Inpatient Palliative Care

What is palliative care?
Palliative care focuses on increasing the quality of life for patients with a serious and/or life-threatening illness. Members of the palliative care team work together with all hospital teams to assist patients and their loved ones in making informed healthcare decisions, managing symptoms, and providing physical, emotional, and spiritual support. Our palliative care team includes a physician, a nurse practitioner, a licensed clinical social worker, and a spiritual care counselor.

What does palliative care do?
Patients with a serious illness may be burdened by pain or other symptoms and find themselves facing difficult decisions regarding their treatment. The palliative care team helps patients and families navigate this complex process. Expert symptom management is provided in conjunction with curative interventions to provide the best possible care.

When should a patient be referred to palliative care?
- After repeated hospital admissions due to chronic illness
- If he or she is experiencing declining health or having difficulty recovering from a serious illness
- When the current treatment plan is inconsistent with the patient’s goals, or the patient refuses treatment
- When symptoms or treatments are seriously affecting the patient’s quality of life
- When he or she needs help with complex healthcare decisions for issues such as dialysis, feeding tubes, and other invasive procedures

Who can make a palliative care referral?
Anyone can request a consult via the patient’s physician or by calling the palliative care office.

For questions or more information, please contact the palliative care office, Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm at 1-415-925-7560. After hours, please dial our pager number at 1-415-235-0110.