



Hospice and Palliative Care Orientation Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of Hospice and Palliative Care (HPC) Orientation?

The purpose of HPC Orientation is to introduce VA's hospice and palliative care program and provide a broad overview of Veteran-centered care as it relates to Veterans living with serious and life limiting illnesses. The orientation is a 30-minute program consisting of a short PowerPoint presentation and a 13-minute video that tells the story of a courageous Korean War Veteran's palliative care experience in VA.

What is in the HPC Orientation Toolkit?

- HPC Orientation Guidelines for Use
- PowerPoint file with speaker's notes
- Bereaved Family Survey (BFS) Handout and Pocket Card templates
- HPC Orientation Catalog of Resources and Links
- HPC Orientation FAQ Sheet

Why was this toolkit developed?

Every employee plays a role in the care of seriously ill Veterans, regardless of their position description or job responsibilities. Accountability begins with being sensitive to the needs of seriously ill Veterans and knowing how to advocate for them in any setting. In addition, VA has established standards and performance measures that help track and evaluate the quality of palliative care provided across care settings. VA's Bereaved Family Survey measures how satisfied families are with the care their loved ones received in VA facilities before they died. The Joint Commission now includes hospital standards for care at the end of life.

What can VA staff learn from attending this orientation?

At the conclusion of the orientation, participants will be able to:

- List 3 facts about Veteran demographics including death rates among Veterans
- Define "Veteran-Centered Care"
- Differentiate between palliative care and hospice
- Describe their role in addressing the psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs of Veterans to:
 - Promote dignity and respect wishes as reflected through self-determined goals of care
 - Advocate for safe and comfortable living
 - Respond with empathy to support effective grieving

What are The Joint Commission hospital standard and elements of performance for end of life care?

- Provision of Care, Treatment and Services (PC) Standard PC.02.02.13: *Patients who are near or at the end of their lives need to receive care that addresses their psychosocial, emotional and spiritual needs. To provide care that meets these needs, staff involved in patient care require education about the unique needs of dying patients and their families.*
- Elements of Performance:
 - Performance Element #1: *To the extent possible the hospital provides care and services that accommodate the patient's and his or her family's comfort, dignity, psychosocial, emotional and spiritual end of life needs.*
 - Performance Element #2: *The hospital provides staff with education about the unique needs of dying patients and their families.*