

# Hurricane preparedness for hospice patients and families

## VITAS can help

In the midst of caregiving, it may be hard to find the time to prepare for an emergency. During hurricane season in Florida, VITAS is prepared to help hospice patients and their families stay safe and comfortable before and after the storm.

- Every VITAS patient has a hospice care team. And every team has an emergency plan.
- Our staff helps patients and families plan ahead to make evacuation easier.
- VITAS team members can assist to coordinate transportation and the stocking of medication and other essential supplies.
- With after-hours Telecare support, skilled VITAS hospice clinicians are always available.

**Hospice emergencies don't stop when a storm approaches,  
and neither does VITAS® Healthcare.**



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Healthcare  
SINCE 1980

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# VITAS® Healthcare: Prepared to Care

Hurricanes, Natural Disasters  
and 24/7 Everyday Care.  
VITAS is ready.

In times of crisis and calm, VITAS excels at caring  
by communicating, planning and strategizing.

VITAS is prepared to care every day of every week. In the days and hours leading up to Hurricane Dorian as it took aim at 10,000 hospice patients across 40 Florida counties, VITAS provided our seriously ill patients and their families with unwavering, expert clinical care and resources.



Here's how we did it.

## Emergency Priority Level: Assigned

Upon admission, all patients receive:

- Individualized care plans
- Emergency preparedness education



## At-Risk Patients Prioritized by VITAS Care Teams That:

- Deliver a two-week supply of oxygen and medications to home-based patients
- Relocate at-risk patients in evacuation zones to an inpatient hospice unit or safe location
- Monitor patients by Telecare during the hurricane



## Supplies: Stocked and Positioned

- Extra medical supplies and water at locations out of the hurricane's projected path for immediate post-storm delivery to affected areas



## Two Fuel Trucks: Reserved

- 6,000 gallons ready for generators, employee vehicles



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## Top-to-Bottom Hurricane Planning: Early and Often

- 22 national conference calls over 7 storm days
- 116 invited attendees, C-Suite to local care teams
- Employee/hotline/news updates



## Location-Specific Planning and Prep: 24/7

- Daily meetings at local VITAS offices
- Twice-daily email updates on:
  - Storm tracking, forecasts and prep
  - Safety updates
  - Emergency call trees
  - State/county law enforcement updates
  - Self-care reminders

## Shuttered and Ready: Executed Statewide

- Secure our coastal freestanding IPU
- Install hurricane shutters
- Position generators in at-risk offices



## 24/7 Employee Communications/Support

- Activate Employee Support Line
- Update intranet regularly with news/alerts
- Log 1,893 intranet views of hurricane information
- Deliver 6,367 AlertMedia mobile messages to ensure employee safety
- Answer 1,053 inbound calls to employee hotline

24/7



## Community Support: Honored

- Donate \$10,000 to Love and Hope in Action (Martin County) for storm-impacted homeless/indigent residents
- Collect/ship supplies to storm-battered Bahamas via Lank Oil Company and Sea Gem Fishing company

## VITAS Values

- Patients and families come first.
- We take care of each other.
- I'll do my best today and do even better tomorrow.
- I am proud to make a difference.



Trust VITAS to care for your patients 24/7/365.

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E-03819

# MY EMERGENCY PLAN

I LIVE IN \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY

THE CLOSEST SHELTER IS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*I HAVE/ I HAVE NOT ENROLLED WITH THIS SHELTER: \_\_\_\_\_

\*I WILL/ I WILL NOT NEED TRANSPORTATION TO SHELTER: \_\_\_\_\_

MY PLAN: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

PETS: \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MOBILE PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*I HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*I HAVE MOBILITY NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*I HAVE COMMUNICATION NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

MEDICATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• I CAN/ I CANNOT ADMINISTER MY OWN MEDICATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

MY PRIMARY CARE DOCTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

DOCTOR PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

MY EMERGENCY CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

# SHELTER ITEMS CHECKLIST

## FOR SPECIAL NEEDS RESIDENTS

Before an emergency threatens the state, have a plan in place. Preregistration for a spot in a special needs shelter is important and strongly encouraged to make sure necessary resources are available.

Go to [FloridaDisaster.org/Shelters](http://FloridaDisaster.org/Shelters) for special needs registration by county.

If you are a caregiver, you should accompany the special needs client. Bring enough items to last at least five days for both you and the client. Use this checklist to prepare for your stay.

### Medical Supplies and Equipment

- List of current prescription and over the counter medications. A seven-day supply is recommended.
- Documentation of medical information and service providers. Include provider contact information.
- Diabetes equipment and supplies
- Catheter supplies
- Ostomy supplies
- Nebulizer and supplies
- Oxygen supplies
- CPAP/BiPAP machine and supplies
- Wound care supplies
- Incontinence supplies
- Any other specialized medical item you may need.

### Assistive Devices and Supplies

- Dentures
- Hearing aids with extra batteries
- Extra pair of glasses or dark glasses
- Cane, walker, wheelchair, electric wheelchair/scooter or any other mobility device
- Extra batteries and chargers for electrical equipment such as a wheel chair, scooter, etc
- Any other specialized assistive items you may need.

### Food

- Non-Perishable snacks
- Non-Perishable drinks
- Special dietary foods if you require them.

**The conditions in a shelter can be austere and might be stressful. A shelter should be a place of last resort. It is a life boat, not a cruise ship.**

### Equipment and Entertainment Items

- Cell phone with charger
- Radio and compatible headphones or ear buds
- Flashlight and batteries
- Books, magazines, quiet games, etc.
- Small personal entertainment devices

### Personal Items

- Body wipes or washcloth and towels
- Toiletries
- Shoes—especially specialty ones
- Extra clothing, including undergarments and socks
- Sheets and blanket or sleeping bag and pillow
- ID with current address
- Important papers and emergency contacts
- Insurance card

### Service Animal Supplies

- Food and dishes
- Plastic bags and other similar items
- Crate and leash
- Medicine

### Pet Supplies

Not all shelters allow pets, check with your county for pet-friendly locations near you.

- Food and dishes
- Plastic bags and other similar items
- Crate and leash
- Medicine

### Items not allowed in the shelter

- Firearms or weapons
- Alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs
- Perishable food items



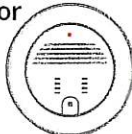
# CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING

It's invisible, odorless and tasteless gas. It can cause tiredness, weakness, chest pains, shortness of breath, upset stomach, vomiting, headaches, confusion, impaired vision, loss of consciousness and death.

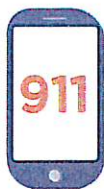


## Prevent CO poisoning:

Never use gas-powered generators inside. Keep portable generators or gasoline engines at least 20 feet away from open windows, doors, window air conditioners, or exhaust vents.



Don't burn charcoal inside or leave any gas-powered engine running in any enclosed or partially enclosed space. Install battery-powered or plug-in CO alarms (with battery backup) in your home.



## Suspect CO poisoning?

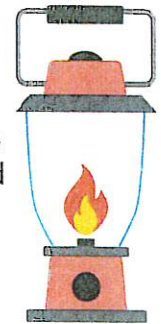
Open doors and windows, turn off gas appliances, go outside and call 911 or the Poison Information Center at 1-800-222-1222.



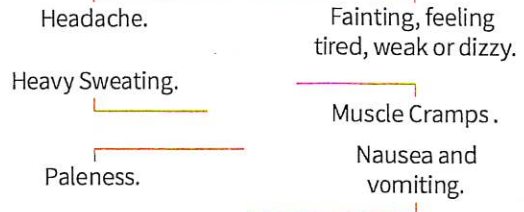
## AVOID FIRE DAMAGE

## Use battery-powered lanterns and flashlights.

If you must use candles, put them in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood or other flammable items.



# HEAT EXHAUSTION WARNING SIGNS



## HEAT STROKE Symptoms:

Confusion, altered mental status, slurred speech, loss of consciousness (coma), hot, dry skin or profuse sweating, seizures, very high body temperature. Heat Stroke can be fatal if treatment is delayed.



## Keep cool.

Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages; take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath; wear lightweight clothing; and rest in an air-conditioned room.



# STANDING WATER BREEDS MOSQUITOES

## Cover your skin.

Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves. Mosquito spray is not safe for children under 2 months old, use mosquito netting to protect them. Fix broken screens on windows, doors, porches and patios.

## Drain standing storm water.

Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where water has collected.

Throw away storm debris as soon as possible.

Check and maintain your swimming pool's chemistry.

Empty plastic swimming pools.



## SPRAY BARE SKIN AND CLOTHING WITH REPELLENT.

Use spray with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535. Follow label instructions.



# BEFORE THE STORM SAFETY

LEARN MORE: [weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness](http://weather.gov/wrn/hurricane-preparedness)

## IF YOU MUST EVACUATE

**Have a plan** in place for evacuation. Know the location of your nearest public evacuation shelter.

**Special needs shelters** are for those with disabilities or who require medical care that exceeds basic first aid.

Know the location of the special needs shelter closest to you.

**Bring change of clothing:** rain gear, toiletries, sleeping bags, blankets, pillows, books and any special dietary needs.

**Have a pet?** Make sure your shelter accepts them. Have a leash and collar, two weeks of food and water, bowls, a crate and medications ready, along with veterinary records. For cats, kitty litter and an appropriate container.

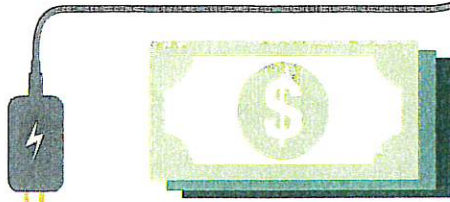
**Fill your car with gas** as soon as possible. Power outages will prevent gas pumps from working.

**Charge your cell phone** and any other electronic devices you may need.

**Have some cash** and important papers, like insurance policies, in a waterproof folder or container.

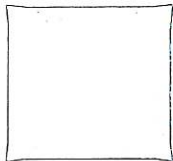
## EVACUATION ✓ LIST

- Shelter location
- Special needs shelter location
- Change of clothing
- Rain gear
- Toiletries
- Sleeping bags, blankets, pillows
- Books or other reading material
- Special dietary needs
- Pet supplies and medication
- Car filled with gas
- Charged cell phone
- Cash and important papers

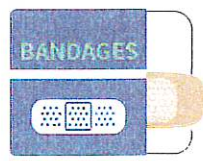


## PERSONAL HEALTH

An ANSI-compliant first aid kit that includes:



Compresses



Adhesive Bandages



First Aid Tape



Antiseptic Wipes



Gauze



Pain Relievers  
(Aspirin, Acetaminophen  
or Ibuprofen)



Hand Sanitizer



Latex Gloves

Have a 30-day supply of any **prescription medications** you or your family requires on a daily basis.

**Prepare a list** of your family's doctors' names and contact information.

Also include a list of **personal medical conditions** for appropriate family members in case of emergency.

**For pets** that require specific medications, have a 30-day supply on hand.



## PERSONAL HEALTH ✓ LIST

- First aid kit (ANSI-certified)
- 30-day supply of medications
- Doctor contact information
- List of medical conditions
- Pet medications

# Disaster Supply Kit Checklist

## First Aid Supplies

- First aid kit and manual
- Wet wipes
- Antiseptic wipes
- Nitrile medical gloves
- Cold pack
- Scissors (small, personal)
- Tweezers
- Mask (cloth or disposable)
- Cotton balls
- Thermometer
- Petroleum jelly/lubricant
- Sunscreen

## Food and Water for 3-5 Days

- Water
- Ready-to-eat canned food
- Canned or boxed juice
- High-protein snacks
- Special dietary needs
- Instant coffee
- Cereals
- Salt, pepper, sugar
- Shelf-stable milk

## Clothes and Bedding

- Change of clothes
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Rain gear
- Hat
- Jacket
- Extra socks and underwear
- Sunglasses
- Blanket, sleeping bag, pillow
- Folding cot or lawn chair

## Household Items

- Bleach or purification tablets to treat drinking water
- Paper cups, plates, plastic utensils
- All-purpose knife
- Manual can opener
- Camping stove and fuel
- Aluminum foil, plastic wrap, Ziploc bags, trash bags

- Cards, games, books, toys
- Assorted safety pins
- Travel alarm clock

## Sanitation and Hygiene

- Soap and hand sanitizer
- Heavy-duty garbage bags for personal sanitation
- Washcloth, towel
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Toothpaste, toothbrushes
- Disinfectant/chlorine bleach
- Shampoo, comb, brush
- Feminine supplies
- Toilet paper
- Razor, shave cream, mirror
- Incontinence supplies
- Lip balm
- Insect repellent

## Tools

- Battery or hand-crank radio/NOAA weather radio
- Extra batteries for all devices
- Jumper cables (in car)
- Gas (car and/or generator)
- Flashlight, electric lantern
- Jack, lug wrench, spare tire
- Signal flare
- Waterproof matches
- Wrench, pliers, shovel etc.
- Duct tape and scissors
- Plastic sheeting
- Whistle
- Work gloves
- Paper, pens, pencils
- Sewing kit
- Small fire extinguisher

## Documents & Keys

- ID; drivers license, passport, Social Security card
- Cash, coins, credit cards
- Spare set of keys
- Instructions to turn off utilities

## Medicine and Supplies

- Antibacterial ointment
- Pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid
- Laxative
- Vitamins
- Prescription drugs
- Dentures/cleaning solution
- Extra eyeglasses
- Contact lenses/solution
- Hearing aid/batteries
- Medical equipment\*

\*Wheelchair, walker, cane, dressings, oxygen, tubes, feeding equipment, etc.

## Photocopies (in Ziploc bag)

- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate
- Drivers license
- Social Security card
- Passport
- Will, living will, and advance directive
- Deeds
- Household inventory
- Insurance policies
- Immunization records
- Medical contact info
- Models and serial numbers of medical equipment
- Written instructions for medical care
- Pre-admission letter for hospital or nursing home\*\*
- Bank, credit card account and routing numbers
- Stocks and bonds
- Emergency contact list
- Map of the area
- Directions and contact info for your destination

\*\*A pre-admission letter from your doctor for a specific hospital or nursing home.



## STATE & FEDERAL Disaster Contact Information

Family, friends, and neighbors who wish to assist elder or special-needs storm survivors may find the following list of telephone numbers helpful:

### FEDERAL

|   |   |
|---|---|
| FEMA Registration                                       | 1-800-621-FEMA<br>TTY: 1-800-462-7585     |
| Fraud & Abuse Hotline:                                  | 1-800-323-8603                            |
| American Red Cross                                      | 1-800-733-2767<br>Español: 1-800-257-7575 |
| Salvation Army  | 1-800-725-2769                            |
| Small Business Administration,<br><i>disaster loans</i> | 1-800-659-2955                            |
| Social Security Administration                          | 1-800-772-1213<br>TTY: 1-800-325-0778     |
| IRS   | 1-800-829-1040<br>TDD: 1-800-829-4059     |
| U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs                    | 1-800-827-1000<br>TDD: 1-800-829-4833     |
| Feeding America   | 1-800-771-2303                            |

### STATE OF FLORIDA

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Florida Emergency<br>Information Line                          | 1-800-342-3557                        |
| Florida Attorney General<br>Price Gouging Hotline              | 1-866-966-7226                        |
| Agriculture and Consumer Services,<br><i>price gouging</i>     | 1-800-435-7352                        |
| Florida Elder Abuse Hotline                                    | 1-800-96-ABUSE                        |
| Florida Volunteer and<br>Donations Hotline                     | 1-800-354-3571                        |
| Elder Helpline,<br><i>information and referral</i>             | 1-800-96-ELDER                        |
| Department of Financial<br>Services Storm Hotline              | 1-800-22-STORM<br>TDD: 1-800-640-0886 |
| Florida Child Care,<br><i>resource and referral</i>            | 1-866-357-3239                        |
| Florida Power & Light,<br><i>outages update</i>                | 1-800-468-8243                        |
| Department Economic Opportunity,<br><i>unemployment claims</i> | 1-800-204-2418                        |

## RED CROSS *Safe & Well*

The American Red Cross encourages those affected by a disaster to register on the Safe and Well website. This secure, easy-to-use tool, available at [redcross.org/safeandwell](http://redcross.org/safeandwell), allows concerned loved ones all across the country to search for registrants' posted messages, to see that they are safe. Concerned family members and friends can search for loved ones in the affected area by entering the person's name and pre-disaster phone number or address. If their loved one has registered, they will be able to see their message. The Safe and Well website is also available in Spanish at [redcross.org/cruz-roja.html](http://redcross.org/cruz-roja.html). People without access to a computer, without electricity, or in need of help from an interpreter can call the Red Cross at 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767) to register.

## FLORIDA 511

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) encourages Floridians to stay safe during a disaster. If travel is necessary, FDOT's Florida 511 Traveler Information System is available to keep you up to date with the latest traffic information and urgent alerts. These alerts include notifications about traffic incidents, road closures, and suggested alternate routes. Florida 511 also provides severe weather notifications and the Silver, AMBER, and Blue alerts for law enforcement, all in one place.

Other ways you can use 511:

- Download the free Florida 511 Mobile app
- Sign up for a [FL511.com](http://FL511.com) account to create custom routes and register for alerts.
- Follow #FL511 on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

By learning how to use Florida 511 now, you will be prepared if you need to access it during an emergency. For the latest emergency travel information, visit [fdot.gov/emergency](http://fdot.gov/emergency).

Department of  
**ELDER AFFAIRS**  
STATE OF FLORIDA



# HURRICANE READINESS

If you are under a hurricane watch or warning, here are some basic steps to take to prepare for the storm:

- Be prepared to turn off electrical power in the case of standing water, fallen power lines, or evacuation. Secure structurally unstable building materials.
- Buy a fire extinguisher, and make sure your family knows where it is and how to use it.
- Locate and secure your important papers.
- Post emergency phone numbers at every phone and on the refrigerator.
- Inform local authorities about any special needs, i.e., elderly or bedridden people, or anyone with a disability.
- Make plans to ensure your pets' safety at [floridadisaster.org/planprepare/pet-plan](http://floridadisaster.org/planprepare/pet-plan).

## Emergency Supplies

You should stock your home with supplies that may be needed during the emergency period. A detailed checklist may be found on page 13. You can find more information on emergency plans and supply kits at [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).

## Preparing to Evacuate

The National Weather Service will issue a hurricane watch when there is a threat to

coastal areas of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.

When a hurricane watch is issued, you should do the following:

- Fill your automobile's gas tank.
- If no vehicle is available, arrange with friends or family for transportation.
- Fill your clean water containers.
- Listen to the radio or television for weather updates.
- Secure any items outside that could damage property in a storm, such as bicycles, grills, propane tanks, etc.
- Cover windows and doors with plywood or boards. Officials no longer advise taping windows.
- Put livestock and family pets in a safe area.
- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water and ice as a supply for washing.
- Adjust the thermostat on refrigerators and freezers to the coolest possible temperature.

## If Ordered to Evacuate

Because of the destructive power of a hurricane, you should never ignore an evacuation order. Be aware that most shelters and some hotels do not accept pets. If a



hurricane warning is issued for your area or you are directed by authorities to evacuate:

- Take only essential items.
- If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity, and water.
- Make sure your automobile's emergency kit is ready.
- Follow the designated evacuation routes—others may be blocked—and expect heavy traffic.

## If Ordered NOT to Evacuate

The great majority of injuries during a hurricane are cuts caused by flying glass or debris.

- Monitor the radio or television for weather conditions.
- Do not go outside, even if the weather appears to have calmed—the calm "eye" of the storm can pass quickly, leaving you outside when strong winds resume.
- Stay away from all windows and exterior doors, seeking shelter in a bathroom or basement.

# Hospice Fast Facts

**1 Hospice is for people with advanced illnesses.**

Hospice provides symptom and pain management for patients with serious illness, no matter their age, culture, beliefs, or cause of illness.

**2 Hospice can happen anywhere.**

Hospice is a service that comes to the patient in the place they prefer to be for end-of-life care. Patients at home feel better surrounded by the faces and things they know and love.

**3 Hospice is a choice.**

Patients can leave, or “revoke their hospice status,” at any time for any reason. Patients can also come back to hospice at any time, as long as they meet hospice eligibility guidelines.

**4 Patients can keep taking some medicines while on hospice.**

Hospice patients are prescribed medicines that manage the symptoms of their advanced illness and improve quality of life.

**5 Hospice gives medicines as needed to help with symptoms.**

Hospice doctors try to give just enough medicine to manage symptoms and ease pain.

**6 Family or friends provide care with support from the hospice team.**

Family or friends are a hospice patient’s primary caregivers, supported and trained by an expert team that makes regular, scheduled visits. For patients who live in assisted living communities and nursing homes, the hospice team works together with the facility staff.

**7 There is no limit to the time a patient can be on hospice.**

Hospice is for patients who have 6 months or less to live according to a doctor, and it can be extended when needed. In surveys, family members often say, “we wish we had known about hospice sooner.”

**8 Hospice provides home medical equipment and supplies related to the cause of the illness.**

This includes shower chairs, oxygen tanks, hospital beds, toileting supplies, and more.

**9 Hospice supports the family.**

After a patient passes, hospice addresses emotional and spiritual pain suffered by loved ones for more than a year.

**10 Most hospice patients do not have any out-of-pocket expenses.**

Medicare Part A covers up to 100% of the cost of hospice care related to a hospice-eligible patient’s illness, with no deductible or copayment.

Private or employer-provided health coverage can vary. Check with your insurance provider for details about hospice eligibility, coverage, and out-of-pocket expenses.

Medicaid provides hospice coverage, but it varies by state.



Still have questions?  
**Download a discussion guide  
at [HospiceCanHelp.com](https://www.hospicecanhelp.com)**

# Hospice facts

- 1. Hospice is for people with advanced illnesses.** It includes heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease, liver disease, kidney disease, ALS/Lou Gehrig's disease, Alzheimer's disease, HIV/AIDS, sepsis, multiple sclerosis, and other neurological diseases. Hospice helps cope with serious illness in patients of any age, culture, beliefs, or cause of illness.
- 2. Hospice can happen anywhere.** Hospice is a service that comes to the patient. Patients at home feel better, surrounded by the faces and things they know and love.
- 3. Hospice is a choice.** Patients can leave, or "revoke their hospice status," at any time for any reason. Patients can also come back to hospice at any time, as long as they meet eligibility guidelines.
- 4. Patients can keep taking medicines and treatments while on hospice.** Hospice patients get treatment that brings comfort and improves quality of life.
- 5. Hospice gives medicines as needed to help with symptoms.** Hospice doctors try to give the smallest amount of medicine that will bring relief and comfort. That means they give just enough medicine to help the patient feel better, from anti-inflammatory pain relievers to opioids.
- 6. Family or friends provide care with support from the hospice team.** Family or friends take on the role of primary caregivers, supported and trained by an expert team that makes regular, scheduled visits. Patients in assisted living communities or nursing homes are already getting care from staff. The hospice team provides extra care that works together with the facility staff.