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## FAMILIES OF LOVED ONES

**Strategies and  
Resources  
for Caregivers**

### ....Coping

## HOSPICE~PROVIDING A BETTER WAY OF LIFE

By Rebecca Sands

A hospice is a method of healthcare that offers assistance to terminally ill patients and their families' during the last stages of life. It is an approach that cares for the total person, addressing the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of patients and their families-- making the last days of life the most fulfilling they can be. Care is provided by an interdisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, social workers, home health aides, dietitians, pastoral care providers, bereavement counselors and trained volunteers.

Some of the services a hospice provides include comprehensive medical and nursing care; pain management and symptom control; a hotline designed to provide support for patients and their caregivers; 24-hour on-call availability of a hospice nurse; medical supplies and equipment related to the terminal illness; assistance with a patients' personal hygiene; nutritional counseling; social work services; physical, occupational and speech therapies; spiritual counseling and bereavement services.

Many hospice organizations also offer a variety of programs that are tailored to a patient's specific needs including: pediatric programs (a program that addresses the needs of children who have been diagnosed with advanced illness); bereavement programs for both adults and children (a program that provides emotional support after the loss of a loved one); perinatal

support programs (a program that is designed to offer support to couples when they learn that their unborn children is diagnosed with a life-limiting illness) and programs that provides assistance to caregivers (a program that provides a variety of services to help patients and their families get through this difficult time).



Hospice Care Network is a member of the North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System. It is one of the largest hospice organizations in New York State and provides all the services listed above. The organization --that is headquartered in Woodbury, NY with locations in Bay Shore, NY and Fresh Meadows, NY-- has been serving individuals with terminal illness in Nassau, Suffolk and Queens Counties since 1988. Ninety-percent of the patients of Hospice Care Network are given in-home care. When symptoms can no longer be treated at home, patients are cared for at The Hospice Inn, the first freestanding hospice care facility in the Long Island region that is located in Melville, NY, or their Hospice and Palliative Care Center located at Franklin Hospital Medical Center in

Valley Stream, NY.

Hospice Care Network, as well as many of the Hospice organizations available, is covered under Medicare and Medicaid and most private insurance plans, HMOs and other managed care organizations.