



# TERMINAL OR END OF LIFE CARE

## PURPOSE

Respectful and responsive care is provided to the dying patient and the patient's family to provide comfort and dignity at end of life.

## POLICY

1. Withdrawal of life support does not prevent provision of optimal care (see Withdrawal or Withholding Life Support and Resolution of Conflict of Care Issues policy).
2. Patients have the right to accept or refuse all treatments (see Patient Rights-Management policy).
3. Do Not Resuscitate does not mean no care.
4. Utilize a holistic approach to ensure interventions for any symptoms are provided or withheld according to the wishes of the patient or the surrogate decision maker.
5. Comfort care will include:
  - a. Managing pain aggressively and effectively.
  - b. Providing sedation if appropriate to patient's condition
6. Sensitively address issues such as autopsy.
7. See Organ and Tissue Donation policy
8. Respect patient's values, religion, culture, and philosophy by involving the patient/family when appropriate in every aspect of care and decision making, responding to the psychological, social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural concerns of the patient and the family.
9. Allow and support patient/family grief practices as much as is safe.
10. Offer to family and/or friends. Bereavement packet
11. Treatment and care are fully explained to the patient and family and documented.



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12. The hospital will demonstrate respect for the following patient needs:
  - a. Confidentiality
  - b. Privacy
  - c. Security
  - d. Resolution of complaints
  - e. Pastoral, counseling
  - f. Communication
13. Staff will initiate a referral to Patient Resources for patient/family as appropriate.
14. Ethics committee members are available for ethical dilemmas. See Ethics: How to call a case review policy.
15. MGHFC respects a patient right to participate in the Death with Dignity Act. See related policy- Death with Dignity
16. Encourage and facilitate Care Conferences when appropriate. See Multidisciplinary Patient Care Conference Policy
17. 17. Angel trays (snacks, coffee, tea) available to order for family/friends if patient is at end of life.

Alternate Search Words: death, dying, terminal, comfort care, no code, comfort measures

### Referenced Documents

Multidisciplinary Patient Care Planning. MGHFC policy. August 15, 2017.

Withdrawal or Withholding Life Support and Resolution of Conflict of Care Decisions. MGHFC policy. March, 2, 2015