

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR CAREGIVERS

What Type of Care is Best for Your Loved One?

Several different types of care may be available for people who are aging, seriously ill, or living with a disability.

CUSTODIAL CARE

Custodial care refers to non-skilled, personal care, such as help with activities of daily living like bathing, dressing, eating, getting in or out of a bed or chair, moving around, and using the bathroom. It may also include care that most people can do themselves, like using eye drops. Medicare doesn't cover custodial care.

HOME HEALTH CARE (Covered by Medicare)

Home health care may encompass limited part-time or intermittent skilled nursing care and home health aide services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology services, medical social services, durable medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, hospital beds, oxygen, and walkers), medical supplies, and other services provided in the patient's home. A doctor or other health care provider enrolled in Medicare must order the care for Medicare to cover it, and a Medicare-certified home health agency must provide it.

HOSPICE CARE (Covered by Medicare)

Hospice care offers a special way of caring for people who are terminally ill, typically utilizing a team-oriented approach to address medical, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs. Hospice also provides support to the patient's family or caregiver.

INPATIENT CARE (Covered by Medicare)

Inpatient care refers to health care for those admitted to a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

LONG-TERM CARE

Long-term care encompasses a variety of services that help people with health, personal needs, and activities of daily living over a period of time. This care can be

provided at home, in the community, or in various types of facilities, including nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Most long-term care is custodial care. Medicare doesn't cover this type of care if this is the only kind of care a person needs.

LONG-TERM HOSPITAL CARE (Covered by Medicare)

Long-term hospital care refers to acute care hospitals that provide treatment for patients who stay, on average, more than 25 days. Most patients are transferred from an intensive or critical care unit. Services provided include comprehensive rehabilitation, respiratory therapy, head trauma treatment, and pain management.

SKILLED NURSING CARE (Covered by Medicare)

Skilled nursing care refers to a level of care that includes services that can only be performed safely and correctly by a licensed nurse (either a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse).

SKILLED NURSING FACILITY (Covered by Medicare)

Skilled nursing facilities are those with the staff and equipment to give skilled nursing care and/or skilled rehabilitation services and other related health services.

Want to learn more? Go to www.medicare.gov/caregivers and click on "Caregiver Topics," then "Paying for Care," and "Which expenses are covered?" to learn more.

A more extensive glossary of terms that are important to caregivers—including those related to the Medicare program, billing, and treatments for different health conditions—is offered through the "Help and Support" link at www.medicare.gov.