

## Sharing Our Palliative Care Story

**LEAD**  
*the* **WAY**

*Building a People-Centered Health System*



Trinity Health is one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation, serving diverse communities that include more than 30 million people across 22 states. We are building a People-Centered Health System to put the people we serve at the center of every behavior, action and decision. This brings to life our commitment to be a compassionate, transforming and healing presence in our communities. We advocate for public policies that support better health, better care and lower costs to ensure affordable, high quality, people-centered care for all.

### Palliative Care is People-Centered Care

Today more than ever, people are living longer—even decades—with serious illness and chronic diseases. Palliative care is a medical specialty that offers people-centered care to patients with serious illnesses that focuses on quality of life, ensuring relief from pain, symptoms and stress, while addressing the burdens often experienced by the patient's caregivers/family who need support. Palliative care is provided by interdisciplinary teams that address the medical, psychological, spiritual and social needs of patients. It is offered in partnership with the patient's regular care team of clinicians along with traditional medical care and advanced pain management services.

Palliative care supports people with serious illness to live successfully with life-limiting conditions; for example, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or cancer. It is available to patients of any age no matter what the diagnosis or prognosis, and can be delivered alongside curative treatments.

#### Trinity Health Program Highlights

- 78 percent of Trinity Health hospital currently have access to a palliative care program.
- Of those hospitals with access to programs, 5 percent of admissions receive palliative care consultations.
- 91 percent of patients report high satisfaction with palliative care services.
- Patients are consulted within three days of admission; with those consults completed in less than one day.
- 90 percent of uncontrolled pain and symptoms are addressed; and 72 percent have advance care plans and goals of care completed upon consultation.
- Palliative care patients spend two days less in hospital; and have lower readmission rates of 9.6 percent.
- Palliative care provides better care at lower cost, resulting in \$9.8M in savings from FY2013 through FY16.
- 30,000 palliative care education courses have been completed by staff through the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC).
- Host 20 Palliative Care Resident Education programs.
- Pain management competency education is designed to support an Opioid Utilization Reduction Initiative.

Palliative care offers greater opportunities for patients to live well, supports those who would benefit from further education in their own self-care, while offering an additional team of expert medical professionals for patients to enhance quality of life, and experience fewer days in intensive care, the emergency department and hospital readmissions.

Sometimes confused with hospice care, the goal of palliative treatment is to benefit those with complex chronic conditions who expect to live with their illness. As an important part of the palliative care continuum, hospice care serves those entering the terminal or end stage of an illness.

#### Palliative Care: Leadership & Commitment

Trinity Health has been dedicated to advancing the benefits of palliative care across the country for nearly a decade. It is committed to a system-wide palliative care initiative increasing patient access to palliative care services with programs that meet national quality standards and evidence-based research; and that provides better health, better care and lower costs. This work brings to life the call of Pope Francis I, reflecting the need that palliative care be a hallmark of Catholic health care. Trinity Health recognizes palliative care as a national priority, and in February 2017, endorsed a

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[Pew Charitable Trust letter](#) designed to bolster the health care workforce, innovate around models of care, advance research around palliative care, and promote the better use of technology to ensure patient preferences are honored.

The success of the palliative care inpatient programs resulted in a \$1.6M grant toward developing Community-based Palliative Care (CbPC) program models. CbPC creates seamless transitions of care across the continuum; maximizing skill set and services with home-based services partners. Programs implemented in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and New York have resulted in improved patient satisfaction, symptom management, completion of advance care plans, and timely hospice referrals. The commitment to CbPC not only allows patient access to important services right in the community, it also builds partnerships that provides for participation in new reimbursement and contract services opportunities via accountable care organizations (ACOs) that support Medicare Shared Savings Programs (MSSPs). These alignments, which include practice and home care models, are resulting in valuable access to treatment; and expanding Trinity Health's commitment to better health, better care and lower costs for all patients, including those with serious illness.

In partnership with the [Patient Quality of Life Coalition](#) (#PQLC), Trinity Health has partnered to develop a consensus-based agenda aimed at promoting public policy dedicated to improving and expanding access to high-quality palliative care, clinical education and overall awareness.

## Champions for the Chronically Ill: Regional Health Ministries in Action

Trinity Health ministries across the country have been leading the way in providing palliative care programs for nearly 20 years. Ministry highlights include:

- **Holy Cross Health, Silver Spring, Md.** – In 2017, Holy Cross entered a partnership with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as the Community Palliative Care site for the NIH Palliative Medicine Fellowship program.
- **St. Francis Hospital & Medical Center, Hartford, Conn.** – Initiated in 2001, the program has been expanded to include access to care in ambulatory services, the Medical Clinic and in the Womens' Center for gynecological oncology patients. The program provides rotations for geriatric fellows, interns, residents, graduate nurses and licensed clinical social workers.
- **Saint Joseph Mercy Health System, Mich.** – Launched in 2004, the palliative care program now offers inpatient and outpatient services. The program includes a palliative medicine rotation for internal medicine, transitional year, emergency medicine, family medicine residents, and began including a fellowship program in 2018. The team also supports innovative models such as the St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea Board certified RN-led model in collaboration with an attending physician and interdisciplinary team, and a telehealth Palliative Care Program at St. Joseph Mercy Livingston.
- **Mercy Health System, Pa.** – Offering an inpatient program in all three of its hospitals since 2015, Mercy Health System also offers an in-home program through Mercy Choices with a palliative medicine rotation for internal medicine residents since 2017.
- **Mount Carmel Health System, Columbus, Ohio.** – Mount Carmel Health System is one of nine Center to Advance Palliative Care-designated Palliative Care Leadership Centers in the nation. It has educated 185-health system teams providing the opportunity to learn best practice systems and implement expansive palliative care programs. It has received a Four Star Ranking from the "We Honor Veterans" organization; and in 2018, its Hospice and Palliative Care Medical Director was honored with the Distinguished Educator Award, from Ohio State University.
- **St. Mary Medical Center, Langhorne, Pa.** – With inpatient palliative care services since 2005, St. Mary Medical Center participates in the Bucks County Health Improvement Partnership Advance Care Planning Task Force.
- **St. Mary's Health Care System, Athens, Ga.** – In 2018, St. Mary's palliative care program leader was honored with the 2018 Certified Hospice and Palliative Nurse of the Year Award. The program includes in-hospital services, resident education and has plans to expand into the community setting. A member of the Georgia Palliative Care and Quality of Life Advisory Council, St. Mary's has worked to pass legislation providing for a statewide Palliative Care Consumer and Professional Information and Education Program.
- **St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, Pontiac, Mich.** – The hospital launched Mercy Supportive Care in 2000, received the prestigious American Hospital Association Circle of Life Award in 2006. In 2012, it was the first in Michigan and fourth program nationally to be accredited by the Joint Commission for Advanced Palliative Care.

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**Mission:** We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

**Core Values:** Reverence • Commitment to Those Who Are Poor • Justice • Stewardship • Integrity

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