

VNA Hospice & Palliative Care

Your trusted choice for experienced and compassionate care, wherever you call home.



**VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION
OF CAPE COD**

Member Cape Cod Healthcare





Table of Contents

- 2 Greetings from VNA leadership
- 4 Patient-Centered Care
- 5 Meet Our Care Team
- 6 Frequently Asked Questions
- 11 McCarthy Care Center



Dear Patients, Families and Caregivers

“People were informed about who we were, what we were doing and what our parents’ needs were. Our care team had a consistent nurse, case manager and social worker – we had good continuity and quality service.” — *Family Caregiver*

Welcome to Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care. We understand that considering hospice care is a significant decision, and we are honored to provide you with information about our compassionate services.

At VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care, our mission is centered around enhancing your quality of life and providing unwavering support to both you and your family or caregivers, whether you prefer to receive care in the comfort of your home, assisted living or skilled nursing facility.

Choosing hospice care with us means joining a community of dedicated experts who are here to ensure your comfort and dignity throughout this journey. This experienced

team is comprised of nurses, social workers, home health aides, bereavement counselors, music therapists and volunteers.

Our team is honored to have been nationally recognized as the top hospice service on Cape Cod by Strategic Healthcare Programs and to be rated above the state and national averages for quality of care. Additionally, we have earned a four-star rating by family caregivers according to Medicare.gov, which is one of the highest in our region for hospice care and reinforces our commitment to excellence and the trust our community places in us.

As part of Cape Cod Healthcare, VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care ensures a seamless transition to hospice services, maintaining the high standard of care you have

come to expect from the Cape’s leading health-care provider. With the assistance of Cape Cod Healthcare’s extensive resources, including McCarthy Care Center for short-term inpatient hospice care, we will help you remain comfortable in your chosen setting.

Our hospice and palliative care teams work in tandem with our Public Health & Wellness division, offering additional education and support for those who do not meet the hospice or palliative care requirements - keeping patients and caregivers in the VNA care continuum.

We understand that hospice care is deeply personal and believe that every patient is empowered to actively participate in their care decisions. We are here to support you as trusted guides, providing comfort, compassion and respect every step of the way.

You can learn more about our VNA Hospice & Palliative Care services, as well as how to reach our team with questions at www.capecodhealth.org/vna-hospice.

Warm regards,



Ann-Marie Peckham, RN, MSN, MBA
President, Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod



Holistic Patient-Centered Care

Meet Our Comprehensive Care Team

Empowering Patients

Patients considering hospice care are empowered with the choice to elect their hospice benefit as well as the choice of deciding on a preferred hospice care provider, whether their care will be provided at home or in an assisted living or skilled nursing facility. VNA of Cape Cod Hospice patients are empowered to maintain control over their care services, allowing them to live their final days with dignity and comfort.

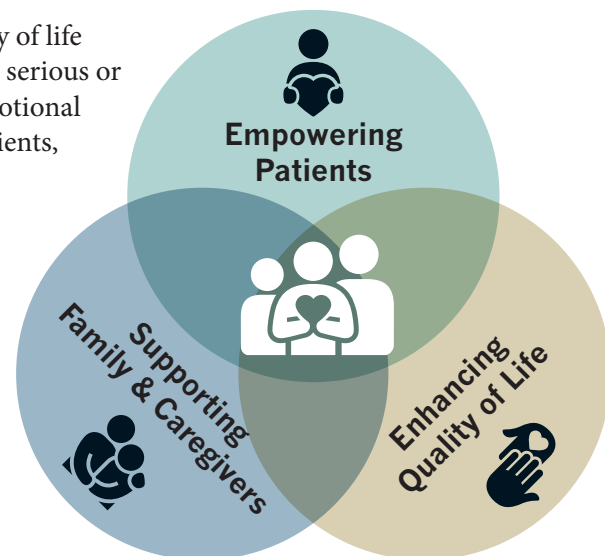
Enhancing Quality of Life

VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care improves the quality of life for patients along the continuum of care, whether experiencing a serious or life-limiting illness. From pain and symptom management to emotional and spiritual support, we provide a holistic care approach for patients, families and caregivers.

Supporting Family and Caregivers

By offering comprehensive support to family members and caregivers, VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care reduces stress and improves the overall experience for those involved in the patient's serious illness or end-of-life care.

Our expert team offers essential guidance, education and emotional support throughout the patient's hospice journey as well as comprehensive bereavement services to adults and children coping with the loss of a loved one.



Primary Care Provider: the hospice team will keep your primary care doctor informed of any changes to your condition and changes in your plan of care.

Medical Director: the hospice medical director oversees the hospice and palliative care plan, working to develop a personalized care approach for each patient.

Nurses: your hospice nurse manages your care in consultation with the hospice medical director and other members of your hospice team. Your nurse will monitor your condition and coordinate all aspects of your care.

Home Health Aides: an aide can assist with personal care, such as bathing, eating, dressing and personal grooming.

Clinical Social Workers: a social worker can help you determine your goals for end-of-life care and may offer emotional support for you and your loved ones, as well as facilitate family meetings to address your care and comfort, helping to resolve any conflicts or stressful situations. A social worker may also provide information on healthcare decision making (Advance Directive and Healthcare

Proxy), as well as referrals to community resources, financial assistance and funeral arrangements.

Physical, Speech & Occupational Therapists: speech, physical and occupational therapists play an important role in palliative care, focusing on enhancing the quality of life for patients with life-limiting illnesses.

Complementary Therapists: certified therapists offer a variety of services to enrich the quality of life for patients, including Reiki, music and pet therapy.

Pastoral Care Providers: pastoral care providers offer spiritual and emotional support to patients and their families during end-of-life care.

Bereavement Counselors: specialized counselors offer options for bereavement support to help family and caregivers cope with the challenges of loss that come with losing a loved one.

Volunteers: a hospice volunteer can visit on a regular basis or as needed. Volunteers have extensive training and offer support services such as companionship, listening, reading, playing music, writing letters, singing and providing bedside vigil.



Frequently Asked Questions

“They knew what we were going to need – from ordering supplies, medications, dressings, a hospital bed and a wheelchair, they took care of everything.” — *Family Caregiver*

HOSPICE CARE

What is hospice care?

Hospice care is designed to provide comfort and support to patients and their families and caregivers when a life-limiting illness is no longer responding to curative treatments. Hospice care shifts the focus to comfort rather than recovery.

This unique form of care strives to provide a person living with a chronic, life-limiting illness or disease, with the quality of life they and their family and loved ones hoped for. It addresses physical well-being as well as the psychological, cultural and spiritual needs of the patient and their family or caregivers.

When medical treatment cannot provide a cure, hospice is a realistic and positive choice because it can support both the patient and family for weeks and months, not just the final days of life. Many patients and their families wish they had chosen

hospice sooner, knowing now the benefits from the specialized services offered.

What can we expect if choosing hospice care?

Those who approach the end of life are often less afraid of death than they are of what may come during the dying process. Hospice care addresses this issue by offering a personalized plan of care based on each individual's status and needs.

This specialized treatment focuses on pain and symptom management and provides critical help and support to both the patient and family to help the patient maintain independence, take control of their illness or disease, complete important tasks, organize personal affairs, complete spiritual services and have a comfortable, dignified and peaceful passing.

In addition to providing care directly, hospice team members serve as teachers, enabling the family or caregivers to support their loved one at home or in an assisted or skilled nursing facility.

Who is eligible for hospice care?

Hospice serves patients with a terminal illness resulting in a life expectancy of six months or less, as determined by the patient's physician. Hospice care is provided regardless of diagnosis, age, gender, nationality, race, creed, sexual orientation, disability or ability to pay. The patient makes the decision to choose hospice in partnership with his or her family physician and the hospice team, after a thorough review of all the care options.

The hospice care team continues to evaluate eligibility for ongoing hospice care, and as long as the person meets the guidelines, hospice can continue to provide services. Since hospice is the choice of a patient, it can be discontinued by the patient at any time, for any reason.

Where does hospice care happen?

Hospice care can be provided at home or in a comfortable home-like environment such as a skilled nursing, assisted or independent living facility. Additionally, patients of the VNA of

Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care have the ability to receive care at McCarthy Care Center for pain and medication management that may be challenging at home. Being in a familiar environment can bring comfort and peace in a time that is often fraught with fear and sorrow. In addition, the compassion, support and understanding of the hospice team can give families the foundation they need to withstand the emotional and physical hardships they are enduring.

What are the benefits of using hospice care?

Patients and families who elect to invoke the hospice care benefit receive:

- Coordination between a patient's primary care provider and the hospice medical director who oversees the plan of care
- Nurses and support staff available around the clock, every day of the year
- Social workers and spiritual care coordinators to care for the emotional and spiritual needs of both patient and family



“I can’t begin to say how kind and caring all of the staff are, not just for mom but for my dad, my brother, and I as well. The level of comfort and love they gave was exceptional and words are nowhere near enough.” — *Family Caregiver*

- Medications, medical supplies and equipment related to a patient’s diagnosis
- Complementary services such as pet therapy and music therapy
- Ongoing grief counseling and bereavement support following the loss of a loved one

How is hospice paid for?

Medicare pays for the full cost of hospice care for those who qualify. Medicaid and many private insurance plans will also cover hospice care; however, benefits vary per policy and verification of benefits is required. People will be granted hospice care regardless of their ability to pay.

PALLIATIVE CARE

What is palliative care?

Palliative care improves the quality of life for those patients with serious illness for whom the end of life is not imminent. Unlike hospice, palliative care provides patients with the ability to continue to pursue curative treatment while also receiving comfort care. Palliative care focuses on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of serious illness.

How does palliative care differ from VNA of Cape Cod Home Health Care?

Our palliative care bridge program is a collaborative effort between the VNA’s Hospice and Home Health Care divisions. We provide symptom management, education, and support during a period when a patient with a serious illness may still be pursuing active treatment or declines to elect the hospice benefit. Palliative care services are also offered through dedicated telehealth support.

How are the services of VNA Public Health & Wellness part of the care continuum?

Our palliative care teams work in tandem with our Home Health Care and Public Health & Wellness teams, offering additional education and support should a patient no longer meet palliative care requirements – keeping patients and caregivers under the continual care of the VNA.

What are the benefits of using palliative care?

Studies have shown that palliative care can have many benefits for both patients and their families. These studies show that those enrolled in palliative care have fewer symptoms, greater emotional support, and increased patient and family satisfaction.

Will insurance cover palliative care?

Most private insurance plans at least partially cover palliative care services. Medicare and Medicaid also typically cover most of these services. Veterans may also be eligible for palliative care through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

PROVIDER COMPARISON QUESTIONS

What does it mean for VNA of Cape Cod to be accredited by the Joint Commission?

Joint Commission Accreditation reflects our organization’s efforts to provide safe, high-quality care for our patients.

Why VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care?

Rated the top hospice service on Cape Cod and earning 100-percent ratings from the Strategic Healthcare Programs’ analysis of 6,000 post-acute services nationwide, VNA of Cape Cod Hospice provides more services, more resources and the reassuring relationships you’ve come to expect from the Cape’s largest health provider. As the region’s local choice, our teams are well-acquainted with nearby medical facilities, community resources and support networks.



McCarthy Care Center

Benefits include:

- **A seamless transition:** a continuation of the high-quality care you already receive through Cape Cod Healthcare
- **Keeping your primary care physician** as part of a chain of support which also includes nurses, social workers, therapists, counselors and home health aides
- **More staff, more support** than any other hospice on Cape Cod for you and your family
- **The full resources of Cape Cod Healthcare:** with the assistance of Cape Cod Healthcare's extensive resources, including McCarthy Care Center for short-term inpatient hospice care, we will help you remain comfortable in your chosen setting.
- **Coordinated care**, with case managers who oversee your individualized care plan

What complementary services are available?

VNA of Cape Cod Hospice & Palliative Care offers unique complementary services to help ease various physical and emotional concerns during care. These include music therapy and a "Telling Our Stories" program in which our patients record their life story for future generations to treasure.

What bereavement services are available?


Our hospice offers a variety of free, supportive and educational services for adults and children coping with the loss of a loved one. These services are open to anyone in the community and include individual or family consultations, telephone support, support groups across the Cape Cod region, workshops and information or referrals to other resources as needed.

A PEACEFUL SPACE OFFERING HOSPICE COMFORT AND SUPPORT

When increased symptoms cannot be managed safely at home, we also provide short-term, acute inpatient care at McCarthy Care Center in Sandwich. This small facility offers private rooms and comfortable common spaces in a peaceful, home-like atmosphere, where family and friends are welcome to visit 24 hours a day. The rooms are set up to accommodate overnight guests if needed and pets are welcome at the facility. The center's skilled care team provides individualized care and emotional support to help hospice patients feel safe, comfortable and valued, with a goal of managing symptoms until a patient is stable. The center was originally named in honor of Mary E. McCarthy, founder of the first hospice on Cape Cod over 30 years ago.

The specially designed center is equipped with the technology of an inpatient hospital unit, arranged in a tranquil and unique setting. All





“From the moment that you walk in the door, the McCarthy Care Center facility is beautiful. The care that they provided to the family was unbelievable. We felt like we weren’t the caregiver there – we were family members.”

— Family Caregiver

patient rooms are spacious and private, with balconies over-looking the surrounding woods. Designed to blend with nature, the light-filled space offers a peaceful environment for a restful stay and includes shared common areas such as the kitchen and dining area. A chapel provides a quiet place for meditation and reflection.

A dedicated interdisciplinary care team provides individualized, round-the-clock skilled care and emotional and spiritual support to help patients feel safe, comfortable, respected and valued.

Patients are candidates for admission to McCarthy Care Center when pain or other symptoms have become difficult to manage at home. Qualifying patients require plan of care changes that need to be monitored by hospice medical staff 24/7 until resolved.

Learn more about our services available at McCarthy Care Center by calling 800-978-0838.



POCKET



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Learn more about our nationally recognized care.

VNA of Cape Cod | www.capecodhealth.org/vna-hospice

The VNA of Cape Cod is accredited by the Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, is Medicare/Medicaid certified and accepts most private insurances.



Meet Our Hospice Leadership Team



Ann-Marie Peckham, RN, MSN, MBA

President, Visiting Nurse Association of Cape Cod

Ann-Marie Peckham has been with the VNA of Cape Cod since 1986 and served as chief clinical officer from 2005 until 2017, when she was named president of the organization. During her time at the VNA, she has worked in various capacities, including director of operations, branch manager, nursing rehab manager, home health supervisor, and Falmouth Hospital liaison.

Ms. Peckham holds an MBA in healthcare administration from Western New England College, and a master's degree in nursing from the University of Massachusetts – Boston.



Jorge Alfonso, MD

Internal Medicine | Hospice Medical Director

Dr. Jorge Alfonso earned his medical degree at New York Medical College, Valhalla, New York and completed his residency in internal medicine at Stamford Hospital, Stamford, Connecticut. He maintains a board certification from the American Board of Internal Medicine and oversees VNA of Cape Cod Hospice care as the hospice medical director in addition to practicing at Yarmouth Primary Care. Dr. Alfonso has been with Cape Cod Healthcare since 2019 and offers a wealth of knowledge and experience, supporting patients and caregivers as they navigate their hospice care journeys.



Sharon Molinaro, RN, CHPCA

Executive Director of Hospice Operations & McCarthy Care Center

Sharon Molinaro is the executive director of the VNA of Cape Cod Hospice Program. She joined the VNA of Cape Cod Hospice program in 2019 and helped facilitate the reopening of the McCarthy Care Center for inpatient hospice services as part of the Cape Cod Healthcare system. As a member of the leadership team at the VNA, Sharon uses her expertise in organizational leadership, creativity and hospice care to guide the interdisciplinary hospice team to provide the highest-quality hospice services for those experiencing serious illness and the families who love them on Cape Cod, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Sharon is originally from Ohio where she grew up and raised her four children. Sharon attended the University of Cincinnati and The Ohio State University where she graduated with degrees in both education and nursing.



Catherine Brand, RN, MSN

Executive Director, Clinical Strategy & Operational Management

Cate Brand, RN, MSN, is a dedicated health care professional who has been an integral part of the Visiting Nurse Association since 2015. Currently serving as the executive director of clinical strategy and operational integration, Cate is passionate about her work and the mission of the VNA. Throughout her career at the VNA, Cate has been instrumental in implementing significant initiatives, including two electronic health record systems, a palliative care program, and a telehealth program. Her experience spans various roles, including field nurse, clinical manager, education specialist, and now as an executive with primary oversight of the reimbursement department.



Meg Payne, MBA

Director, Public Health, Provider Relations & Telehealth

Meg Payne started with the VNA of Cape Cod in 2015 as the public health & wellness program coordinator. Meg's position evolved along with the public health landscape and in 2019, she became director of public health and provider relations, also encompassing our telehealth program. Ms. Payne holds an MBA with a concentration in health care from Cambridge College.



Advance Care Planning

Advanced care planning allows individuals to document their preferences for medical care and end-of-life decisions. Having a health care proxy and advanced care plan in place facilitates clear communication between a care team, the patient, and their designated decision-maker. This clarity helps ensure that everyone involved understands the patient's goals and preferences for care.

Completing an Advance Directive (Health Care Proxy)

Advance care planning involves learning about the types of decisions that might need to be made, considering those decisions ahead of time, and letting others know about your preferences, often by putting them into a document known as an advance directive.

An advance directive:

- Is a simple legal document, also known as the Massachusetts Health Care Proxy in this state, that goes into effect only if you are incapacitated and unable to speak for yourself.
- Allows you to appoint your health care agent, someone you know and trust, to make decisions about your medical care when you are unable to communicate. Your agent cannot act for you until your doctor determines, in writing, that you lack the ability to make health care decisions. It will be important to discuss your wishes and values regarding medical treatments and end-of-life care, with the person you intend to be your healthcare agent, as that person will be expected to follow your directives in making decisions on your behalf. If your agent does not have this information, your agent is to make decisions based on his or her assessment of your best interest.
- Is a living document that you can adjust as your situation changes because of new information or a change in your health.

Download a Massachusetts Health Care Proxy form at www.capecodhealth.org/advance-directive or by scanning the below QR code.





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Bereavement Services

VNA of Cape Cod Hospice offers a variety of free, supportive and educational services for adults and children coping with the loss of a loved one. These services are open to anyone in the community and include:

- Individual and family consults
- Telephone support and regular mailings
- Support groups across the Cape
- Workshops
- Community outreach and education
- Information and referrals to other resources

Learn more about our bereavement support groups at www.capecodhealth.org/bereavement-support or by scanning the below QR code:





Complementary Services



Music Therapy

Provided by board-certified music therapists, it provides comfort and joy to patients and families and can help with pain, anxiety and emotional discomfort



“Telling Our Stories” program

Recording our patients’ life stories and providing a recording for future generations to treasure



Pet Therapy (offered at McCarthy Care Center)

Specially-trained dogs help to bring comfort, ease loneliness and boredom and bring back wonderful memories for loved ones



Hospice Care Comparisons

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, the VNA of Cape Cod Hospice cares for patients from Bourne to Provincetown as well as Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard - a service area spanning more than 1,000 square miles.

VNA of Cape Cod is a non-profit institution and accepts most private and commercial insurance plans.

	Medicare Rating	Short-Term, Acute In-Patient Hospice	Joint Commission Certified
VNA of Cape Cod Hospice	★★★★★	✓	✓

To learn more about the nationally recognized care of the VNA of Cape Cod Hospice, and to review how other local hospice agencies compare, visit <https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare>