



Hospice & Palliative Care Association of NYS

24 Computer Drive W., Suite 104

Albany, NY 12205

Ph: 518-446-1483 ■ Fax: 518-446-1484

www.hpcanys.org

HPCANYS Issue Brief

Access to Palliative Care for all New Yorkers

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Palliative Care is specialized medical care for people with serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment. Palliative Care provides an added layer of support for patients and their families during a stressful time.

Research has shown that palliative care improves patient outcomes, increases the likelihood of completion of cancer treatments, improves patient satisfaction with care, and bends the cost curve by decreasing unnecessary futile care. In New York, however, there are only a limited number of palliative care programs – whether in the hospital or post-acute care – thus patient access to palliative care is also limited. This limited access can be at least partially attributed to the lack of payment available for the team of specialized clinicians who provide palliative care. Currently the only team member paid for this service is the physician.

New York State has received a “B” grade by the Center for the Advancement of Palliative Care for the availability of hospital based palliative care programs, but we have only 34 post-acute care palliative care programs for the entire state.

OUR ASK:

1. Conform the definition of palliative care throughout New York statutes.
2. Create and fund a study to create a palliative care benefit and payment structure for Medicaid recipients and commercial customers.

For more information, please contact

Carla Braveman HPCANYS cbraveman@hpcanys.org 518-446-1483	JoAnn Smith Rivera Law jsmith@rivera.legal (518) 533-2884	Sandra Rivera, Esq. Rivera Law srivera@rivera.legal (518) 533-2884
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