

# Comparing Palliative Care and End-of-Life Care

It is normal for individuals to be concerned when they hear the term palliative care. The term is often confused with imminent death or end-of-life care. When palliative care is provided early it offers extra support while medical treatments continue. Some patients may even be discharged from palliative care once good symptom management is achieved.

Palliative Care	End-of-Life Care
<b>Who is it for?</b>	
Patients and families living with a life-limiting illness.	Patients and families who are in their last days to weeks of life.
<b>What is the focus?</b>	
Helping patients and families have the best quality of life possible so they can live a settled and peaceful life.	Comfort is the focus of care for patients and families to have the best possible quality of life as death approaches.
<b>What do care teams do?</b>	
<p>Prevent and treat distressing symptoms.</p> <p>Coordinate in-home care support services such as help with personal care, equipment.</p> <p>Help you talk with your family about your illness and what's important to you and wishes for future healthcare.</p>	<p>Prevent and treat distressing symptoms.</p> <p>Help determine the best services and location of care.</p> <p>Support you and your family so you can focus on what's most important at this time.</p>
<b>Where are the services offered?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your home</li> <li>• hospital</li> <li>• hospice or a long-term care center</li> <li>• assisted living facility or group home</li> </ul>	
<b>Who is on the team?</b>	
<p>A palliative and end-of-life care team may have a variety of members depending on what you and your family need. Doctors, nurses, personal care aids, social workers, emergency medical service (EMS) practitioners, recreational and occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dieticians, volunteers and spiritual health consultants are possible team members.</p>	

## Example of someone who could benefit from receiving palliative care:

*Jim has lived with multiple sclerosis for 15 years and was recently admitted for recurring skin breakdown and a serious bladder infection. These problems seem to be more frequent and more severe.*

*While in the hospital, Jim was referred to the Palliative Care Consult Service that provided suggestions to treat and prevent his distressing symptoms. These suggestions were followed while Jim was in the hospital and after he was discharged home.*

## Example of someone best suited for end-of-life care:

*Alice's health has deteriorated over the last 4 months and the healthcare team has told her that signs show she is approaching a time closer to death.*

*Alice was able to receive end-of-life services and support in her home.*

## To learn more about palliative care:

[myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care](https://myhealth.alberta.ca/palliative-care)

## To learn more about Calgary Zone palliative services:

[ahs.ca/palliativecalgary](https://ahs.ca/palliativecalgary)

Albertans have a variety of choices when it comes to end-of-life care. Calgary Zone PEOLC information focuses on palliative and end-of-life care. Medical assistance in dying (MAID) is a separate healthcare option that is also available to Albertans at the end of life. Albertans that are thinking about or planning for medical assistance in dying can still receive palliative and end of-life-care if they choose. If you are looking for information on MAID visit [www.ahs.ca/maid](https://www.ahs.ca/maid) which includes information on how to reach the MAID care team.