



# Physicians

**PHAX**

Feb. 2006

*We are Colorado's first, and  
our nation's second, hospice.  
Exceptional experience and  
compassion set us apart.*

**Inpatient Hospice Facility  
and 24-hour Crisis Care**

**Board-Certified Physicians  
in hospice and palliative  
medicine**

**State-of-the-art, compre-  
hensive continuity-of-care**

**Driven by patient goals  
and choices**

**Community Based**

**Community Focused**

**Community Supported**

## From Cure to Quality of Life *Lengths of Stay... Matter*

Physicians can help their terminally ill patients experience less pain, gain support, and enjoy a higher quality of living at end-of-life by referring to HospiceCare services sooner. From their first day of medical school, physicians are trained to cure, prolong life and focus on combating disease. However, when a Physician waits too long to refer a patient with a life-threatening disease to Hospice... it can have a negative effect on the patient's quality of life, level of pain as well as the preparedness of the patient and family for death.

HospiceCare of Boulder & Broomfield Counties conducted a study of forty-five patient charts to examine the management of pain in our patients with a Length-of-Stay less than seven (7) days. Seventy-eight percent of the patients & families studied reported pain upon admission to HospiceCare.

Although 73% of these patients were already taking an opiate upon admission, 63% of the patients reported their pain as being "not managed" at the time of admission. Fifty percent of the patients had their medications changed at the time of the initial Hospice admission. Interestingly enough, 33% of this 57%... merely needed adjustments in the medications they were already taking at the time of admission to enhance their level of comfort.

Because of the frequency of contact and the regularity of observation that a HospiceCare nurse and clinical team are able to have with a patient, HospiceCare can collaborate with the Primary Physician to help manage a patient's pain, titrate medications and witness changes in condition, first hand. We've also found that a patient and/or family member are much more likely to contact their HospiceCare team rather than their Physician's office with subtle changes in condition.

Pain management is just one of many areas we can help you with in support of your terminally-ill patient. The goal of HospiceCare is to keep a patient as comfortable as possible by relieving discomforting symptoms as well as to support both the patient and family in helping them to understand and manage what is happening at the end-of-life.

With good communication, collaboration and earlier referrals to HospiceCare we can offer a patient hope that they can live with a sense of well being as they shift the focus from cure... to quality of life... in the time that remains.



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