

**Regulatory Citation(s):** | 42 CFR 418.64 (a)  
**L-Tag(s):** | 590

**POLICY:** The Hospice Medical Director, physician employees, and contracted physician(s) of the hospice, in conjunction with the patient’s attending physician (if any), are responsible for the palliation and management of the patient’s terminal illness and related conditions.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. All physician and nurse practitioner employees, and those under contract, function under the supervision of the hospice’s Medical Director.
2. All physician employees, nurse practitioners, and those under contract provide services directly or coordinate patient care with the patient’s attending physician (if any).
3. If the attending physician is unavailable, the Medical Director, contracted physician, nurse practitioner and/or a hospice physician employee are responsible for meeting the medical needs of the patient.
4. When the hospice Medical Director, physician employee, or contracted physician(s) of the hospice is certifying or recertifying a patient’s terminal prognosis and eligibility for hospice care, s/he must compose a brief narrative explanation of the clinical factors that support the patient’s initial and continued eligibility for hospice care.
5. When the hospice Medical Director, physician employee, or contracted physician(s) of the hospice is recertifying a patient’s terminal prognosis and eligibility for hospice care for the patient’s third or later benefit period, s/he must:
  - a. consider clinical information obtained from the nurse practitioner or hospice physician who conducted a face-to-face encounter with the patient; and
  - b. include information obtained from a face-to-face encounter with the patient in the narrative explanation of the clinical factors that support the patient’s continued eligibility for hospice care

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