

Certification of Terminal Illness PC.C.05

Regulation(s): 42 CFR 418.22; 418.102(b)
L-Tag(s): 667

POLICY: When a patient is first admitted to Lifesong Hospice and Palliative Care, the Medical Director or physician member of the IDG and the patient's attending physician (if the patient has one) sign a written statement certifying that the patient's prognosis is 6 months or less if the terminal illness follows its normal course.

PROCEDURE:

1. The *Initial Certification of Terminal Illness* form specifies that the patient's prognosis is for a life expectancy of six months or less if the terminal illness runs its normal course.
2. The certification of the patient's terminal illness is based on the physician's clinical judgment regarding the normal course of the patient's illness.
3. The hospice physician considers, at a minimum, the following information when making his/her certification decision:
 - a. diagnosis of the terminal condition of the patient;
 - b. other health conditions, whether related or unrelated to the terminal condition;
 - c. current clinically relevant information supporting all diagnoses and objective and subjective medical findings;
 - d. current medications and treatment orders; and
 - e. information about the medical management of any of the patient's conditions unrelated to the terminal illness.
4. Clinical information (which may be provided verbally) and other documentation that supports the patient's medical prognosis and the physician's certification of terminal illness is included in the patient's clinical record and documented as part of the hospice's eligibility assessment.
5. The hospice physician or the patient's attending physician (if there is one) composes a brief narrative explanation of the clinical findings that support a life expectancy of six months or less.
6. The *Initial Certification of Terminal Illness* may be completed no more than 14 calendar days prior to the effective date of the hospice election.

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6/18			4/2019
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7. The *Initial Certification of Terminal Illness* includes the physician's signature, the date signed, and the dates for the hospice benefit period covered by the certification, 90 or 60 day certification period dependent on payor source guidelines and initial benefit period with Lifesong Hospice and Palliative Care.
8. A verbal certification is obtained from both physicians within the two days and is documented in the patient's clinical record. If the hospice physician and the patient's attending physician do not sign the *Initial Certification of Terminal Illness* form within two calendar days of the start of care (by the end of the third day), the hospice will not release for billing until written certification is obtained.
9. Verbal certifications are documented in the clinical record and include:
 - a. date received;
 - b. printed name, signature and credentials of the hospice staff member who received the oral certification; and
 - c. the name of the physician providing the oral certification.
10. The signed *Initial Certification of Terminal Illness* form is obtained, reviewed by the Director of Clinical Operations, or designee, and filed in the patient's clinical record prior to submitting claims for payment.

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