



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Health Administration
Washington DC 20420**

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UNDER SECRETARY FOR HEALTH'S INFORMATION LETTER

**HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE CARE ARE PART OF THE VA BENEFITS PACKAGE FOR
ENROLLED VETERANS IN STATE VETERANS HOMES**

1. This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Information Letter clarifies that all enrolled Veterans, including those residing in State Veterans Homes, have hospice and palliative care as part of their Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Benefits Package as authorized under title 38 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 17.38(a)(1)(xi)(A). VA is obligated to offer to purchase or provide these services for Veterans residing in State Veterans Homes.
2. For Veterans residing in State Veterans Homes requiring hospice services, the State Veterans Home is considered their place of residence. When hospice services are to be purchased, enrolled Veterans are offered the choice among certified agencies and payers. Payer sources may include Medicare, Medicaid (in states that offer this option), other third-party payers or VA-paid hospice.
3. VA is committed to ensuring reliable access to the continuum of quality hospice and palliative care in all settings. An infrastructure has been established that supports the delivery of these services for Veterans living in the community, including State Veterans Homes. Key components of this infrastructure include:
 - a. Active palliative care teams at every VA inpatient facility;
 - b. A national network of Hospice-Veteran Partnerships to ensure access to quality hospice care for Veterans in all settings;
 - c. Veteran-specific palliative and end-of-life care training for VA and community providers, including ongoing collaboration with State Veterans Homes' leadership to build palliative care expertise among all staff caring for seriously ill Veterans; and
 - d. Implementation of Veteran-specific outcome measures to drive quality initiatives.
4. Inquiries may be directed to Chris Cody, Management Analyst, Office of Geriatrics and Extended Care, at (202) 461-6956.

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Under Secretary for Health

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