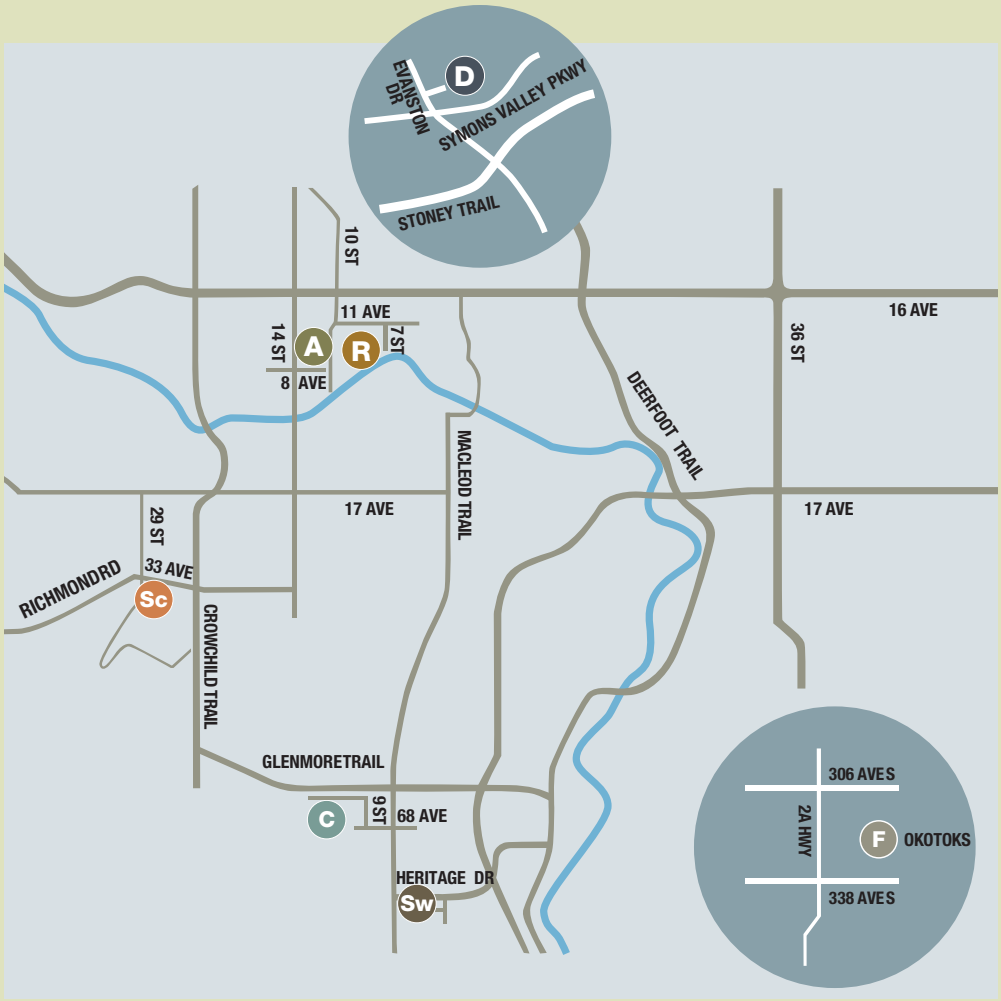
Alberta Health Services

Calgary Area Hospices



A Agape Hospice

(Salvation Army)
1302 – 8th Avenue NW
403-282-6588
agapehospice.ca

R Rosedale Hospice

(Hospice Calgary)
920 – 7A Street NW
403-284-5195
hospicecalgary.com

Sc Sarcee Hospice

(Carewest)
3504 Sarcee Road SW
403-685-6460
carewest.ca

C Chinook Hospice

(Intercare)
1261 Glenmore Trail SW
403-258-0040
intercarealberta.com

Sw Southwood Hospice

(Intercare)
211 Heritage Drive SE
403-252-0620
intercarealberta.com

D Dulcina Hospice

(Covenant Care at St. Marguerite Manor)
110 Evanspark Manor NW
587-230-5500
covenantcare.ca

F Foothills Country Hospice

(Foothills Country Hospice Society)
322001 – 32nd Street E
Municipal District of Foothills
No. 31, Alberta
403-995-4673
countryhospice.org

Near Okotoks, approximately
25 km south of Calgary
See website for directions

279C (2018 08)

Grief Support Program

When someone has died

Individual counselling and grief groups are offered in a safe, supportive and healing environment. All counsellors have specialized training and skills in grief and bereavement care.

Grief often takes much longer, and is sometimes more challenging than what people expect. Although there is nothing abnormal about the pain, loneliness, and disruption felt when grieving, there are times when you may want to ask for support.

Education night

- Clients who are newly registered can attend an education session to help bridge the time between registration and the first counselling appointment.
- This session provides information on grief and loss along with an opportunity to hear from program volunteers about their personal grief experiences

Individual counselling

- The Grief Support program provides up to eight sessions and is based on client need.
- The program is available during the day and limited evening appointments are available.

Grief groups

- After you participate in individual counselling, the possibility of attending a grief group will be discussed.
- Each group is led by a grief counsellor and trained volunteers.
- Group sizes vary, but generally average 15 participants per group.
- Various groups are run based on type of loss (i.e., loss of a parent).
- Groups meet once a week for six weeks.

Who is this service for?

Individuals who are 18 years or older and are grieving the death of someone. This program is not a crisis service and it is typical to wait to see a grief counsellor. If you need urgent help with your grief, call 811.

Is there a cost?

The program is primarily funded by Alberta Health Services (AHS), however, donations are appreciated to fund the lending library, grief groups, volunteer training and education facilitated by specialists in grief and bereavement care.

How do I access this service?

Call 403-955-8011 to book an appointment.
At that time you will be asked to provide:

- Alberta Health Care number
- Legal name, date of birth, address and phone number
- Type of loss experienced

Hours of operation:

Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location

The Bob Glasgow Grief Support Center, 3rd floor
Richmond Road Diagnostic and Treatment Centre
1820 Richmond Road SW, Calgary AB T2T5C7

To learn more about palliative care:

myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care

To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

ahs.ca/palliativecalgary

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Calgary Zone
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Alberta Health Services