Checklist for Selecting a Hospice or Palliative Care Provider

Finding a hospice provider near you is usually not difficult. Ask your doctor, hospital discharge planner, home care staff, or nursing home staff for a referral. You may also search a convenient national database of hospice providers by going to www.nhpco.org.

Before you make your choice, here are some questions you should ask.

License and Affiliations

- ❑ Most states license hospice organizations. Is this program fully licensed?
- ❑ Does this agency belong to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization?

Payment

- ❑ Is this hospice program approved to accept the Medicare Hospice Benefit?
- ❑ If the Medicare Hospice Benefit is not available, what services will be charged for? How will fees be set?
- ❑ Many hospice services are covered by Medicare or other insurance. What are the covered services? What help will the hospice program offer in processing claims?
- ❑ If you have limited ability to pay for hospice care, will the provider accept you anyway?

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Services Offered

- ❑ Does this hospice offer 24-hour nursing coverage? If not, what coverage arrangements are available?
- ❑ Will the same hospice staff generally stay with the patient and family throughout the course of care?
- ❑ Does this hospice provide hospital or other inpatient care services? If not, what transfer arrangements will be made, if needed?
- ❑ What bereavement and other family support services does this hospice provide?
- ❑ Does this hospice provide respite care for primary caregivers when needed? If not, is the agency able to help the family arrange for respite care from another source?

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