**What is Palliative Care?**

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It focuses on providing patients with relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of a serious illness—whatever the diagnosis. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a 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 can be provided along with curative treatment.

**Palliative care improves health care quality in three significant ways:**

- Relieves physical and emotional suffering
- Strengthens patient-family-physician communication and decision making
- Ensures well-coordinated care across health care settings

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