



*Walking you through  
how to identify if you or  
a loved one qualify for  
end-of-life care.*

*Fellows Riverside Gardens*

## HOSPICE ELIGIBILITY REFERENCE GUIDE

**Alzheimer's/Dementia** (*Signs from sections 1 and 2 must be present; 3 will show additional support*)

1. Must show signs of each of the following:
  - Unable to ambulate, dress and bathe without assistance
  - Urinary and fecal incontinence, whether intermittent or constant
2. Must be stage 7A or beyond on FAST scale (cannot skip stages):
  - 7A – Ability to speak is limited to 1 and 5 words a day
  - 7B – Intelligible (understandable by listener) vocabulary is lost
  - 7C – Ambulatory ability is lost
  - 7D – Cannot sit up without assistance: patient will fall over if there are no arm rests on chair
  - 7E – Loss of ability to smile
  - 7F – Loss of ability to hold head up independently
3. Secondary conditions contribute to functional impairment, including: aspiration pneumonia, pyelonephritis or other upper urinary tract infection, septicemia, decubitus ulcers, fever recurrent after antibiotics, inability to maintain sufficient fluid and calorie intake with a loss of 10% or more total body weight during the previous 6 months or serum albumin <2.5gm/dL

**Heart Disease** (*1 and 2 must be present*)

1. Significant symptoms of recurrent congestive heart failure at rest, classified as NYHA Class IV and/or ejection fraction less than 20%
2. Optimal treatment with diuretics and vasodilators or angina pectoris at rest, resistant to standard nitrate therapy and is not a candidate or declines invasive procedures
3. Secondary conditions including delirium, pneumonia, stasis ulcers and pressure ulcers are present

**Renal Disease** (*Either 1 or 2 must be present*)

1. The patient is not seeking dialysis or renal transplant
2. Discontinuing dialysis
3. Experiences nausea/vomiting, pruritis, restlessness, oliguria, edema, abnormal labs such as hyperkalemia, creatinine clearance of less than 10 cc/min (15 for diabetics), serum creatinine more than 6 gm/dL (8 for diabetics), documented weight loss of 10% or more of total body weight or decrease in mid-upper arm circumference or serum albumin less than 2.5 gm/dL

**Liver Disease** (*1 and 2 must be present*) *Patients will be considered to be in terminal stage liver disease with a life expectancy of 6 months or less.*

1. The patient shows:
  - Prothrombin time prolonged more than 5 seconds over control, or International Normalized Ratio of more than 1.5
  - Serum albumin more than 2.5 gm/dL
2. End-stage liver disease is present and the patient shows at least one of the following:
  - Ascites, refractory to treatment or patient is non-compliant
  - Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis
  - Hepatorenal syndrome and urine sodium concentration
  - Hepatic encephalopathy, refractory to treatment or the patient is non-compliant
  - Recurrent variceal bleeding, despite intensive therapy
3. Documentation of the following will support eligibility for hospice:
  - Progressive malnutrition
  - Muscle wasting with reduced strength and endurance
  - Continued active alcoholism of more than 80 gm ethanol/day
  - Hepatocellular carcinoma
  - Hepatitis B positivity
  - Hepatitis C refractory to interferon treatment

*Patients waiting for a liver transplant who otherwise fit the above criteria may be certified for the Medicare hospice benefit, but if a donor organ is produced, the patient must be discharged from hospice.*

#### **Pulmonary Disease (1 and 2 must be present)**

1. Disabling dyspnea at rest resulting in decreased functional capacity, little or no response to bronchodilators (may be documented by FEV1 post bronchodilators <30%)
2. Progression documented by increasing ER visits, physician office visits or hospitalizations for pulmonary infections and/or respiratory failure, use of antibiotics
3. Hypoxemia at rest on room air oxygen saturation less than 88%
4. Hypercapnia with carbon dioxide more or equal than 50%

#### **Stroke and Coma – Chronic phase patients (1 and 2 must be present)**

1. Poor functional status with a Karnofsky score less than or equal to 40
2. Poor nutritional status evidenced by weight loss of more than 10% over the last 6 months, or 7.5% or more in the last 3 months, or serum albumin less than 2.5 gm/dL
3. Secondary conditions may include dysphagia, pneumonia and pressure ulcers

#### **Cancer (1 and 2 must be present)**

1. Disease with metastases at presentation
2. Progression from an earlier stage of disease to metastatic disease with either
  - A continued decline in spite of therapy or
  - Patient declines further disease-directed therapy
3. Supporting signs/symptoms including unmanageable pain, documented weight loss or decrease in mid-upper arm circumference