



Fall 2011

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How Hospice Care Can Help Patients Affected By Medicare's New Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program

BACKGROUND

Intent on reducing the rate of what are considered preventable hospital readmissions for three chronic health conditions, Medicare is rolling out its Hospital Readmissions Reduction Program.

Covering congestive heart failure, pneumonia and acute myocardial infarction, this program will penalize certain hospitals which exceed their Medicare-calculated expected readmission rates. The penalty will take the form of reduced Medicare payments to high-readmission-rate hospitals for all of their Medicare discharges by a factor which increases over several years. It is expected that the list of chronic conditions included in this program will be expanded in the future.

While the penalty phase of this program begins in fiscal year 2013 (which starts October 1, 2012), the previous year's readmission data will be evaluated by The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, meaning that October 1, 2011, is the effective start of data collection.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PATIENTS

Since readmissions for patients with any of the three chronic conditions included in this program may result in financial penalties for hospitals, patients can expect to receive a higher degree of pre-discharge education, planning and preparation as well as post-discharge transitional care and home health care.

While some patients may be able to benefit from such measures, achieving stability and avoiding repeated trips to the emergency room, others may need more direct assistance in order to manage their symptoms and pain. That's where hospice care can make the difference.

Patients with any of the three chronic health conditions under scrutiny who are hospice appropriate can benefit from the palliative care expertise provided by hospice programs.

This hospice expertise can contribute to controlling symptoms and managing pain in patients who are not likely to be readmitted to a hospital for repeated stabilization of a chronic condition. As a result, readmission rates can be reduced, hospitals can be spared both the financial downside of readmitting such patients and the negative impact of turning them away, and those patients can be relieved of the unnecessary discomfort and concern which might lead them to go to the hospital in the first place.



New Beginnings at Crestwood Nursing Center



Specializing in restoring independence, Crestwood Nursing Center is a 65-bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility nestled in the heart of Palatka at 501 South Palm Avenue.

While the Center has deep roots in the region's history, new administrator Jan Powers has ushered in changes to further benefit its residents. "The quality of change has made an impact on the quality of life for our residents," she explains. A shining example of this change is the Center's emphasis on providing not just a place for residents to live, but a home with more personal care. "We are a family here," Powers says, "and we treat our residents as our own family."

Providing a perfect setting for recovery, Crestwood Nursing Center offers mostly semi-private accommodations.

Its newly renovated, spacious, short-term rehabilitation rooms now feature oversized bath and shower areas.

As changes continue, Powers' goals are to promote more community involvement and to provide more amenities for residents, all leading to what she envisions as "country charm and quality care for our country community." Currently planned improvements include a shaded walkway through a landscaped garden and a restored patio area.

"Whatever your needs may be, the caring staff at Crestwood Nursing Center can accommodate them," declares Powers, who invites all to stop by for a personal tour and to meet the warm and friendly staff. Medicare and Medicaid are accepted along with a variety of insurances. You can reach Crestwood Nursing Center at 386.328.1472.

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Just Some of the Many Programs and Services Available at Crestwood Nursing Center

Healthcare Programs

Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapy (5 - 7 days/week)
Personalized Care Planning
Respite Services (caregivers enjoy time away without worry)
Restorative Program (promotes ability of residents to perform their everyday activities of daily living)
Hospice Services

Rehabilitation Services

Regain Functional Skills During Recovery
Maintain Maximum Independence
Assistance for Post-Discharge Arrangements
Individualized Treatment Programs
24-Hour/Day Skilled Nursing Care
Therapeutic Dietary Program

Other Services

Housekeeping/Laundry
In-House Beauty Parlor
Cable Television
Wireless Access
Resident Activities
Much More

Suwannee Team

Having long ago outgrown offices in Branford, Hospice of the Nature Coast's Suwannee Team recently relocated to a larger facility in Lake City, where we have now also opened a Wings Community Education Center.

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We're Growing!

Levy Team



Above: Artist's rendering of our new triple-use facility now under construction along U.S. 19 in Chiefland. When completed in 2012, this 16,100-square-foot structure will house a local regional office location, education center and thrift shoppe with a Herry's Café. Below: (left) Hospice and contractor teams gather at the old tire shop building on our site, setting the stage for demolition (right).



with Anthony Palumbo

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