

Key Message and Tips for Providers: Hospice and Levels of Care



Message

Hospice care is defined as a “comprehensive set of services ... identified and coordinated by an interdisciplinary team to provide for the physical, psychosocial, spiritual, and emotional needs of a terminally ill patient and/or family members, as delineated in a specific patient plan of care.”[1, 2] Hospice services are designed to be provided in the participant’s home but can be provided in the hospital for caregiver respite and patient symptom management.[3, 4] Medicaid allows residential facilities such as a nursing facility or an assisted living facility to be considered a participant’s home.[5]

Determination of medical necessity for hospice services and the level of hospice care are dependent on the certifying hospice provider’s documentation,[6] including a brief explanation of the clinical findings[7] that supports a terminal illness as defined by the State Medicaid agency (SMA). The explanation must be included as a part of, or as an addendum to, the certification and recertification forms.[8]

Participants elect hospice benefits by completing an election of hospice benefits form with a particular hospice.[9] Once the hospice benefit is elected, treatment to cure the terminal illness usually stops, unless the participant is younger than age 21.[10] A participant may revoke the hospice benefit at any time to seek curative treatment.

TIPS

These tips will help ensure participants receive the care they need at a difficult time.

- Know the difference between hospice care and palliative care, which helps manage the pain and symptoms of illness whether the illness is terminal or not;
- Be aware of the State Medicaid program definition of “terminal illness,” which includes a medical prognosis with a limited life expectancy, the length of which varies by State;
- Make sure a physician has certified that the beneficiary is terminally ill prior to enrolling him or her in a hospice program;
- Know the levels of hospice care and order inpatient care when appropriate;
- Include a principal hospice diagnosis on documentation and claims; and
- Check with your SMA for information about services in your area since these programs vary from State to State.



For more information review the toolkits available at <https://www.cms.gov/Medicare-Medicaid-Coordination/Fraud-Prevention/Medicaid-Integrity-Education/edmic-landing.html> on the CMS Medicaid Program Integrity Education website.

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1 Definitions, 42 C.F.R. § 418.3. Retrieved June 18, 2015, from http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=009d7a8f47e1232ab64f843034cf7275&rgn=div5&view=text&node=42:3.0.1.1.5&idno=42#se42.3.418_13

2 Social Security Act § 1861(dd)(1). Retrieved June 18, 2015, from http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title18/1861.htm

3 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2000, July 31). State Medicaid Manual. Chapter 4 § 4306. Hospice Reimbursement. Retrieved June 25, 2015, from <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Paper-Based-Manuals-Items/CMS021927.html>

4 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Medicaid.gov. Hospice Benefits. Retrieved June 24, 2015, from <http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/benefits/hospice-benefits.html>

5 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2000, July 31). State Medicaid Manual. Chapter 4 § 4305.2, para. 3. Hospice Services. Retrieved June 25, 2015, from <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Paper-Based-Manuals-Items/CMS021927.html>

6 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2000, July 31). State Medicaid Manual. Chapter 4 § 4305.1. Election Procedures. Retrieved June 25, 2015, from <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Paper-Based-Manuals-Items/CMS021927.html>

7 Social Security Act § 1902(a)(27). Retrieved June 25, 2015 from http://www.socialsecurity.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title19/1902.htm

8 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2000, July 31). State Medicaid Manual. Chapter 4 § 4305.1. Physician Certification. Retrieved June 25, 2015, from <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Paper-Based-Manuals-Items/CMS021927.html>

9 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. (2000, July 31). State Medicaid Manual. Chapter 4 § 4305.2. Election Procedures. Retrieved June 25, 2015, from <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Paper-Based-Manuals-Items/CMS021927.html>

10 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Pub. L. No. 111-148, § 2302. 124 Stat. 119, 293. (2010, March 23). Retrieved June 18, 2015, from <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ148/pdf/PLAW-111publ148.pdf>