Hospice Care Services

Licensed to Care for Collier County since 1983

Avow®

Hospice Services
“How can I care for Mom and hold down my job?”

“What do you say to a five-year-old whose daddy has just died?”

“I feel overwhelmed as a caregiver – how will I ever cope?”

“I’m scared! I feel so alone.”

Take a deep breath: Avow is here to help. Living through the end of a life – your own or someone else’s – can be frightening and overwhelming.

But you don’t have to go through it alone. Avow is here to gently and expertly guide you through it.

This brochure describes the care we offer to those who are terminally ill and their families. But if you are hurting, scared or overwhelmed and need help immediately, call our CareLink hotline:

(239) 261-4404
“Hospice 101:”
the basics

• Hospice is for people who are terminally ill and have an estimated lifespan of six months or less. Hospice is for anyone, of any age, who has a life-limiting illness.

• Hospice is not a building, like a hospital. When most people “enter a hospice program,” they receive care in the comfort of their own home – a house, apartment, assisted living or skilled nursing facility, for example.

• Patients on hospice receive more – not less – care and support than they did before joining the program. Hospice patients stop focusing on their disease, going to the doctor and enduring treatments. Instead, they spend their time and energy on the people, pets and activities they love most.

• Each hospice patient and family has a team working together to make life easier and more enjoyable. A patient’s hospice team can include a physician, nurse, hospice aide, social services coordinator, spiritual care coordinator, bereavement specialist and trained volunteers. Some hospices, including Avow, provide complementary therapists specializing in music therapy, Reiki, massage therapy and other treatments.

• Hospice care supplements – but does not replace – the care provided by families, friends, the staff at an adult living facility or other full-time caregivers. Hospice nurses
visit every 14 days or more frequently if the patient’s condition requires it. Members of a hospice team are also available by phone or to make visits to patients’ homes around the clock to answer questions or help with an emergency.

Feel at Home with Avow
There’s nothing like the familiar comfort of home. In whatever way we serve you, our goal is to help you feel safe, understood and respected.

Patients: we promise to care for you wherever you live. If you need to spend time in our Georgeson Hospice House, we pledge to make your experience as homelike as possible.

Families: we promise to teach you how to care lovingly and confidently for someone at home. If your loved one is in our Hospice House, we encourage you to bring favorite foods, photos, bedding, pets or whatever else would make the patient’s stay more homelike.

Caregivers and those who grieve: we promise to help you cope when you feel overwhelmed, panicked, sad, lost or scared. We can help you find a new sense of being at home in the changed life you’re living or facing.

What to expect if you’re our patient
Avow works with you, your physician and your family to develop a care plan. The nurses and physicians at Avow are experts in relieving pain and specialize in comfort care. You can also choose to have your regular doctor continue to
Joining our program is easy: just call us 24/7 on our CareLink hotline at (239) 261-4404 and ask for help.

A nurse will come to talk with you about your goals for care and to evaluate your condition (free of charge). We will then talk with your doctor to coordinate your care and arrange to have medicines, equipment (such as wheelchairs and hospital beds) and other supplies delivered to you as soon as possible.

Our nurse will examine you thoroughly, review your medications and set a schedule for follow-up visits. The nurse will also teach your family or caregiver how to care for you between our visits.

You and your family can choose from the following Avow services.

- **Supplies, equipment and prescription medicines** needed to treat your hospice-related illness, delivered to your home.

- **Spiritual care** by an Avow chaplain and/or your own spiritual leader can be included in your care as you wish.

- **Personal care** by specially trained, very caring hospice aides including bathing, shaving, hair and nail care.

- **Massage therapy, music therapy, Reiki and hand aromatherapy** to relieve your pain and provide comfort.
Companionship visits from trained volunteers who share their time with you and keep you company or give your family members time to get errands done or just take a break.

As you settle into our program, you can add or stop any non-medical service whenever you like.

What to expect if you’re a family member or caregiver

Caregiving can be very rewarding, but it can also be difficult and overwhelming. Avow is here to ease your mind and help you cope. We:

- **Explain what to expect** as the patient transitions through this phase of their life so you aren’t surprised or unnecessarily alarmed by behaviors, sights, sounds or other symptoms.

- **Listen to your concerns and answer your questions.** Call us 24/7 – we’ll immediately connect you with a hospice nurse who can help you through an issue or make an emergency visit.

- **Teach you** how to give medications, change dressings, bathe and position the patient and provide other types of physical care.

- **Talk with you** about how the stress of serious illness can bring out the best and worst in family members.

- **Help you** fill out Medicare/insurance paperwork.

- **Tell you about other community resources** you or the family may need.
• Help you with your grief through individual or group meetings and regular follow-up.

• Support children or grandchildren who are grieving.

• Help you plan a private memorial service if desired.

• Invite your family and friends to an Avow RememberingSM memorial service for your loved one.

**Try us out if you are not sure**
Many people feel better after joining a hospice program. Some decide to leave hospice care for awhile and return when they need to.*

If you’re not sure hospice is the answer for you or someone you love, we invite you to sample our services for a week or two and then decide if you want to continue. The choice is always yours.

* The Medicare Hospice benefit requires certification of terminal illness at the start of each benefit period. If you stop hospice care you may, if eligible, go back to hospice care at any time with appropriate certification.

**Frances Georgeson Hospice House**
Frances Georgeson Hospice House is Avow’s “intensive care unit” for patients who need temporary, focused care to resolve a symptom or control pain.

Georgeson House features 16 homelike patient rooms, four of which can be converted to shared suites. There are also areas for family members to prepare a snack, take a break or do light laundry.
Georgeson House is always open to family members and friends. Leashed and monitored pets are also welcome. Family members are encouraged to stay overnight if they wish and to eat with their family member.

Admission to Georgeson House is by recommendation from the patient’s Avow care team or primary care physician. Most patients stay a few days for intensive care before returning home for ongoing care.

Paying for care
We accept Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance and personal funds for payment of care. We work with patients and families to make the payment process as simple as it can be. Most patients with Medicaid, Medicare or commercial insurance will be responsible for deductibles and/or coinsurance for hospice services, as determined by their insurance carrier. Call our Billing Department at (239) 261-4404 to discuss your payment options and insurance coverage questions and concerns.

Support our mission
Avow accepts all patients, even those who cannot pay for our services. Additionally, for many patients, we must “make up the difference” between what it costs us to provide care and how much we are paid by Medicare, Medicaid or insurance. Donations from our community help us close that financial gap.

There are many ways you can help. Our Development Department can assist you in choosing the option that best meets your giving and tax-planning needs. Call the Development office at (239) 261-4404 for more information.
Why choose Avow?

• Our doctors, nurses, social workers, chaplains and hospice aides have specialized training and most have earned additional certification in end-of-life comfort care.

• Our Frances Georgeson Hospice House is the only dedicated, intensive care hospice unit in Collier County – you don’t have to go to a hospital.

• We are quality certified by The Joint Commission – the Gold Seal of Approval™ in the health care industry.

• 98-100% of our patient families say they would highly recommend our services to others.*

• We consult with our Community Advisory Boards in Naples, Immokalee and Marco Island for their input on our services. We also have a Spiritual Support Advisory Board. We formed these Boards specifically to learn how our community wants and needs us to serve them.

• We vow to care for everyone who needs us, even if they have no ability to pay for our services.

• Our mission: We believe by changing the way people die, we change the way people live.SM

* Avow Family Satisfaction Survey responses, measured quarterly.
Avow was founded in 1983 as Collier County’s original, nonprofit hospice. Today, Avow’s companies care not only for those who are terminally ill, but also for those who have chronic illnesses or who have suffered great loss.

Services provided by Avow companies include:

• Care for the dying and their families, plus community members who are grieving

• Palliative care physician consultations for the chronically and seriously ill

• The PAWS Pet program to support those who have lost a pet

• A “healing, learning and celebrating” space for the community through the Ispiri center on our campus

• Education for the community on topics related to serious illness, caregiving, death and grieving

To find out more about the scope of services provided by Avow’s companies, call our CareLink line at 239-261-4404 or visit www.avowcares.org.
Changing moments, changing lives.℠

Information in this brochure was current at press time. To verify the availability of specific services or to discuss any aspect of our care, call us at (239) 261-4404.

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