

## **HOSPICE APPROACH TO DEMENTIA CARE**

### **Prepare person/family about what to expect in advanced stage**

- ✓ Start early
- ✓ Talk about what is to come
- ✓ Identify treatment preferences before complications occur
- ✓ Establish directives in writing
- ✓ Structured guides/materials help
- ✓ Hospice approach: Dementia specific discussion
- ✓ Physician Order of Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

### **Hospice Approach to Dementia Care**

- ✓ First palliative care model for advanced dementia  
(Note: the term “palliative” was not used at the time the model was first developed)
- ✓ Goal is to find a balance between prolong life and preventing suffering as dementia progresses
- ✓ Focus on promoting comfort & quality of life
- ✓ Approach: Family discussions about care that focus on the person’s value and beliefs
- ✓ Discuss intervention options/choices AND risks and benefits to person
- ✓ Review choices each care planning meeting
- ✓ The Hospice Approach blends palliative care with hospice
- ✓ Both target treating pain and discomfort and focus on quality of life, not length of life

### **Hospice Approach: 5 levels<sup>1</sup>**

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Aggressive diagnostic workup	✓	✓	✓		
Treat coexisting medical conditions	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Transfer to acute care	✓	✓			
Infection treatment: UTI, pneumonia	✓	✓	✓		
CPR	✓				
Feeding tube	✓	✓	✓		
Antipyretics (fever), analgesic (pain)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hand feeding, drinking as able	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

1. Changes in the model have occurred over time to reflect best practices in care of persons with advanced dementia based on evidence about outcomes of treatments that become burdensome at end of life for those with dementia.