



# Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at The Reschini Group



## MAKING THE HOSPICE CHOICE

Hospice is a special concept of care offering support and medical assistance for a person suffering from a terminal illness. Hospice focuses on treating the person rather than the disease, ensuring that patients live their remaining time in comfort and with dignity.

### Who Provides Hospice Care?

Hospice care depends on the patient's choice and circumstances. Most often, hospice care is a service provided in the home, but hospitals, nursing homes, and private facilities may also offer specialized programs.

Providing hospice care is typically a team approach that focuses on a patient's medical care, pain management and emotional support. The patient, family caregivers, and a doctor are the core of the hospice team, and together they develop a personalized plan aimed at relieving symptoms.

### When to Consider Hospice Care

Hospice care is appropriate when a person has a terminal illness and life expectancy is no longer than six months.

### Who Pays for Hospice Care?

Hospice care is generally covered by most private insurance plans, Medicare, or Medicaid. To help you determine possible out-of-pocket expenses, the hospice care provider should be able to advise you on what costs, if any, are the patient's responsibility.

### How to Select a Hospice Program

The following questions can help you select a hospice program based on your needs:

- Are family caregivers given the information and training they need to care for the patient at home?
- What services does the hospice offer to help the patient and loved ones deal with grief and loss?
- Is respite care (relief for the caregiver), including inpatient, available?
- How will the hospice physician oversee the patient's care and work with the patient's doctor?
- How many patients are assigned to each hospice staff member?
- Does the hospice staff regularly discuss and routinely evaluate pain control with patients and families?
- How quickly does the hospice respond to after-hour emergencies, and who responds?
- How are calls and visits handled when death occurs?
- How does the hospice work with hospitals and other facilities during the course of the patient's stay?
- Does the hospice program follow the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's "Standards of Practice for Hospice Programs"?
- What other kind of accreditation or certification does the hospice program or its staff have?

