

What is Palliative Care?

Information for Residents and Families

Palliative care is health care that addresses the discomfort, symptoms, and stress of chronic conditions or serious illness. Support is provided to both the resident and his or her family. Palliative care can be provided at the same time as treatment focused on curing disease. **Choosing palliative care does not mean that disease directed treatment stops.**

What is the goal of palliative care?

The goal of palliative care is to prevent and relieve suffering through symptom management and patient-centered care. It involves making a care plan based on the values and, goals, and preferences of the resident and family. This “whole person” care considers physical, social, spiritual, and psychological well-being.

Who provides palliative care?

Palliative care is provided by a healthcare team that typically includes physicians, nurses, social workers, spiritual counselors, and others.

When is palliative care provided?

Palliative care can be provided at any stage of an illness. Most chronic illnesses such as heart or lung disease, dementia, kidney disease, neurodegenerative disorders, cancer, and frailty worsen over time. Palliative care can help at any time during illnesses, and it can be provided along with life prolonging treatments. Comfort can also be the main focus of palliative care when curative treatments are no longer an option.

Where is palliative care provided?

Palliative care can be provided in a nursing home, hospital, out-patient clinic, or at home. Palliative care can provide an extra layer of support in the nursing home, and it is guided by the goals and values of the family. Care continues to be provided by the nursing home staff under the direction of the resident’s doctor.

For more information:

If you have questions or would like to learn more, please reach out to your OPTIMISTIC nurse or nurse practitioner.