The first week of hospice: a checklist

Check off each item as it happens. The order can change, and the nurse will guide you.

Before the admission visit

- [ ] Gather the medicine bottles, insurance cards, and any advance directive, POLST or power of attorney papers
- [ ] Choose one family member to be the main contact for the hospice
- [ ] Clear a path and a space where a hospital bed or other equipment could go
- [ ] Start a list of questions and keep it by the phone

At the admission visit

- [ ] The nurse explains hospice, reviews the medicines and examines the person (plan on one to two hours)
- [ ] Tell the nurse what a good day looks like for the person, and what they fear most
- [ ] Tell the nurse about faith, culture or family customs the team should respect
- [ ] The person or their legal representative signs the consents and the election statement
- [ ] Ask for copies of everything you sign, and a copy of your patient rights
- [ ] Put the hospice number on the refrigerator and in every caregiver's phone

During the first week

- [ ] Equipment is delivered and set up, and the driver shows you how to use it
- [ ] Comfort medicines arrive. Do not use them until a nurse tells you to. Store them away from children and visitors
- [ ] Within 5 days, if hospice started on or after October 1, 2026: a written list of anything the hospice will not cover, with the reason
- [ ] The nurse case manager comes back to follow up
- [ ] The social worker calls, and the chaplain if you wish
- [ ] A hospice aide visit is scheduled, if bathing help is part of the plan
- [ ] By the end of the week: a written plan of care. Ask what visits to expect

Write it down

NURSE CASE MANAGER _____

SOCIAL WORKER _____

CHAPLAIN _____

HOSPICE AIDE _____

ATTENDING DOCTOR _____

FUNERAL HOME (IF CHOSEN) _____

Read the full guide: betahospice.com/resources/what-to-expect-first-week