



Choosing a hospice is a very important decision. While all hospice programs may have the same basic philosophy of care, each is different in some ways. Hospice programs are very willing to answer questions and assist in determining which hospice can best meet the needs of a particular patient and family.

95% of hospice care is given in the home. The home is defined by where the patient lives, not necessarily their permanent residence. This can include a residential home, nursing home, skilled nursing facility, hospital, etc. Everyone in Florida can be served by hospice. When searching for a Hospice Program, it is not important that the hospice office be located near the patient's home, because the professional care givers travel to the patient's place of residence to provide routine care. However, you do want to choose a hospice program that serves your county.

**Answers to the following questions will assist you in making a decision about hospice care:**

- What services does the hospice provide?
- Will the program cover the cost of the patient's medications (provide a list of the patient's medications)?
- Does the hospice provide all levels of care?
- Is the hospice accredited by The Joint Commission, Accreditation Commission for Health Care, or the Community Health Accreditation Program?
- How many times per week will a nurse and other hospice staff visit?
- Are home health aides readily available from the hospice?
- How many hours of home health aide support can be expected each week?
- Who is the hospice physician and will he/she work with the patient's physician to provide care? Are they hospice and palliative care board certified?
- What facilities does the hospice use for inpatient care?
- What facilities does the hospice use for respite care?
- Will volunteers be assigned?
- How many hours of support from volunteers can be expected each week?
- If palliative treatments such as radiation, chemotherapy, or blood transfusions are needed for symptom control, does the hospice provide this therapy?
- If the patient or family is unhappy with any aspect of the program, what will be done to address the problem?
- If this hospice program is chosen, how soon can services be started?
- What support does this hospice provide to the family after the patient dies?
- What does the hospice admission process include?
- How does the hospice manage pain?
- How are families involved in the patient's care?
- Who handles the paperwork for the insurance billing?

*If you have any additional questions regarding how to choose a hospice, call our Consumer Hotline at 800-282-6560 or email us at [info@floridahospices.org](mailto:info@floridahospices.org).*