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**Refer to Home Health for:**

- Skilled Nursing
- New Diagnoses or Existing Conditions
- Post Surgical Care
- Wound Care
- Ostomy Care
- Rehabilitation Therapies (Physical, Occupational, Speech)
- Disease Management
  - Heart Failure Program with Telemonitoring
  - Diabetes
  - COPD
- Medication Management
- Tube feedings or TPN
- Pain Management
- Home Safety Evaluations

**Or refer for specialty programs:**

- Palliative Care for pain and symptom management
- Hospice Care for those facing end of life

We accept Medicare, Medicaid, and most major insurances.

**Feedback**

If you have any comments on this issue or to be taken off our mail list, please email: [ann.johnson@baystatehealth.org](mailto:ann.johnson@baystatehealth.org)

## Palliative Care Program Bridging the Gap in Home Care

In the world of Medicare defined home care programs, there exists a gap between the traditional home health program and the traditional hospice program. To qualify for hospice, a doctor must provide a prognosis of six months or less, and a patient cannot concurrently receive treatments that are curative in purpose. Many patients who might benefit from aspects of hospice service cannot enter the hospice program because they are pursuing curative treatments, they have a prognosis of greater than six months, or they are not ready for the hospice program for personal reasons. These patients often need the type of counseling, pain management, and symptom management in which hospice staff has the greater expertise. Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice (BVNAH) offers a program that bridges the gap between home health and hospice: Palliative Care.



In short, our Palliative Care program admits patients using their home health benefits and home health admission criteria but sends hospice nurses and other hospice staff. Therefore, **patients enrolling in Palliative Care may receive curative treatments, and there is no limitation on prognosis.** Our Palliative Care program can send nurses, aides, physical therapists, medical social workers, occupational therapists, and speech therapists to the homes of your patients. The majority of our team staffing Palliative Care has achieved certification in hospice & palliative care and is certified in case management. Important Palliative Care services include:

- Pain and symptom management from highly qualified registered nurses (especially the symptoms of dyspnea, nausea, fatigue, constipation, loss of appetite, and difficulty sleeping);
- Routine home care services including skilled nursing care, rehabilitative therapies, and home health aides;
- Counseling, for patient and family, around anticipatory grief, coping with the difficulties of treatment, and similar issues;
- Education and support regarding end of life planning and advance directives.

When patients get better, they are discharged from services. If Palliative Care patients worsen, they have the option of transitioning into hospice care with the comfort of having the same care team.

**Criteria & Insurance:** Palliative Care is paid for by patients' home health benefits, so only home health admission criteria apply. Patients must meet the insurance's definition of homebound, must need only intermittent care, and must have a skilled need. For qualified recipients, **Medicare pays 100%**. Medicare beneficiaries have no co-pays, deductibles, or other cost-sharing expenses with this program.

In conclusion, when you have patients coping with the types of symptoms common to life-threatening diseases, but who are not candidates for hospice, please consider Palliative Care from BVNAH. Call us at 800-249-8298 and together we can determine if Palliative Care may help your patient.

**Please tell your patients about  
Baystate Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice.**