

Promoting the Appropriate Use of Palliative Care Services in the Skilled Nursing Center

*Most Americans would like the end of their life to be
marked by loving care at their place of residence.*



Palliative care focuses on relieving suffering and improving quality of life. A team of professionals helps residents and families navigate through the health care system and make health care decisions that are right for them. The goal of this project is to improve quality of life and satisfaction with end-of-life care received by residents of skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) and reduces unnecessary and unwanted acute care transfers.

Many who could benefit from palliative care services are not offered this opportunity and over half of nursing home residents lack advance directives that would assist them at the end of life. When a resident without an advanced directive suffers a worsening of their clinical condition a cascade of care is put into motion and can trigger unwanted emergency room visits and admissions, which can cause other complications. The provision of palliative care services for SNF residents supports person-directed care in a proactive way to honor the patient and their choices.

Alliant Quality, in partnership with SNFs and palliative care organizations, will develop customized education and learning sessions for SNF leaders to better understand palliative care and its beneficial role for the residents whom they are caring for each day. This educational offering will be pilot-tested in central North Carolina and in southeast Georgia with interested SNFs who are interested in this Special Innovation Project offered through the Center for Medicaid & Medicare Services.

Participating SNFs will have the opportunity to:

- Receive free training programs designed to improve their SNF staff competency and knowledge related to end-of-life care
- Join a learning network with experts on palliative care in the SNF setting
- Partner with palliative care providers in order to improve the quality of life of their residents
- Implement low-burden measurement strategies that monitor resident and family satisfaction with end-of-life care
- Improve rates of avoidable acute care transfers and hospital admission and readmission rates

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