



## ELIMINATING MEDICAID HOSPICE MAKES NO CENTS FOR FLORIDA

*Florida's advocate for quality End-of-Life care*

Without the Medicaid Hospice Benefit, Florida Will Pay About \$76.9 Million More for Mandatory Medicaid Services in Florida!

- An estimated 75% of what Florida spends on Medicaid hospice is for nursing home room and board. This is for the Medicaid recipient who is a hospice patient and lives in a nursing home.
- If the Medicaid hospice benefit is eliminated, Florida will still be paying for this patient under the mandatory Medicaid nursing home benefit.
- When a Medicaid recipient is a hospice patient in a nursing home, Florida pays 95% of the usual and customary room and board rate (but the hospice generally pays 100% of the usual and customary room and board rate to the nursing home).

***Here is the catch: If Florida eliminates the Medicaid hospice benefit, it will pay 5% more for each such Medicaid patient in a nursing home.***

But the savings from hospice are greater than that. Without hospice, Medicaid patients will access the acute care system and the state will have to pay for patient care – and pay more because that care is provided in settings that are much more expensive than hospice.

- Hospice provides the kind of medical care that is intended to relieve pain and other symptoms that would ordinarily send a terminal patient to the hospital for relief and symptom control. Under hospice, costs associated with expensive emergency room visits are avoided.
- With hospice care, many patients often can stay at home and avoid entering a nursing home – this is an absolute savings to Florida's Medicaid system and a great comfort to the patient and family.
- With hospice care, those patients who do reside in nursing homes have access to medical help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without having to be admitted into the hospital – this is an absolute savings to Florida's Medicaid system and far less traumatic and upsetting for the patient.

The Medicaid hospice benefit is a vital part of Florida's health care system, AND it is a **cost saver**. The needs managed and paid for by hospice cover care that the patient would otherwise get in much more expensive settings.

The cost savings of hospice to Medicaid are well documented around the country:

- ▶ 47 states, including Florida, have the Medicaid hospice benefit
- ▶ This total will increase to 48 as Connecticut will soon adopt the benefit

Florida needs to stay among the 48 states choosing to **SAVE** Medicaid taxpayer dollars through hospice care.

For more information, please contact Cam Fentriss, Florida Hospices and Palliative Care, 850-508-8030.

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## **Contact your Congressperson**

You can direct any and all of your employees, volunteers or friends to go to [www.nhpco.org](http://www.nhpco.org) and click on the CapWiz icon on the right-hand side of the page. At this point, no one needs a password or login to use this tool. Over the next several days, we will be rolling this out to the membership.

Please remember, this is a phased process and CapWiz is a very powerful tool. We need to ease into it.

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