How Can Palliative Care Be Helpful to You?

Some patient examples . . .

I have cancer and am receiving chemotherapy. My pain is being treated, but it is still interfering with my ability to live my life fully."

Palliative care can help with pain and symptom management even while you are receiving active treatment. Your doctor is always in charge, and our consultation team works closely with your primary team.

I've had congestive heart failure for several years. It's getting more difficult to breathe easily and do the things I enjoy. I've been hospitalized frequently. I get into trouble late at night, don't know who to call, and end up in the emergency unit."

Palliative care can help with troublesome symptoms like shortness of breath. We can also work with you and your treatment team to find the best possible home support for you, whether visiting nurse association (VNA) or hospice care. Palliative care can also help you think about the kind of care you wish to receive in the future to meet your changing needs.

I'm in the terminal phase of my illness and would like to make the most of the time I have left. I don't know if I will be able to stay home or if I want to. I worry about my loved ones and whether I will suffer at the end of my life."

Palliative care can help patients and their loved ones cope with physical and emotional end-of-life symptoms. Pain and suffering can be treated in any setting – hospital, home, or facility. Our goal is to help ensure that any remaining time is as much the way you want as possible.

Mission Statement

Our goal is to ensure that all BIDMC patients and families receive the life-affirming palliative care services they need, and that all BIDMC staff have the support they need in providing those services.





Palliative Care Consultation Service

Information Brochure



330 Brookline Avenue Boston, MA 02215 www.bidmc.org



A teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School

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What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is the interdisciplinary specialty dedicated to promoting the best quality of life for people with advanced or serious illness. Its goals are to prevent and ease suffering, and to provide compassionate care for patients and their loved ones.

Palliative care is appropriate at any point in a serious or life-threatening illness. It is not dependent on prognosis or diagnosis. It can also be provided at the same time as curative and life-prolonging treatment.

What is the Palliative Care Consultation Service?

We are a hospital-based consultation service. Our palliative care team includes physicians, a nurse practitioner, social worker, and administrative support.

We are available to help both patients who are currently receiving active treatment, as well as patients who are considering or seeking comfort-focused care.

The Palliative Care Consultation Service collaborates with primary care and hospital attending physicians, Case Management, the Ethics Support Service, the Pain Service, Pastoral Care, Pharmacy, Social Work, and other services.

We also work closely with outpatient providers, home-based clinicians, hospice, and community health workers.

Services Offered

- Symptom management, including but not limited to pain, nausea, depression, delirium, and shortness of breath
- Discussion of treatment options, care planning based on your personal values, and end-of-life concerns
- Support for patient transitions from the hospital environment, including home with hospice or visiting nurse services, rehabilitation centers, hospice residences, and skilled nursing facilities
- Family support
- Staff support and education
- Bereavement education and support
- Volunteer visitor program
- Reiki therapy

How do I Request a Consultation?

If you feel that you or a loved one might benefit from a consultation, you can speak to your physician, nurse, or social worker. If you would like more information about palliative care or the Palliative Care Consultation Service, please call 617-667-1320.



Our Standard of Excellence BIDMC Palliative Care . . .

- is always anchored in realistic and carefully-considered goals that reflect the values of the patient
- includes prompt and effective treatment of physical and emotional symptoms and enhancement of functional status
- provides *support for patients as well as their families* and caregivers in the struggle
 to find or create *affirmative meaning* in
 the last stages of life
- ensures that patients and families experience *continuity in care* during transitions across settings of care
- includes reliable bereavement care

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