

PALLIATIVE CARE

Policy Number: CP-IFP21-010A

Effective Date: 10/1/2021

Palliative care focuses on symptom relief, pain management and managing a chronic or life limiting condition. It does not limit ongoing diagnostic, preventive, or curative interventions. Palliative care is not the same as Hospice services. Members do not have to be homebound or discontinue treatment to receive Palliative Care services.

DISCLAIMER

Coverage Policies are developed to assist in identifying coverage for UCare benefits under UCare’s health plans. They are intended to serve only as a general reference regarding UCare’s administration of health benefits and are not intended to address all issues related to coverage for health services provided to UCare members.

These services may or may not be covered by all UCare products (refer to product section of individual coverage policy for product-specific detail). Providers are encouraged to have their UCare patient refer to their UCare plan documents (Evidence of Coverage/Member Handbook/Member Contract) for specific coverage information. If there is a conflict between a coverage policy and the UCare plan documents, the UCare plan documents prevail.

Coverage Policies do not constitute medical advice. Providers are responsible for submission of accurate and compliant claims.

PRODUCT SUMMARY

This coverage policy applies to the following UCare products:

| UCARE PRODUCT | APPLIES TO |
|--|------------|
| Individual and Family Plans (IFP), IFP with M Health Fairview | ✓ |
| UCare Medicare Plans, UCare Medicare with M Health Fairview and North Memorial, UCare Advocate (I-SNP), EssentiaCare | |
| Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO) | |
| UCare Prepaid Medical Assistance (PMAP), MNCare | |
| Connect | |
| Connect +Medicare | |
| MSC + | |

Benefit Category: HOME HEALTH SERVICES**Definitions:**

Palliative care is specialized medical care for members living with a serious illness or life-limiting condition. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the member and their family, providing essential support at any age or stage of serious illness or condition, often together with curative treatment.

Palliative care:

- Addresses physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual needs to facilitate patient autonomy, access to information, and choice.
- Focuses on the relief of pain and suffering for members living with a serious illness or condition.
 - Examples of serious illnesses may include, but are not limited to cancer, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, Alzheimer's, HIV/AIDS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's.
- Uses team-based approach, providing essential support at any age or stage of serious illness or condition, often together with curative treatment.
- Helps match treatment options and choices to individual patients
- Focuses on patient's goals

Palliative Care interdisciplinary team may include the following types of healthcare providers:

- Palliative care physicians
- Nurses/Nurse Practitioners
- Social workers
- Pharmacists
- Mental health providers

Elements of palliative care may include:

- Partnering with primary or specialty healthcare provider
- Guidance regarding treatment options
- Assistance with advance care planning
- Caregiver support
- Patient and caregiver education
- Spiritual counseling
- Connecting with community resources

Coverage Policy

Covered services

The Palliative Care Team completes a review of systems and documents a comprehensive pain and symptom assessment. Elements of the assessment generally includes:

- Diagnosis
- Presenting problems
- Current treatments and medication profile
- Current pain management regimen
- Patient concerns
- Patient/family preferences
- Spiritual, cultural beliefs and values that influence treatments
- Pain assessment upon time of initial assessment, and at regularly prescribed intervals after initiation of pain and symptom treatment plan.

The comprehensive pain and symptom management treatment plan includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Education of patient and family about disease process, pain, and symptom management.
- Provides instructions to the patient/family on any self-care procedures.
- Ongoing monitoring of the treatment plan and reassessment.
- Ongoing assessment of patient response that includes:
 - Response to medications
 - Pain relief measured on a consistently utilized pain scale
 - Side effects
 - Adverse events/ reactions
 - Patient and/or caregivers
 - Satisfaction with interventions
 - Palliative team modifies the plan based on ongoing assessment and patient response.

Services not covered

- Direct care services (*see applicable benefit section for Inpatient Hospital Services, Laboratory Services, Outpatient Facility, Home Health Services, Durable Medical Equipment, Prescription Drugs etc. related to treatment and other care support needs*)
- Financial and legal counseling services
- Housekeeping and meal services in the member's home
- Custodial care services

| CPT/ HCPCS Codes <i>This list may not be all-inclusive.</i> | | |
|--|-----------------|---|
| CPT®, ICD-10 or HCPCS CODES | MODIFIER | NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION |
| V66.7 | | Encounter for palliative care; Assign as secondary diagnosis when treatment is focused on management of pain and symptoms in a patient with an incurable disease. |
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*CPT is a registered trademark of the American Medical Association.

| Prior Authorization |
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| Prior Authorization may be required for some services recommended in the Palliative Care plan. |

| Related Policies and Documentation | |
|---|------------------------------|
| POLICY NUMBER | POLICY DESCRIPTION |
| DME | Policy number: CP-IFP21-006A |
| Home Health Services | Policy number: CP-IFP20-003A |
| Home Hospice Services | Policy number: CP-IFP20-005A |

| References and Source Documents |
|---|
| 2021 Individual & Family Plan https://home.ucare.org/en-us/member-documents/#!/tab-924202 |
| Center to Advance Palliative Care https://www.capc.org/ |
| JCAHO 2004 Standards and Palliative Care JCAHO-crosswalk |

| Coverage Policy Development and Revision History | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Version | Date | Comment |
| V1 | | New policy |