

Janice Jenkins is a 49-year-old female diagnosed 6 six weeks ago with a recurrence of breast cancer. She now has liver and bone metastases. Her past medical history includes hypertension, osteoarthritis, and type 2 diabetes, all of which are well controlled with medications. Janice is widowed and has three children, who all live within one hour of her suburban apartment. Her children and grandchildren are all active in her life and visit weekly. Janice is involved in the senior center activities in her community. She has many friends in her neighborhood, as well as the church she attends. Hospice care has been mentioned as an option to Janice by a friend whose husband died while receiving hospice benefits from a local not-for-profit organization. Janice has minimal knowledge and experience with hospice care. She does not fully understand the implications of choosing the hospice benefit, which is offered as an option on her health care plan. Janice has just recently told her family that she is considering hospice care as an option. Her only concern is that she lives alone and is afraid of pain. She states, "I am not afraid to die. It is just how I am going to die that scares me." Janice understands that to be considered for the hospice benefit, two (2) doctors need to diagnose her as terminally ill. Janice understands that the expectancy to be admitted to the hospice program is six months. She wants to live for another year to see her granddaughter get married. She would like the benefits that hospice provides, but she is fearful that this is not the right time to begin hospice care.

The American Cancer Society website, www.cancer.org, has a well-prepared overview of hospice-search the term "hospice." The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association (HPNA) also have websites at www.nhpco.org and www.hpna.org. Review the websites and respond to the following questions.

- 1- Describe the goals of hospice and the services that may be provided by the hospice interdisciplinary team.

Hospice care is designed to enhance the quality of life for individuals facing terminal illness by prioritizing comfort, symptom control, and holistic support. Unlike curative treatments, hospice focuses on alleviating physical pain, managing symptoms like nausea and fatigue, and promoting emotional well-being to ensure patients can maintain dignity and peace throughout their end-of- life journey (National Institute on Aging, 2021). The interdisciplinary hospice team, which includes physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains, counselors, volunteers, and occasionally therapists, collaboratively provides a range of services. These include pain and symptom management, emotional and psychological counseling for both patients and families, and spiritual support to address existential concerns (*Palliative Care vs. Hospice: Which to Choose*, n.d.) Social services assist with practical needs, such as advance care planning and access to community resources, while respite care offers temporary relief to primary caregivers. After the patient's passing, the hospice team also provides bereavement support to help families cope with their loss, offering guidance and counseling through their grief (National Institute on Aging, 2021).

- 2- How can Janice obtain a referral for hospice care that will include an assessment by the hospice admission nurse?

Janice can request a hospice referral by speaking with her primary care provider or oncologist about her interest in hospice care. Her doctor can then provide an assessment and submit a