



Palliative Care Program

General Referral Criteria

Reason for referral		What specialist Palliative Care might provide
Patient Characteristics	poor symptom control	-complex symptom management (e.g. dyspnea, dysphagia, sialorrhea, dry mouth, weakness, headache, anxiety) -undesirable side effects from medications, alternate management approaches
	high distress	-assessment of distress etiology and management plan
	desire for death	-assessment and management approach for desire for death/requests for hastened death
	comorbid conditions	-multiple/complex comorbid conditions
Disease characteristics	poor pain control	-uncertain pain mechanism -dose limiting side effects from pain medications
	rapidly progressive disease	-unexpected progression -refractory to usual therapies
	advanced disease	-multiple physical impairments
	unexpected ICU admissions	
Social Circumstances	poor psychosocial supports	-complex psychosocial supports needed
	family/caregiver limitations	-complex psychosocial supports needed -difficult communications
Anticipatory Bereavement	intensely dependent relationships	-psychosocial supports, referral to appropriate services
	family discord	-psychosocial supports, referral to appropriate services
	multiple prior or unresolved losses	-psychosocial supports, referral to appropriate services
	spiritual crisis	-psychosocial supports, referral to appropriate services



Palliative Care Program

General Referral Criteria

Reason for referral		What specialist Palliative Care might provide
Difficult prognosis discussion		-discussion and guidance for patient and family
Advanced care planning	advance care planning, living will, code status	-discussion and guidance for patient and family
Dying	incomplete symptom control, high family/patient distress	-complex symptom management -education regarding death and dying process
Denial of diagnosis		
Code status		-code status not in keeping with expressed values or disease course