



Blue Shield of California's Palliative Care Program: Improving the lives of those with serious illness

A Serious Problem

Millions of Californians live with serious illness. This number will double by 2040.¹ Serious illness affects people of all ages who may live for months or years. Many will need extra care from their families and other caregivers.

That's why Blue Shield of California offers its Palliative Care Program.

What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care (pronounced pal-lee-uh-tiv) is specialized medical care for people with serious illness. It helps manage the problems and stress from a serious illness with the goal to improve quality of life for both the person with the serious illness and those who help care for them. It is provided by a team of doctors, nurses, social workers and chaplains who work together with a person's primary doctor(s) to provide **an extra layer of support**. Palliative care is appropriate at any age and at any time in a serious illness. It can be provided along with other medical treatment.

Palliative care helps keep people with serious illness at home, not in the ER or the hospital. Studies show that it reduces physical discomfort, improves quality of life, and makes living with a serious illness easier.

Blue Shield's Home-Based Palliative Care Program

Home-based palliative care is offered in all 58 California counties at no additional cost to members.

What services are covered?

Services include but are not limited to:

- Treatment decision and support
- Care plan development and shared decision making
- Home-based palliative care visits – in person and via video conferencing
- Medication management and reconciliation
- Psychosocial support for mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being
- 24/7 access to help and support
- Caregiver support

Fast Facts



More than **12 million Americans** live with serious illness. This number is likely to double by 2040.¹

Home-based palliative care features home visits and **24/7 access to care**.



Palliative care can **reduce unnecessary ER visits** and hospitalizations.²

75% of our providers have certification in home-based palliative care.³



Sources: ¹Commonwealth Fund 2016
²Journal of Palliative Medicine
³Joint Commission, ACHC, or CHAP

Who provides these services?

A specially-trained team of:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Social Workers
- Chaplains
- Home health aides
- Nurse practitioners
- Physician assistants
- Other specialists

How has it helped?

- Over 2,500 people and their families have been supported in the Blue Shield palliative care program
- All members who were/are enrolled received help with physical problems, planning, and coordinating their medical care as well as support for them and their families/caregivers

For more information about Blue Shield of California's palliative care programs, please visit www.blueshieldca.com/palliativecare.

Blue Shield of California is an independent member of the Blue Shield Association.

1. Meier, Diane E., MD. (2014). Palliative Care Facts and Stats. Center to Advance Palliative Care.