



ABC Hospice
INC.

A caring touch, a hand of compassion

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STROKE & COMA

Stroke is a disease that affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. It is the third leading cause of death in the United States.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs,

causing the brain to rapidly decline.

Being diagnosed with a terminal illness is devastating. ABC Hospice will take this journey with you.

The following criteria can be helpful in determining the eligibility of a patient to qualify for services offered through hospice. ABC Hospice is available to answer any questions you may have.

The medical criteria listed below would support a terminal prognosis for individuals with a diagnosis of stroke. Patients must meet 1 and 2 below:

**1. Karnofsky Performance Status (KPS) or Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) of 40% or less
-and-**

2. Inability to maintain hydration and caloric intake with one of the following:

- Weight loss >10% in the last 6 months or >7.5% in the last 3 months
- Serum albumin <2.5gm/dl
- Current history of pulmonary aspiration not responsive to speech language pathology intervention
- Sequential calorie counts documenting inadequate caloric/fluid intake
- Dysphagia severe enough to sustain life, in a patient who declines or does not receive artificial nutrition and hydration

Coma (any etiology), Comatose patients with any 3 of the following on day three of coma:

- Abnormal brain stem response
- Absent verbal response
- Absent withdrawal response to pain
- Refractory stage 3-4 decubitus ulcers

Documentation of the following factors will support eligibility for hospice care:

- Aspiration pneumonia
- Upper urinary tract infection (pyelonephritis)
- Sepsis
- Refractory stage 3-4 decubitus ulcers
- Fever recurrent after antibiotics

In the absence of one or more of these findings, rapid decline or comorbidities may also support eligibility for hospice care.