

Service Providers and Caregivers: Making the Right Choices

Patricia Kenny, Nurse Practitioner

Senior Living Communities

(Least Amount of Care to Most)

- Home
- Independent, Congregate
- Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC)



Senior Living Communities



- **Assisted**
- **Memory Care**
- **Skilled Care**
- **Home !**

Private Pay Helpers at Home



- **MD: House Calls**
- **NP: House Call**
- **Private Care Manager**
- **RN/Occupational/Physical/
Speech Therapies**

Insurance-paid Resources



Skilled Home Care:

- **Physician certifies acute decline in function and home-bound status**
- **RN/Physical, occupational, speech therapies/Social**
- **Work/Home health aide**

Insurance paid...



- **Limited time, and only when condition shows improvement or possibly further decline.**
- **When plateau attained (no further progress anticipated), care ends.**

Insurance paid - Hospice



- **Medicare pays for care when one is terminally ill (6 months or fewer if disease process runs anticipated course)**
- **One can receive hospice care at home, in SNF, many assisted care settings**

Insurance paid - Hospice



Examples of eligible diagnoses:

- **Cancer**
- **Emphysema/COPD**
- **Cardiac**
- **Alzheimer's/dementias**
- **Debility & Decline**

Insurance Paid - Hospice



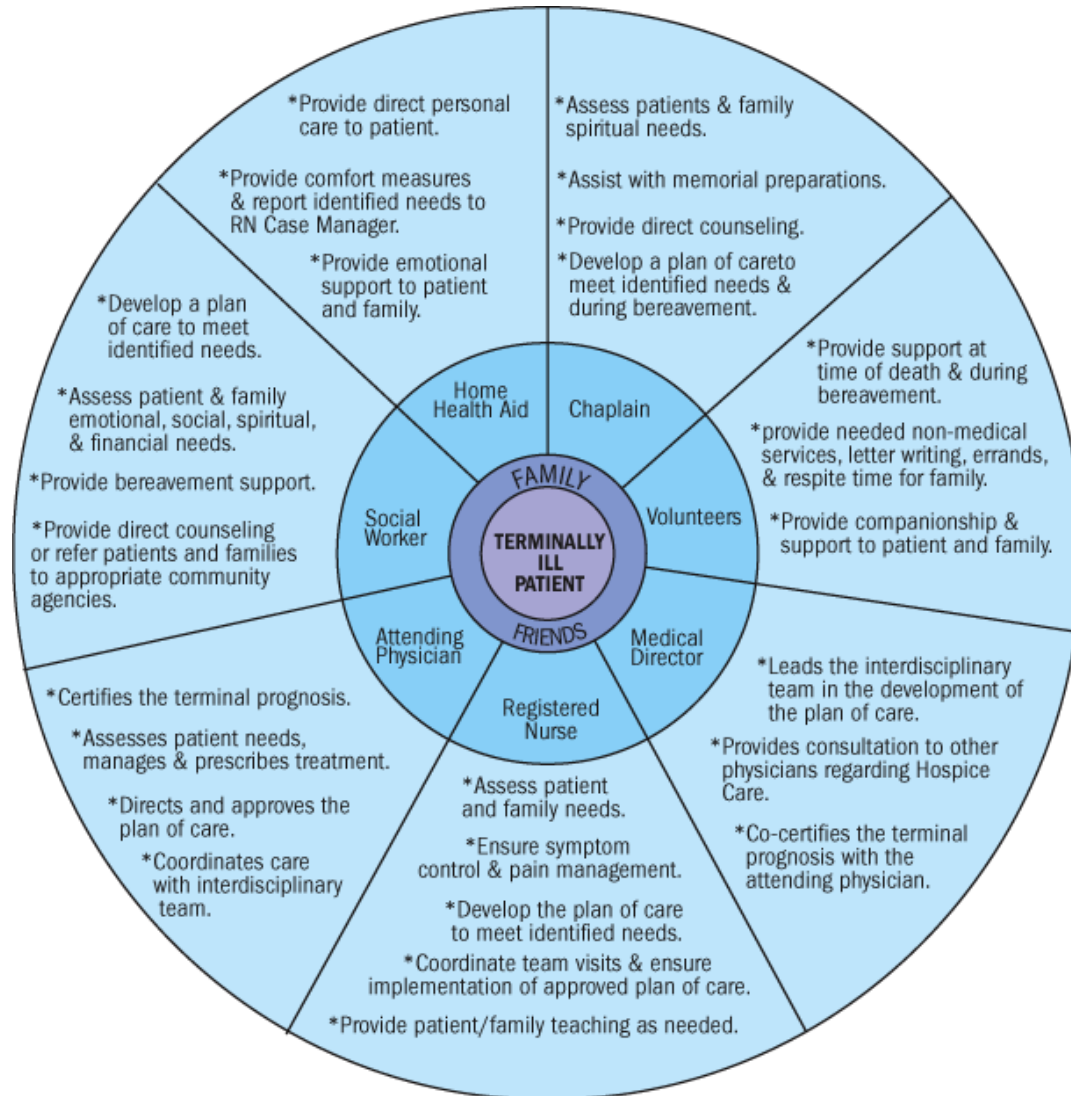
- **We do not utilize this benefit well!**
- **15% of those enrolled in hospice care die within 7 days!**

Insurance Paid - Hospice



- **Support from RN**
- **Home health aide**
- **Social worker**
- **Chaplain**
- **Medical Director in addition to your primary provider (MD or NP)**

Hospice Circle of Care



PALLIATIVE CARE



- From Latin, *palliare*, to cloak, palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life for patients with life-threatening illnesses, and their families

PALLIATIVE CARE



- **Focus on prevention and relief of suffering**
- **Early identification, assessment and treatment of pain and other physical, psychological, and/or spiritual problems**

PALLIATIVE CARE



- **Affirms life, regards dying as normal process**
- **Intends neither to hasten or postpone death**
- **Offers a formal support system to cope during illness as well as during bereavement period**

PALLIATIVE CARE



- **Enhances quality of life and may positively influence course of illness**
- **Is applicable early in course of illness, in conjunction with chemo/radiation therapy, surgery**
- **Supports understanding and management of distressing clinical complications of such treatments (WHO, 2011).**

Self Care for Caregivers

- Caregivers are hidden patients



Self-Care for Caregivers



The glass half full...

- **Get educated**
- **Get support**
- **Get relief**

Communication is Key



- **Communicating with Healthcare Professionals, or How To Talk To Your Doctor**

Communicating



- **Give information that will help the provider make the best recommendations for you**
- **Listen to the information provided**

Communicating



- **Ask questions (as many times as necessary) so that you understand**
- **Bring a list of concerns and issues you want to discuss**

Communicating



- **Let each provider know if you are seeing other doctors, including those who may not be in the Western healthcare system, such as curanderos, herbal practitioners, or any others**

Communicating



- **Bring a list of all medicines and treatments used- herbals, prescriptions, alcohol, tobacco, medicines obtained without prescription such as tylenol or ibuprofen**

Communicating



- **Your provider may ask about things that seem very personal to you, such as bowel movements, appetite, sleep, and even sex. This information provides important clues about health, illness and possible treatments.**

Communicating



- **It is important to talk to your provider about your family's views about health, illness and treatments so that he or she can better understand how best to communicate with you about care.**

Medication Safety



- **Keep a list of all medication you take with you at all times**
- **Bring medicines with you to provider appointments**
- **Have 1 provider monitor all medications prescribed/taken for safety & simplicity**
- **Consider using a Mediset to assist in more accurate dosing**

Planning Ahead



- **Advance Health Directives**
(Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment)
- **POLST**

Thank you!



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Specialists in Geriatric Medicine
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Resources – Service Providers & Caregivers



- **Patricia Kenny, Geriatric Nurse Practitioner**
Elizabeth Landsverk, MD
House Calls
www.elderconsult.com
650-357-8834
- **Coalition for Compassionate Care (POLST)**
www.coalitionccc.org
- **American Geriatrics Society**
www.healthinaging.org
- **Alzheimers Association, Northern California**
www.alznorcal.org
- **"Five Wishes"-care preferences**
www.agingwithdignity.org
- **Caregiver supports**
www.medicare.gov/caregivers/caregiver-topics-support.html
- **Family Caregiver Alliance**
www.Caregiver.org