

The NBC medical drama series, *New Amsterdam*, is airing an episode Tuesday, February 11, at 10:00 pm ET entitled, “In the Graveyard.” Unfortunately, the episode perpetuates misconceptions by portraying palliative care as only end-of-life care and conflating palliative care and hospice.

The following talking points are meant to address questions and concerns you may hear from patients, families, referring clinicians, and others in response to the show.

Talking Points to Address the Episode

- You can have a curable serious illness and still need palliative care.
- Palliative care provides relief from the symptoms and stress of a serious illness.
- Palliative care is based on need, not on prognosis.
- The goal of palliative care is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.
- Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness.
- Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses, and other specialists who work together with a patient’s other doctors to provide an extra layer of support.
- Palliative care can be provided along with medications and treatment meant to cure you.
- You can be cured or in remission and still need palliative care to help with the symptoms and side effects of treatment.
- Patients are not referred to as “palliative.”

Evidence-Based Definition of Palliative Care

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. It is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family.

Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses, and other specialists who work together with a patient’s other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in an illness, and it can be provided along with curative treatment. Palliative care is based on need, not prognosis.

Short “Elevator” Definition

Palliative care is specialized medical care focused on the symptoms and stress of a serious illness. The goal is to improve quality of life.

Palliative Care: Do and Don't Say

DO	DON'T
✓ Use CAPC's evidence-based definition and messaging	x Don't define palliative care by how it is not hospice or how it is different from hospice
✓ Say "palliative care is based on need, not prognosis"	x Don't use end-of-life language when describing palliative care (i.e., life-limiting, terminal, end of life, dying, etc.)
✓ Say "living with a serious illness"	x Don't say or write: end of life, death, or dying when defining palliative care or discussing it outside of a clinical interaction

Information for Patients and Families

[GetPalliativeCare.org](https://www.getpalliativecare.org) is a website that helps patients and families understand what palliative care is, if it's right for them, and how to get it. The site includes [podcasts](#) and a blog with real patient stories, a [printable handout](#), and a [Palliative Care Provider Directory](#) with hospital and community-based options.

About the Center to Advance Palliative Care

The Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC) is a national organization dedicated to increasing the availability of quality health care for people living with a serious illness. As the nation's leading resource in its field, CAPC provides health care professionals and organizations with the training, tools, and technical assistance necessary to effectively meet this need. CAPC is part of the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City. [capc.org](https://www.capc.org)