



Benton  
Hospice  
Service

## ACHIEVING YOUR END-OF-LIFE GOALS

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Have you thought about what you would want when the end is near? Where would you like to be? Who do you want to be with and who will provide the care that you need? How much pain would you want to tolerate? Do you have the resources you'll need? And what will happen if you can no longer express your own wishes?

There have been several surveys done over the years asking Americans what they do and don't want at the end of life. Over and over again, people say that at the end of their lives, they want to remain at home, free from pain, in control, surrounded by their loved ones. The bad news for many Americans is that death will not meet their expectations. Most Americans do not die at home and often do not have adequate pain control.

Fortunately, there is some good news: hospice care can help many who are at the end of their lives achieve their goals for control, comfort, and choice at home and with their loved ones.

Hospice provides support to those with life-limiting conditions wherever it is they call home--whether it's their home or apartment or an adult foster home, assisted living facility, or nursing home. Hospice supports family caregivers so they can keep their loved one at home and feel confident in the care they provide. Hospice nurses' expertise in pain and symptom control allows a person to be comfortable while balancing pain relief with alertness for the best quality of life possible.

While most people say they are comfortable talking about end-of-life issues, there is still a large majority of people who have yet to fill out an Advance Directive.

Advance Directives are legal documents which allow you to plan for future medical care, particularly in the situation where you are unable to make your decisions known. An Advance Directive allows you to designate a health care representative and give instructions for your care, including hospice, should you become unable to communicate your wishes and decisions.

Your health care representative and your family should have a copy of your Advance Directive, and copies should be kept in your home as well as in your physician's medical record.

An Advance Directive is something everyone should have, regardless of whether or not hospice is involved. An Advance Directive makes your wishes known if you find yourself in a situation where you are unable to do that for yourself. It allows family

members to carry out instructions rather have to make difficult decisions on your behalf.

You can download the Advance Directive for use in Oregon at the Oregon Hospice Association website ([http://www.oregonhospice.org/online\\_store\\_books.htm](http://www.oregonhospice.org/online_store_books.htm)).