

## What We Do and How We Help



### What is hospice?

Hospice is care that focuses on medical and personal comfort for people living with a life-limiting illness.

Hospice care helps patients with physical symptoms like pain or nausea. Hospice staff members also comfort patients, families, and friends by helping them feel emotionally and spiritually at peace. They work together with patients and families to bring dignity and well-being to anyone affected by illness and loss.

### What is Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice?

Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice is a nonprofit organization that has been providing hospice care in Maryland for more than 40 years. Besides hospice services, we provide professional grief support for anyone who lives or works in Montgomery or Prince George's Counties. Annually, we care for more than 2,300 patients and their families, and provide grief education and support to more than 7,500 community residents.

### Who is Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice?

We are professionals and volunteers who work together as a team to meet the needs of our neighbors who are living with a terminal illness. The professionals include doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, spiritual counselors (chaplains), social workers, certified nursing assistants, and grief counselors.

### Is Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice a part of any county government?

No.

### Is Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice affiliated with a religious group?

No.

### Whom does Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice care for?

We provide care for our seriously ill neighbors in Montgomery County and Prince George's County, who have decided (after talking with their doctors) to concentrate on living their lives as fully as possible rather than aggressively fighting a disease.

### Is hospice only for people with cancer?

No. Hospice can help patients with any illness (including cancer, dementia, heart disease, and others).

### Do patients pay for hospice?

No. Hospice services are paid for by:

- Medicare
- Medicaid
- most private insurance companies, or by
- Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice. We care for patients without insurance or any other way to pay.

### Why do patients choose hospice?

Patients choose hospice when it becomes clear that a cure is no longer likely, and they want comfort care to live as fully as possible until the end of life. For some patients, hospice can be a welcome alternative to staying in – or returning to – a hospital.

### Where do patients receive hospice care?

We care for patients and families in their own homes, wherever they may be. Besides houses and apartments, we care for patients in assisted living facilities and nursing homes, and also at Casey House - our acute care in-patient facility exclusively designed for hospice patients.

### What services are provided by Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice?

- Expert pain and symptom relief
- Medications
- Medical equipment, such as oxygen, wheelchairs, walkers, and hospital beds
- Medical supplies
- Nurses available in person 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Education on what to expect and how to cope
- Assistance with patient personal care
- Complementary Therapies
- Volunteers
- Grief support

### Who cares for the patient?

An experienced team of professionals – doctors, nurses, hospice aides, social workers, spiritual counselors (chaplains), and trained volunteers – working together to care for the patient.

### Will the hospice doctor visit the patient?

Yes. If necessary, the hospice doctor will visit a patient's home.

### **What do hospice nurses do?**

Hospice nurses visit patients regularly to see how they are doing, teach caregivers how to take care of their loved ones, and coordinate the visits of other hospice team members.

### **What is a certified nursing assistant?**

A certified nursing assistant (CNA) is a trained nursing aide who has passed a state certification exam. Our CNAs visit patients periodically to help with things such as bathing and making sure patients can move around safely.

### **What does the hospice social worker do?**

Hospice social workers help patients and families learn coping skills and ways to keep patients comfortable in their homes. They also can help patients and families with difficult conversations or to work on practical tasks, such as arranging for help with chores.

### **What does a chaplain do?**

For patients who are interested, spiritual counselors (chaplains) are available to talk about spiritual concerns. Our chaplains help people find comfort and answers that fit their own beliefs. Chaplains offer spiritual support to people of any faith background, or no faith background, and help people find their own answers.

### **What do volunteers do?**

After a thorough three-day training, volunteers help in a variety of ways such as visiting with patients so caregivers can take a break, giving soothing hand massages to ease stress, running errands, or helping patients and families with email, letters, or memoirs. Volunteers are required to attend ongoing training during the year.

### **How are decisions made about the care of the patient?**

Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice respects and honors the wishes of our patients. Their priorities guide us.

### **Do patients' family doctors stay involved when a patient chooses hospice?**

Yes, patients can keep their own doctors while receiving hospice services. Their doctors will consult with the hospice physician to review goals and courses of care.

### **Do hospice patients have to stop all medications?**

No.

### **What happens if a hospice patient has an accident - would extra care be provided?**

Yes.

### **Does hospice hasten death?**

No. In some cases, hospice helps patients live longer.

### **What should patients or families do if they are considering hospice care, or if they have questions about hospice?**

- Ask their doctor to discuss all their options, which may include hospice care
- Call for information or ask us to visit them to provide information
- Call back with more questions. Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice wants families to fully understand their options and will respect any decision made.



### **Can patients who sign up for hospice care change their mind?**

Yes. Patients can stop hospice care whenever they want, for whatever reason. They can call us any time and restart hospice services.

### **Do patients ever leave hospice care?**

Yes. Some patients improve and stop hospice services.

### **What is Casey House?**

Casey House is a warm, home-like facility designed for hospice patients. If a patient has symptoms that need specialized attention, the patient may need to go to Casey House for a short period of time - after the symptoms are managed, the patient can return home. Casey House also has doctors, nurses, certified nursing assistants, social workers, chaplains, and volunteers.

### **How is Casey House different from other facilities?**

Casey House has a highly skilled team of professionals who are experts in end-of-life care. Patients have private bedrooms with personal bathrooms. Adult, children, and pet visitors are welcome 24 hours a day.

### **What is grief? What is bereavement? How does Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice help?**

Grief is the intense feeling of sadness felt after the death of a loved one. The word "bereavement" is very similar, referring to that period of sadness.

We have counselors with advanced professional degrees, supporting families for 13 months after their loved one dies. This support includes phone counseling, groups, workshops, and mailings at no cost to the family.

### **How does Montgomery Hospice and Prince George's Hospice help the community with grief?**

We provide grief education to community groups and employees in the workplace. Support groups and workshops have no cost for anyone who lives or works in Montgomery or Prince George's Counties.