

The Pediatric Palliative Care Program

SUPPORTIVE CARE FOR CHILDREN LIVING WITH SERIOUS ILLNESS

About the Program ~ Each year many Vermont families learn their child has a serious life threatening illness. To better support these families, Vermont Medicaid has created a special program for medically eligible children and adolescents up to the age of 21.

What is palliative care? Palliative care provides an added layer of support for children and adolescents living with serious illness. It helps make sure that your goals as a family are at the heart of your child's care. Palliative care can help to ease pain and other upsetting symptoms from a condition or treatment at any age and any stage of illness, and can be offered along with other treatments your child is receiving.

Palliative care can help your child feel better and assist with challenges such as:

- ✓ Pain
- ✓ Nausea
- ✓ Sleeping problems or fatigue
- ✓ Loss of appetite
- ✓ Depression, fear, or anxiety
- ✓ Decision making
- ✓ Managing your child's healthcare
- ✓ Planning for the future
- ✓ Sibling and family support
- ✓ Caring for your child at home

Who is eligible for the Pediatric Palliative Care Program (PPCP)? Children and adolescents eligible for the program are less than 21 years old, have Vermont Medicaid, and are living with a serious life threatening illness from which their life expectancy is unknown.

What services does the PPCP provide?

***Care Coordination.** Coordination of care by a home health palliative care nurse who will help you navigate all the providers and services involved in your child's care.

***Family/Caregiver Training.** Support by an experienced nurse so you feel comfortable and confident providing the best care possible for your child.

***Expressive Therapy.** Play, Music or Art therapy for your child in the home by a certified therapist or visits by a child life specialist to support your child through their experience.

***Family Grief Support.** Support for families to cope with their child's illness and bereavement support if needed.

***Skilled Respite Care.** Short-term relief for parents by a skilled nursing professional so caregivers can have a break.

How do I sign up for the PPCP? Ask your child's primary care provider to complete a PPCP Referral Form. If your child is eligible, the Nurse Case Manager from the PPCP will contact you to schedule a visit and determine which services best fit your needs.

Who provides the PPCP services? PPCP services are provided by local Home Health Agencies that have undergone special training in caring for children with palliative care needs and their families.

For questions, please call the PPCP Nurse Case Manager at (802) 865-1329.