

HOSPICE MYTHS AND THEIR REALITY
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A few weekends ago I had the opportunity to meet with a wonderful group of people and share with them information on Hoosier Uplands Home Health & Hospice. After I left this meeting I came up with the idea of doing an article on, "Hospice Myths and Their Reality."

Below you will find some hospice myths, along with the correct Hospice information listed below it. Hopefully, after reading these myths, everyone will have a better understanding of Hospice.

Hospice Myths & Their Reality:

- #1- If I sign up for Hospice I cannot get pain medication, since this is a treatment and I cannot be actively seeking treatment.**

Hospice patients must be willing to accept that they are terminal and that further treatments will not prolong their life. Treatment in this sense does not refer to pain medications. Symptom control is one of hospices goals and pain management is a definite part of symptom control.

- #2- If I sign on for Hospice and I live longer than 6 months, I will be automatically discharged from Hospice.**

Some hospice patients do live longer than 6 months and remain on hospice until their death. Your hospice nurse will chart your health status and as long as you continue to show a decline in health status, you are eligible for hospice services.

- #3- If I am a physician and I order Hospice for a patient and they live longer than 6 months, I will be in trouble for fraud.**

All that a physician is stating when they give a patient a prognosis of 6 months or less is that if the patients disease progresses as expected then the patient will live 6 months or less. Therefore, we do have some patients that live longer than 6 months.

- #4- If I am in a Skilled Nursing Facility/Nursing Home I am not eligible for Hospice.** Skilled Nursing Facilities/Nursing Homes may have contracts with various hospices. If the Skilled Nursing Facility/Nursing Home has a contract with a hospice you are eligible to receive the same services you would receive in your residential setting.

- #5- If I am on Hospice I can't go see the doctor anymore.**

Hospice encourages patients to continue to see their physicians. If it comes to a point where you can no longer leave your home and go to the physicians office, your physician is kept updated by your hospice nurse. Physicians are very much a part of our hospice team.

- #6- If I am on Hospice my family will be left out of my care and Hospice will take that**

over 100%.

Although hospice is a part of your care, it is not meant to take the place of your family and other support systems you have in place. Hospice encourages your family to be as active part of your care, as they are comfortable with.

#7- If I sign up for Hospice I will die quicker.

Hospice acts in no way to hasten a persons death. Hospices goal is to have a person die with dignity and with their symptoms under control.

#8- If I sign up for Hospice I will be confined to my home.

Hospice encourages their patients to live as active a life as they are able to. There is no requirement for a hospice patient to be homebound to receive services.

#9- After I pass away, if I am on Hospice, my families care ceases the day I pass away. Hospice will provide bereavement care for your family for at least 1 year after the time of your death.