

Hospice Checklist & Questions Guide

Helping You Choose the Right Hospice Provider with Confidence

Initial Considerations

- ☐ Has a doctor certified a life expectancy of six months or less?
- ☐ Have you discussed the patient's values, goals, and wishes?
- ☐ What is the preferred setting for hospice care? (Home, Nursing Facility, Hospice Residence, Other)

Research & Selection

- ☐ Is the hospice Medicare-certified and state-licensed?
- ☐ Is the provider accredited by a body like The Joint Commission or CHAP?
- ☐ Do they specialize in specific conditions (e.g., dementia, cancer, ESRD)?
- ☐ Have you reviewed online testimonials or spoken to other families?
- ☐ Have you visited the facility or met with staff (in person or virtually)?

Services and Care Provided

- ☐ Are medical professionals available 24/7 for urgent needs?
- ☐ Does the hospice use an interdisciplinary team (physician, RN, social worker, spiritual care, aides)?
- ☐ Are complementary therapies offered (e.g., Music, Art, Massage)?
- ☐ Is bereavement support available for at least 13 months after death?
- ☐ Is spiritual or chaplaincy support included?

Key Questions to Ask

- ☐ How long have you been serving the community?
- ☐ How fast can hospice services start after a referral?
- ☐ What is your average visit time for patients in the final days?
- ☐ What kind of training do your staff receive in pain and symptom management?
- ☐ What's expected from family caregivers? Do you offer respite care?
- ☐ How are medications ordered, delivered, and paid for?
- ☐ What medical equipment is provided, and how quickly is it delivered?
- ☐ How do you monitor and report on quality of care?

- ☐ What special accommodations are available for complex needs (e.g., wounds, dialysis)?
- ☐ How often are care plans updated and who is involved in those updates?

Financial Considerations

- ☐ Do you accept Medicare, Medicaid, VA, or Private Insurance?
- ☐ Are there any out-of-pocket costs?
- ☐ Are medications, equipment, and supplies included in coverage?
- ☐ Do you offer charity care or financial support for those in need?

Communication and Care Coordination

- ☐ How often does the hospice communicate updates to families?
- ☐ Who is the main point of contact for questions or concerns?
- ☐ How do you handle after-hours emergencies?
- ☐ What are your discharge policies if a patient improves or declines differently than expected?

Final Advice

- ☐ Choose a provider whose team listens with compassion, communicates transparently, and aligns with your care philosophy.