

## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q** I'm worried about my family and the toll my illness seems to be taking. Can you help them?
- A** Yes, family and loved one support plays an important part in your health. We welcome the chance to meet and talk with your spouse, parents, siblings, children and others in your life.
- Q** I have been referred to palliative care; does this mean I'm dying?
- A** Receiving palliative care does not mean you are dying. The goal of palliative care is to improve your quality of life by addressing pain, stress and other issues related to a serious illness.
- Q** Will my insurance company cover palliative care?
- A** Most insurers and health plans pay for medical components of palliative care.
- Q** Do I need to stop medical treatments in order to receive palliative care?
- A** No, many of the patients we care for are receiving treatment. Palliative care does not replace your primary treatment; it works to support the care you are receiving to improve your quality of life.
- Q** When people hear I'm about to receive palliative care, they assume it is hospice. Are they right?
- A** No, this is a common misunderstanding. Palliative care is often provided during a serious illness in support of curative treatment. It is intended to enhance your quality of life by addressing any physical discomfort or stress you may be feeling.

If you have further questions regarding Palliative Care please contact your physician or call Exeter Hospital's Information and Referral Line Monday through Friday, 8:30am – 5:00pm at 603-580-6668.



### PALLIATIVE CARE

## The Art of Living Well with a Serious Illness

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## What is Palliative Care?

*Palliative medicine is specialized care focused on providing relief from the discomfort, symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve the quality of life for both the patient and family members. Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses and specialists who work in partnership with social services, chaplains and other health care professionals to provide extra support to patients at any stage in a serious illness (regardless of age) in addition to the curative treatment he/she may be receiving.*

*Palliative medicine is the most recently recognized medical subspecialty in the USA. Patients can receive palliative care during the course of treatments meant to cure illness. Its availability does not depend upon whether or not conditions can be cured.*

## Palliative Care at Exeter Hospital

The palliative care team at Exeter Hospital is dedicated to addressing the complex physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs emerging in the course of a serious illness. We are committed to supporting you and the people you love, and we start by listening.

We approach each patient and family as whole and unique, considering issues of comfort, well-being, spirituality and dignity. When family members are involved in care we can support and keep them informed.

Your palliative care team began offering services at Exeter Hospital in 2006, the year this important specialty was recognized. Team members include accomplished clinicians who have been pioneers, teachers and leaders in this field. Together we have accumulated almost a hundred years of clinical experience, providing care even before the formal establishment of the specialty.

## Services for Patients and Loved Ones

- Specialized management of symptoms including pain and shortness of breath
- Care coordination with your primary care physician, specialists and other caregivers who are serving you
- Spiritual Care offers support and guidance in areas of meaning and purpose in times of change, including helping you remain connected with your own clergy
- Crisis prevention and management
- Social services, which address the psychosocial needs of patients and families to include assessment, counseling, community resources and transitions of care
- Support for loved ones facing bereavement.