As part of a patient-centered approach, palliative care, including hospice, allows patients and their families and friends to make plans that reflect their goals and preferences. Often, palliative care allows seriously ill patients to avoid stressful trips to the hospital and spend more time at home with loved ones.

Palliative care can begin at the start of a serious illness and be given alongside treatments designed to combat the disease. It can be an important component of treatment for long-term progressive conditions like cancer, Parkinson’s disease, kidney disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), and heart disease.

Hospice is a type of palliative care program for people in the final months of life. Like other forms of palliative care, hospice can improve quality of life and be an important source of care and comfort for patients and their families.

Everyone should have access to palliative care. All people with advanced serious illness should have access to skilled palliative care services, including hospice as appropriate, in all settings where they receive care.