



Hospice of Santa Cruz County **Open Access Philosophy**

Open Access is a new model for hospice care that supports and pays for a selected group of treatments that:

- serve to palliate symptoms related to a terminal illness
- do not change hospice eligibility

Open Access dovetails hospice care with patients' other treatments, allowing best practice end-of-life care for a much longer period of time. The addition of hospice services is associated with a high level of patient and family satisfaction.

The details of Open Access vary among hospices nationwide. Our Open Access philosophy allows for consideration of the following treatments, approved by our medical directors on a case-by-case basis:

- Artificial hydration
- Total parenteral nutrition (TPN)
- Blood transfusions
- IV antibiotics
- Bisphosphonate therapy
- Palliative radiation
- Paracentesis
- Thoracentesis

Debility Diagnosis

In addition, we recognize that there are many patients who do not meet eligibility criteria for a typical hospice diagnosis: metastatic cancer, end stage cardiac, pulmonary, renal, liver, neurological diseases, AIDS, CVA. For those patients who are frail, elderly, and who have co-morbidities consistent with an estimated life expectancy of six months or less, we provide access to hospice care with a diagnosis of *Debility*.

Transitions Program

To extend services to patients who have a prognosis of greater than 6 months, or who are not ready to choose hospice care, we offer our *Transitions* Program.

Transitions is a community service program offering case management and volunteer support that is not medical in nature. The goal of the program is to identify the needs of patients and their caregivers and offer assistance in fulfilling those needs with referrals and links to existing community resources.

The *Transitions* medical social worker can help patients and families explore goals of care, discuss health care planning and assist with advance health care directives. Trained volunteers offer companionship, respite for caregivers, and practical support like preparing a meal or running an errand.

**For more information about Open Access or Transitions,
please call our Admissions Services Manager
Hospice of Santa Cruz County
831-430-3000**