

A Guide to
Understanding Supportive Care



1600 Eleventh Street
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301

www.unitedregional.org



A Guide to Understanding Supportive Care

Dealing with the pain and other symptoms that accompany a serious chronic or life-altering illness is difficult. However, special care is now available for patients facing these issues through United Regional's Supportive Care Program.

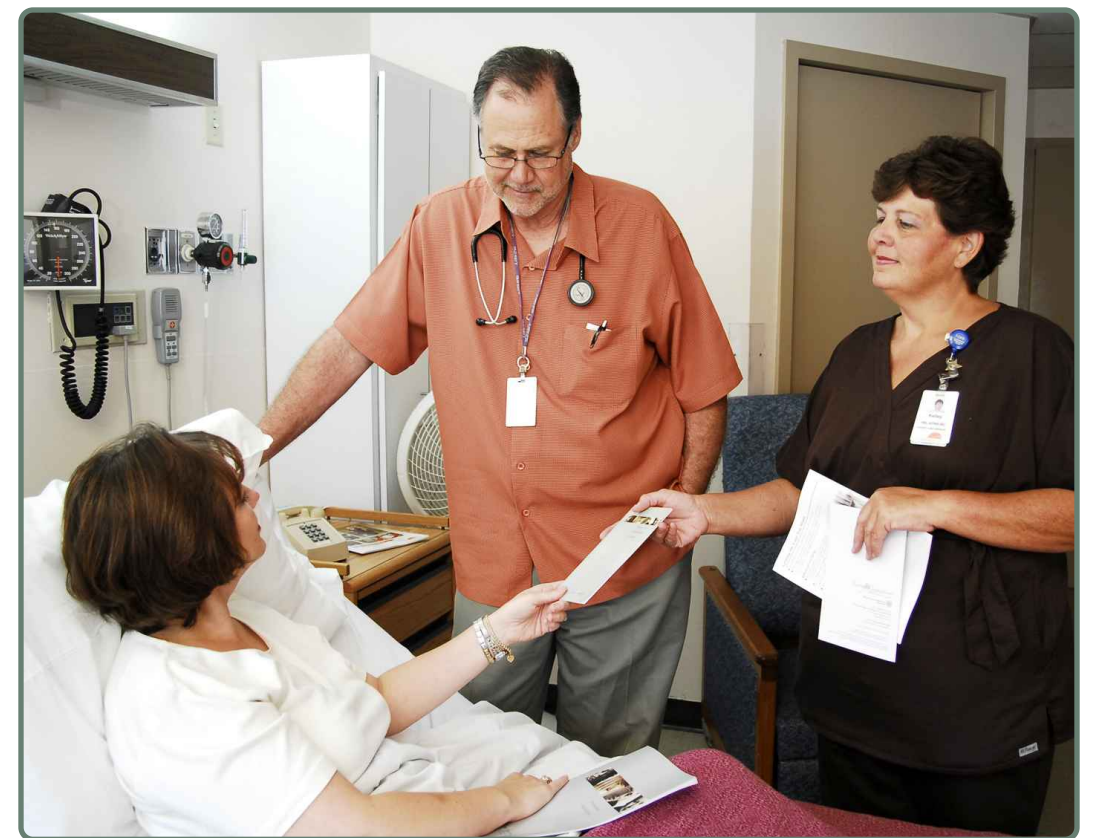
Our hospital-wide Supportive Care Program provides a team approach to "palliative" care - care that focuses on relieving the pain and other symptoms of a serious illness - at the same time the patient is receiving curative treatment.

Palliative care is a central part of treatment for anyone living with a serious chronic or life-threatening illness, although people often think that palliative care is provided only in hospice when an illness is terminal and the patient is in the end stages of life.

For this reason, United Regional is providing an educational guide to help make our community aware of how our Supportive Care Program can benefit patients and their families.

Supportive Care Program at United Regional

Our Supportive Care Program is one of only 66 hospital-based palliative care programs in Texas. Patients who are referred to our Supportive Care Program have chronic, long-term illnesses that require recurrent hospitalizations and ongoing follow-up, such as persons living with cancer, heart disease, lung disease, kidney failure, AIDS, and cystic fibrosis, among others. Although a referral to our Supportive Care Program can be requested at any time, it is best for patients to access the program early in their illness or disease process.



It is best for patients to access the Supportive Care Program early in their illness.



Our Supportive Care Program is different from hospice care.

Although hospice care and our Supportive Care Program both utilize palliative care to relieve pain and improve quality of life, there are distinct differences.

Hospice is a philosophy of caring for the terminally ill and providing guidance and support to their families and loved ones. Hospice focuses on a person's final months of life, when there is no curative treatment for the illness available or the person chooses to no longer receive treatment.

United Regional's Supportive Care Program is available even when a person has been recently diagnosed with a serious or life-altering illness and is receiving treatment meant to cure the illness. Our Supportive Care Program provides comprehensive services to help a person live more comfortably and productively with their chronic illness.

Our Supportive Care Program gives patients a chance to live life more comfortably.

Our Supportive Care Program provides a team approach to palliative care. Patients receive comprehensive treatment for the discomfort, symptoms and stress of the serious chronic or life-altering illness. It does not replace the patient's primary treatment but, rather works with it.

Palliative care provides relief from symptoms including pain, shortness of breath, fatigue, constipation, nausea, loss of appetite, problems with sleep and many others. These symptoms can be caused by the illness or can be the side effects of the medical treatments the patient is receiving.

Our Supportive Care Program also provides patients and families with emotional, psychological and spiritual support throughout the illness and help making treatment decisions.



The Supportive Care Program team specializes in symptom management while the patient is receiving treatment for their disease or illness.

Our Supportive Care Program is provided by a team of specialists.

The Supportive Care Program is delivered by a team of specialists including:

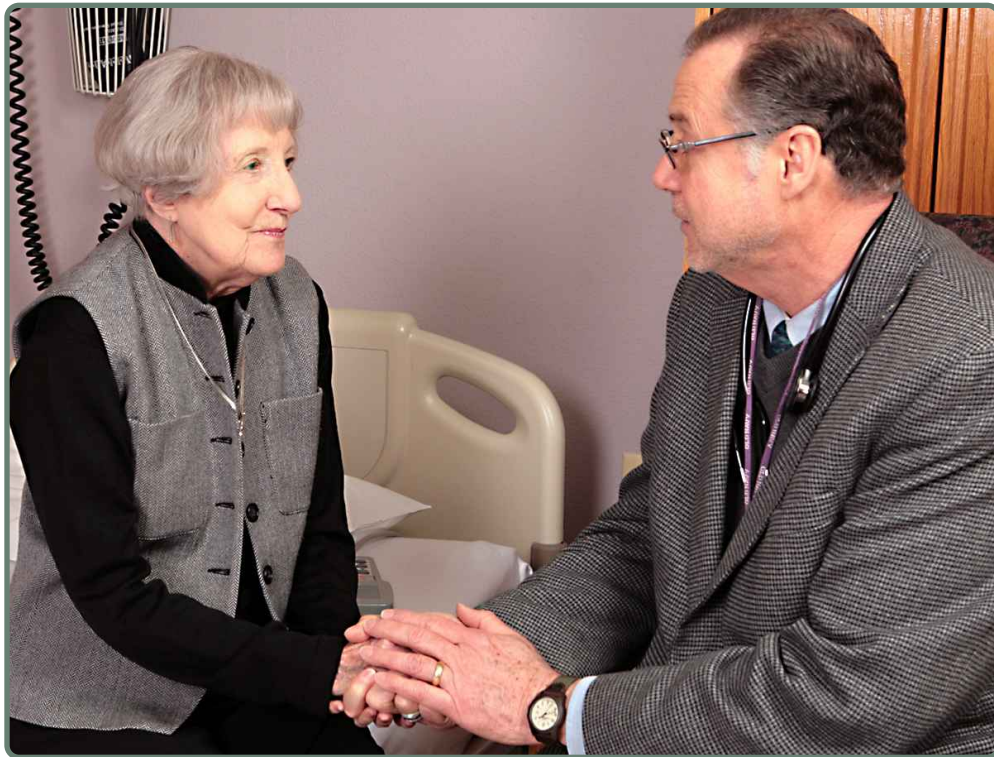
- Physicians
- Nurses
- Social workers
- Pastoral care staff
- Pharmacists
- Nutritionists
- Physical therapists and other clinical staff based on the patient's specific needs

Our Supportive Care Program team serves in a consultative role.

Our Supportive Care Program team members specialize in symptom management to reduce suffering and improve the quality of life while the patient is receiving treatment for the disease or illness. While the patient is hospitalized at United Regional, the Supportive Care Program team works in partnership with the patient's primary care physician, specialists, and nursing staff.

The Supportive Care Program team helps patients when they leave the hospital.

When it is time to leave the hospital, the Supportive Care team will help patients make a successful move to other health care settings or to home. And, they will provide the names of community resources and coordinate ongoing care, if needed.



Insurance pays for the palliative care delivered in our Supportive Care Program.

Most insurance plans cover all or part of palliative care received in the hospital, just as they would other services. Medicare and Medicaid also typically cover palliative care. Patients and family members who have questions about the cost of palliative care should speak with the program's social worker.

Don't wait to get the help you deserve. Ask for our Supportive Care Program and start feeling better now.

If you have uncontrolled pain and other symptoms from a serious chronic illness, tell your physician that you'd like to add our Supportive Care Program specialists to your treatment team. A consultation can be quickly made and you can start feeling better now.

To find out more information about United Regional's Supportive Care Program and speak to a member of the team of specialists,

Please call:

7 6 4 - 4 2 4 8