



# Frequently asked questions

## FOR PHYSICIANS

### What services does Mission Hospice & Home Care offer?

We are committed to providing a continuum of care for those with life-limiting illnesses. Mission Hospice & Home Care provides palliative care, skilled nursing, physician home visits, PT, OT, medical social work for emotional support and case management, HHA to assist with personal care, dieticians, and volunteers to assist as needed.

Services are provided to patients enrolled in our Advanced Care and Hospice programs regardless of ability to pay. Our Transitions Program provides emotional support and care management at no cost.

As of October 2015, we also operate San Mateo County's only hospice house. We have 10 rooms for patients who cannot stay at home and who need intensive pain and symptom management and skilled round-the-clock hospice care.

### How are patients referred to Mission Hospice?

Patients are referred through hospitals, physicians, caregivers, and family members. Staff are also available for informational visits in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and private homes, for families considering hospice or advanced care.

**To make a referral to Mission Hospice & Home Care, please call us at 650.554.1000 and ask for our intake staff.**

### What makes Mission Hospice & Home Care different?

Our continuum of care model allows us to provide patients with quality palliative care throughout their final months. It also allows our patients (and, importantly, their families) to remain with the same support team throughout their journey. Our well-trained volunteers and dedicated staff help ensure that our patients spend their final months in comfort and with the support they need.

“Every patient is unique, and every illness progresses differently. That’s why our continuum of care model is so important. It allows us to provide patients the same support network and high quality care regardless of how Medicare classifies them during that last stage of life.”

– Karri Kaiser, Medical Social Worker

Mission Hospice has a low patient-to-nurse ratio, allowing us to provide the personalized care for which we are known. We are able to provide same-day service upon request, and have a multilingual staff to serve our diverse community.

We tailor a care plan especially for each patient, with sensitivity to cultural, religious, and personal preferences. We don't just provide medical care – we offer compassion.

## What is palliative care?

Palliative care is focused on comfort and compassion. It treats the whole person, addressing physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. Working as a team, specially trained nurses, doctors, social workers, and spiritual counselors work closely with patients and families to support quality of life and relieve the symptoms of disease. Palliative care can be given at any stage of a disease, and is offered across Mission Hospice & Home Care's continuum of care.

"You matter to the last moment of your life, and we will do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you do."

– Dame Cicely Saunders,  
founder of modern hospice

## What is hospice care?

Considered to be the model for quality, compassionate care for people facing an end-of-life illness, hospice care involves a team-oriented, holistic approach to expert medical care, pain and symptom management, and emotional and spiritual support expressly tailored to the patient's needs and wishes.

"It's a unique honor to be invited into someone's home when they're dying. You have to know going in that the patient is going to die and so, the goals are around quality of life. We're really helping patients live as well as possible."

– Lisa Deal, RN,  
Chief Clinical Officer

Hospice also supports the patient's loved ones. At the center of hospice and palliative care is the belief that each of us has the right to die pain-free and with dignity, and that our families will receive the necessary support to allow this to occur.

## Who pays for this care?

The Medicare hospice benefit pays for care for the majority of our hospice patients. However, our services go beyond the levels that are reimbursed by Medicare and private insurance, and contributions from the community make up the difference.

Mission Hospice & Home Care is committed to supporting people throughout the challenges of a terminal diagnosis, regardless of their medical coverage or ability to pay.

## How did Mission Hospice & Home Care get started?

A handful of visionary community leaders saw the need amongst their family and friends for hospice care, and founded Mission Hospice in 1979 to meet that need as San Mateo County's first hospice program. As a trusted, local, independent nonprofit, we have served thousands of patients and their families with physical, emotional, and spiritual support throughout the journey from a life-threatening diagnosis through death and the process of bereavement.

## Who runs Mission Hospice & Home Care?

Our 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is led by a dedicated volunteer board of directors and a highly-trained professional staff, with support from thousands of donors who share our commitment to our community. We are local residents who believe that every member of our community should have access to compassionate palliative and hospice care.