

**You, your patient and the family will benefit from hospice services. Hospice provides unique medical, emotional and spiritual support for end-stage neurological disease patients and their families. You play an important role in providing your patients choices for end-of-life care.**

## When are Patients with End-Stage Neurological Disease Appropriate for Hospice?

Any patient with end-stage neurological disease may be appropriate for hospice care if the patient has a prognosis of six months or less should their disease run its natural course. It may be appropriate to initiate a hospice assessment if a patient has experienced one or any of the following:

### Stroke / Coma

- Degree of ambulation – mainly in bed
- Unable to perform self-care
- Inability to maintain hydration and caloric intake
- Significant, unintentional weight loss
- Progressive clinical decline
- Indicators above also apply to ALS and other debilitating neurological diseases

### ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) and other motor neuron diseases such as Parkinson's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis

- Rapid progression of ALS and other motor neuron disease

- Critically impaired ventilatory capacity
- Critical nutritional impairment
- Comorbid conditions

*Note: The factors listed above are general medical guidelines and are not intended to be strict criteria. The decision to admit a patient to hospice is based on the clinical guidelines and each patient's unique needs.*

## Symptom Management

Hospice manages symptoms that affect a patient's quality of life, including but not limited to:

- Pain; profound weakness; dyspnea; nausea/vomiting
- Emotional distress such as anxiety or grief
- Spiritual or ethical issues that are related to the dying process
- Multi-system deterioration

## Benefits

### of Referring Your Patient for Hospice Care

Providing medications reduces the financial burden on the patient and family, thereby increasing patient and family satisfaction with your care

Intensive pain and symptom management which eliminates or reduces unnecessary hospitalizations/ ER visits

Medications, DME and supplies provided, making the patient more compliant to their treatment plan

Family support and education relieves caregiver stress and exhaustion which decreases demands on your time

Ability to benefit from a full range of programs and services, including 24-hour access to care, psychosocial programs, volunteer services and grief counseling

