

Medicare Hospice Benefit Guidelines can help in determining eligibility for hospice care for people living with advanced dementia. To be eligible for hospice, people with advanced dementia should meet both of the following criteria:

Functional Assessment Staging Tool (FAST): Patient must be at or beyond stage 7c and show all of the features of stages 6a-7c.

- Stage 6a: Cannot dress without assistance
- Stage 6b: Cannot bathe without assistance
- Stage 6c: Cannot toilet without assistance
- Stage 6d: Incontinent of urine occasionally or frequently
- Stage 6e: Incontinent of bowel occasionally or frequently
- Stage 7a: Speech limited to fewer than 6 intelligible words during an average day
- Stage 7b: Speech limited to a single intelligible word during an average day
- Stage 7c: Unable to ambulate independently
- Stage 7d: Cannot sit up independently
- Stage 7e: Cannot smile
- Stage 7f: Cannot hold head up independently

Medical conditions: Patients must have had at least 1 of these listed medical conditions over the prior year.

- Aspiration pneumonia
- Pyelonephritis or other upper urinary tract infection
- Septicemia
- Pressure ulcer, multiple, stage 3-4
- Recurrent fever after treatment with antibiotics
- Eating problems such that fluid or food intake is insufficient to sustain life (or, if tube fed, weight loss 10% over prior 6 months or serum albumin <2.5 g/dL)

This handout accompanies CAPC's course, **Managing Complications in Advanced Dementia**. Visit CAPC's online curriculum, **Best Practices in Dementia Care and Caregiver Support**, for more.