



Palliative and Hospice Care

at The Children's Institute

Western Pennsylvania is home to some of the most advanced medical care in the world. Progress in pediatric medicine, surgery and rehabilitation often begins in Pittsburgh. In spite of medical breakthroughs, some children will face diagnoses with no hope for recovery. As a provider of care for medically fragile children, The Children's Institute is uniquely positioned to help children with terminal diseases and their families.

The Palliative Care Program at The Children's Institute provides collaborative comprehensive patient and family-centered care and treatment for children suffering from incurable conditions and ensures the highest quality, comfort and normalcy.

At The Children's Institute, the mission of palliative care is to ensure the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual well being of the child. While the goal is to comfort children and their families as they face a terminal illness, it does not preclude aggressive treatment to fight a life-threatening diagnosis.

Terminally ill children need to receive services to optimize their ability to function to their maximum capacity. The goal is to have them return home to routine activities until the next phase of treatment or illness necessitates another hospitalization. Typically there's an ebb and flow to a child's progression towards death, so palliative care services usually are not provided as a singular event. At times respite care - an interval of rest - is needed to care for their children with special needs and their siblings as well as themselves.

The Palliative Care Program at the Children's Institute provides medical, therapeutic and support services in a home-like environment, taking advantage of the highly trained staff's skills in managing high medical acuity, but delivering care in a less institutional environment than a traditional hospital. Staff members are specially trained in pediatric rehabilitation and management of terminal illnesses. And the emotional needs of the patients and their families are cared for sensitively.

In the final months of the child's life palliative care to a hospice focus - helping the child die with dignity and supporting his loved ones as they allow the child to do so.



The Children's Institute
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