Trinity Health is one of the largest multi-institutional Catholic health care delivery systems in the nation, serving diverse communities that include more than 30 million people across 21 states. We are building a People-Centered Health System to put the people we serve at the center of every behavior, action and decision. This brings to life our commitment to be a compassionate, transforming and healing presence in our communities. We advocate for public policies that support better health, better care and lower costs to ensure affordable, high quality, people-centered care for all.

Palliative Care is People-Centered Care

Palliative care offers people-centered, chronic disease management for those who want to successfully live with limiting conditions; for example, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or congestive heart failure. It is available to patients of any age no matter what the diagnosis or prognosis, and can be delivered with curative treatments. Palliative care does not offer a cure, but offers greater opportunities for patients to live well, supports those who would benefit from psychological and spiritual care, while offering a system to help the person and their families enhance their quality of life. Patients who receive palliative consultations and follow-up care have more control over their care by improving understanding of their treatment options and goals and reducing pain; while their families are provided extra support and care coordination to reduce the stressful burden of a serious illness. In addition, patients spend fewer days in intensive care and face fewer trips to the emergency department and hospital readmissions.

Sometimes confused with hospice care, the goals of palliative treatment are designed to benefit those with complex chronic conditions who expect to live with their illness, while searching for relief from suffering and other distressing symptoms. While hospice care is a part of the palliative care continuum, hospice care is designed to serve those patients entering the terminal or end stage of an illness.

Patients choosing palliative care receive the benefit of an interdisciplinary medical team comprised of physicians, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, volunteers and spiritual care staff, dedicated to helping them understand their condition, clarify goals for care and treatment options, get relief from pain and symptoms, navigate the health care maze, and increase spiritual and emotional strength to live as fully as possible.

Trinity Health Program Highlights

- Using an industry-accepted estimate of $6,900 per consult, cost savings from approximately 30,000 palliative care consultations exceeds $200M
- $400k funding award from The Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC) Membership
- $1.6M Grant Funding for Community Palliative Care
- Recipient of Medicare Care Choices Grant

Palliative Care: Leadership & Commitment

Trinity Health has been dedicated to advancing the benefits of palliative care across the country for nearly a decade. Our work is delivering on the call of Pope Francis I that palliative care be a hallmark of Catholic health care.

In 2013, Trinity Health committed to a system-wide palliative care redesign initiative increasing the access of palliative care services;

Honoring Veterans

A surviving family member shared, my veteran father wore his ‘Forever Free’ pin every day. Unfortunately, it was lost in the last days of his life, but the Mount Carmel Hospice staff gave us another so that we could pin it to his lapel for his funeral visitation. It was so important to him.

Forever Free is a veteran-centric hospice care program offered by Mount Carmel Health System, Columbus, Ohio, which provides special care and tributes (vet-to-vet recognition days, pinning ceremonies, honor flights) to honor vets and their families at the end of life. The Forever Free program has been awarded Four Star Ranking, the highest ranking offered by the We Honor Veterans organization.
Sharing Our Palliative Care Story

addressing better health, better care and lower costs; and meeting national quality standards and evidence-based research.

Compared to 12 programs in 2013, Trinity Health now has 38 palliative care hospital programs that meet national quality standards measuring clinical, operational, financial, patient-centered care and satisfaction outcomes.

Trinity Health has also established a standard electronic health record that delivers consultation orders within four days or less from admission; with 100 percent of the patients being seen within 24 hours of an ordered consultation. Improved outcomes include: a 90 percent improvement in shortness of breath treatment; improved patient treatment with opioid via a bowel regimen; and an 80 percent improvement in pain assessment. Finally, 70 percent of patients receive Advanced Care Planning completion at time of consultation.

We are expanding the delivery of palliative care across the continuum to home health and skilled nursing during in fiscal year 2016. We will use a recent $1.6 million grant for community palliative care, and a Medicare Care Choices Grant Award to support this expansion.

Trinity Health is a member of the Patient Quality of Life Coalition (#PQLC) formed to advance the interests of patients and families facing serious illness, including survivors. The Coalition has developed a consensus-based agenda aimed at promoting public policy that will improve and expand access to high-quality palliative care.

Champions for the Chronically Ill: Regional Health Ministries in Action

Trinity Health ministries across the country have been leading the way in providing palliative care programs for nearly 20 years, including being the first in many states to be certified Palliative Care Programs by the Joint Commission for the Advancement of Palliative Care. Ministry highlights include:

- **Holy Cross Hospital, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.** – Launching its palliative care program in 2011, Holy Cross Hospital is committed to ensuring the palliative care philosophy and practice is afforded to all. In July 2015, The University of Miami at Holy Cross launched its Internal Medicine residency program, requiring residents rotate through Palliative Medicine as a part of a geriatrics rotation.

- **Holy Cross Health, Silver Spring, Md.** – Holy Cross Health Palliative Care provides services for hospitals in Silver Spring and Germantown, Md. Working with skilled nursing facilities and ambulatory clinics to improve quality of care and coRDinAtION, Holy Cross is also a selected participant in the Maryland Health Care Commission’s (MHCC) Hospital Palliative Care Pilot program, and an MHCC Advisory Group dedicated to developing core data measures and reporting standards.

- **Mercy Medical Center, North Iowa, Mason City, Iowa.** – Since launching a palliative care program in 2006, Mercy Medical Center – North Iowa, has helped hundreds of patients to relieve suffering and enhance the quality of life for those with serious illnesses and their families. Mercy has become home to one of only 30 fellowship programs available nationally. Mercy recruits fellows nationally for a one-year training experience in Mason City.

- **Mount Carmel Health System, Columbus, Ohio.** – Mount Carmel Health System is one of eight designated Palliative Care Leadership Centers in the United States and has helped nearly 160 teams learn about best practices in palliative care programs. Mount Carmel has received a Four Star Ranking from the "We Honor Veterans" organization.

- **St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, Pontiac, Mich.** – Making palliative care part of the culture at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland has been an ongoing commitment since the hospital launched Mercy Supportive Care in 2000. The program received the prestigious American Hospital Association Circle of Life Award in 2006. In 2012, the program was certified by the Joint Commission for Advanced Palliative Care, the fourth program accredited nationally, and the first in Michigan.

- **Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, Boise, Idaho.** – Certified Palliative Care Programs by the Joint Commission for the Advancement of Palliative Care, first in the state of Idaho (2013). Saint Alphonsus has also been awarded the 2013 Cambia Foundation Sojourns Award, for the advancement of palliative leadership and advocacy.

![Image](image.png)

**Mission:** We, Trinity Health, serve together in the spirit of the Gospel as a compassionate and transforming healing presence within our communities.

**Core Values:** Reverence • Commitment to Those Who Are Poor • Justice • Stewardship • Integrity

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"I see palliative care planning as a very personal and intimate endeavor, both heart-wrenching and comforting. You made it OK. You guided my heart string from a tangled knotted up mess into a gently woven shawl of comfort that took the chill out of our reality. For that I am ever so thankful."

- Patient Family, Saint Alphonsus Health System, Boise, Idaho