

Debunking Common Hospice Misconceptions

Separating Fact from Fiction

- ✗ Talking about hospice means admitting defeat in patient care.
- ✓ Introducing hospice is a shift from curative to palliative care, focusing on comfort and quality of life. It's a continuation of care, not an admission of defeat.

- ✗ Hospice care may expose providers to legal and ethical issues.
- ✓ Properly administered hospice care is in line with established medical, legal, and ethical standards. It prioritizes patient autonomy, informed consent, and symptom management.

- ✗ Hospice care is a one-size-fits-all approach.
- ✓ Hospice care is tailored to individual patient needs, taking into account their specific illness, symptoms, & wishes.

- ✗ Recommending hospice may upset patients and families, harming the provider-patient relationship.
- ✓ While the conversation is sensitive, many patients and families appreciate open and honest discussions about end-of-life options. Providers can offer guidance, ensuring that patients receive appropriate care aligned with their wishes.

- ✗ Providers will lose contact with their patients once they refer to hospice.
- ✓ A collaboration between the referring provider and the hospice team is essential. Regular updates and consultations ensure cohesive patient care.

- ✗ The healthcare provider's role ends once a patient is on hospice.
- ✓ Healthcare providers play a continuous role, collaborating with the hospice team & assisting in care decisions based on their knowledge of the patient's history and needs.

- ✗ Hospice referrals indicate to peers that the healthcare provider has given up or failed.
- ✓ Hospice is an essential part of the continuum of care. Recognizing when it's appropriate demonstrates a provider's commitment to holistic patient well-being.

- ✗ Only oncologists should refer patients to hospice.
- ✓ Any healthcare provider, from primary care physicians to specialists, can identify patients who might benefit from hospice and initiate a discussion.

- ✗ Hospice care requires stopping all medications, which can be against a provider's recommendations.
- ✓ Hospice teams work closely with referring physicians to determine the best medication regimen for the patient's comfort and quality of life.

- ✗ Hospice is a location, not a service.
- ✓ Hospice is a philosophy of care emphasizing comfort and quality of life. It can be provided in various settings, including the patient's home.