

## Questions you might want to ask about Hospice

**Question # 1** When should a decision about entering a hospice program be made and who should make it?

At any time during a life-limiting illness, it's appropriate to discuss all of a patient's care options, including hospice. **By law the decision belongs to the patient.**

Most hospices accept patients who have a life-expectancy of six months or less and who are referred by their personal physician.

**Question # 2** Should I wait for our physician to raise the possibility of hospice, or should I raise it first?

The patient and family should feel free to discuss hospice care at any time with their physician, other health care professionals, clergy or friends.

Note: Anyone can make a referral which only starts the process but the patient makes the decision

**Question # 3** Can a hospice patient who shows signs of recovery be returned to regular medical treatment?

**Certainly.** If the patient's condition improves and the disease seems to be in remission, patients can be discharged from hospice and return to aggressive therapy or go on about their daily life.

**Question # 4** Does hospice do anything to make death come sooner?

There is apparently a lot of suspicion usually based on lack of information or assumption so let me clarify this for you.

Hospice neither hastens nor postpones dying. Just as doctors and midwives lend support and expertise during the time of child birth, hospice provides its presence and specialized knowledge during the dying process.

**Question # 5** Is hospice affiliated with any religious organization? In other words do I have to be religious to enroll in the program

No, that is not true. While some churches and religious groups have started hospices, hospice serves a broad community and **does not require patients to adhere to any particular set of beliefs.**

For further assistance ask your family physician about Hospice.

To make a referral to help your loved one because you care

call

Caring Community Hospice of Cortland 607.753.9105