

How to Choose the Best Hospice – Resources

Begin by searching for agencies online and calling each agency you are considering and asking them questions such as:

Questions about their scope of services:

- What towns do you serve?
- Do you have a hospice house?
- If not, where would inpatient or respite care be provided if needed?
- Is your sole focus hospice, or do you also do general home health care or other things?
- How many patients is your agency currently caring for?

Questions about them as a business:

- Where is your agency's local office?
- Where is your agency's headquarters?
- Are they nonprofit or for profit?
- How long have you been in business?
- Who do I call if I am unhappy with the service from your agency?

Questions about what you can expect for day-to-day care:

- Are your staff members specially trained and certified in hospice care?
- How do you support the family and/or caregivers?
- How often will the nurse or others visit?
- What happens if I call after hours?

Questions about the quality of their care:

- What are their unbiased scores on:
 - How well they supported the patient?
 - How well they supported the caregiver?
 - How well they managed the patient's pain?
- What percentage of caregivers would recommend them?



What else sets them apart:

- How do you feel your agency sets itself apart from other hospice agencies?
- What care and services does your agency provide above and beyond the basic requirements?
- What is your agency's philosophy of care? Are there any services, medication, or equipment that your hospice provides that are not typically covered by other agencies?
- Does your agency give back to the community? If so, how?
- Does your agency have a commitment to sustainability?

For unbiased information from surveys visit:

<https://www.medicare.gov/care-compare/>

Medicare's Care Compare landing page (below) will ask you for your location, provider type (choose hospice from a drop-down list), and the name of agency (optional).

Medicare.gov Basics Health & Drug Plans Providers & Services

Find & compare nursing homes, hospitals & other providers near you.

[Learn more about the types of providers listed here](#)

MY LOCATION * PROVIDER TYPE * NAME OF AGENCY (optional)

Maine Hospice care Agency name Search

choose state, city, or zip code choose hospice care choose an agency (optional)

This website allows you to compare hospices' survey performance and learn other details about their operations.

Other helpful information on hospice topics:

Hospice of Southern Maine's Ask the Experts series seeks to inform the community and answer questions about hospice care. Presentations are 30 minutes long and are recorded and made available in our library at www.askhospiceexperts.org. We invite you to ask us any hospice questions by emailing us at askhospiceexperts@hospiceofsouthernmaine.org.

Thank you for your interest and please let us know if we can be helpful as you embark on your search.