HMSA’s Palliative Care Coordination Pilot

Frequently asked questions

When does the pilot program begin?
The program is a two-year pilot that will begin July 1, 2004 and run through June 30, 2006.

Who is eligible for this pilot?
The program is open to members of HMSA’s Federal Plan 87 who have serious, chronic and life-threatening illnesses. Program participants must be residents of the State of Hawaii and receive all their healthcare services in the State of Hawaii. Eligible members will be asked if they wish to participate in the pilot program. Those who agree will be enrolled in the treatment group and will receive all appropriate program services. HMSA expects about 100 members to be served during the two-year pilot.

What is the goal of the pilot?
The program’s main goal is to coordinate services to improve the quality of care for patients with life-limiting illness. The pilot program is designed to bridge the gap between hospital and home health/hospice services for patients who may not qualify for in-home benefits, but would gain in comfort, functioning or quality of life from in-home palliative care services. It will ensure that patients are made as comfortable as possible, and that they are cared for in the place of their choosing, according to their own beliefs and values.

What services will be available to participants?
The program will provide intensive case management that will:

• Provide physician relief from care coordination activities, while preserving the physician’s key role in patient care
• Facilitate the patient’s access to a variety of community services
• Help avoid the patient’s need to choose between palliative and curative treatment
• Reduce the use of acute care when such care is futile or against the patient’s wishes
• Provide timely referrals to hospice when needed
• Integrate palliative care into existing healthcare systems

Who administers the program?
A dedicated Care Coordinator will work in consultation with a Medical Director certified in palliative medicine. The program will be administered by the Integrated Case Management Services unit of HMSA’s Medical Management Department.

Medical Director: Emese Somogyi-Zalud, MD
Associate Professor of Geriatric Medicine
University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine

Care Coordinator: Jodi Shaw, LSW

For Information Phone: (808) 948-5717 or 1 (800) 365-7665 toll free
E-mail: jodi_shaw@hmsa.com
Kōkua Mau’s Palliative Care Capacity Building Project

Frequently asked questions

What is Kōkua Mau?
Kōkua Mau (Continuous Care) is a statewide coalition of more than 250 public agencies, healthcare professionals and organizations dedicated to improving end-of-life care in Hawaii. It was created with support from the Robert Wood Johnson and Archstone foundations, as well as many local foundations.

What is Kōkua Mau’s mission?
To weave a lei of community support so Hawaii’s people may die in the place of their choice, free of pain and suffering, and be treated according to their beliefs, values and traditions.

What is Kōkua Mau’s newest project?
Kōkua Mau recently received funding from the HMSA Foundation for a two-year Palliative Care Capacity Building Project that will run from January 2004 through December 2005. The project’s goal is to expand access to and improve the quality of care at the end of life by increasing the number of Hawaii providers trained in palliative care and stimulating the establishment of palliative care programs at local facilities.

Kōkua Mau’s Palliative Care Capacity Building Project supports HMSA’s Palliative Care Coordination Pilot by increasing the number of trained palliative care providers (e.g., physicians, nurses, aides, social workers), thereby expanding the palliative care referral network in the community. In addition, HMSA’s Palliative Care Coordination Pilot, as part of the larger community effort to improve palliative care services in Hawaii, falls under the auspices of the Kōkua Mau Advisory Group.

What kind of training sessions will be made available to healthcare providers?
Training from the following sources is planned during the grant’s two-year period:

- Respecting Choices® Advanced Care Planning
- End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC)
- Education for Physicians on End-of-Life Care (EPEC)
- Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)

Who administers the grant?
The palliative care expansion grant is administered through one of Kōkua Mau’s founding partners, the Hawaiian Islands Hospice Organization (HIHO).

Project Director: Kenneth Zeri, RN, MS
President & CPO, Hospice Hawaii

Project Coordinator: Rachael Wong, MPH

For information:
Phone: (808) 551-8838
E-mail: palliative@kokuamau.org

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