

Dementia due to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders

Patients will be considered to be in the terminal stage of dementia (life expectancy of six months or less) if they meet the following criteria.

1. Patients with dementia should show all the following characteristics:
 - a. Stage seven or beyond according to the Functional Assessment Staging Scale;
 - b. Unable to ambulate without assistance;
 - c. Unable to dress without assistance;
 - d. Unable to bathe without assistance;
 - e. Urinary and fecal incontinence, intermittent or constant;
 - f. No consistently meaningful verbal communication: stereotypical phrases only or the ability to speak is limited to six or fewer intelligible words.

2. Patients should have had one of the following within the past 12 months:
 - a. Aspiration pneumonia;
 - b. Pyelonephritis;
 - c. Septicemia;
 - d. Decubitus ulcers, multiple, stage 3-4;
 - e. Fever, recurrent after antibiotics;
 - f. Inability to maintain sufficient fluid and calorie intake with 10% weight loss during the previous six months or serum albumin < 2.5 gm/dl.

Note: This section is specific for Alzheimer's disease and Related Disorders, and is not appropriate for other types of dementia.

Cancer Diagnoses

Disease with metastases at presentation OR

Progression from an earlier stage of disease to metastatic disease with either:

- A continued decline in spite of therapy; or
- Patient declines further disease directed therapy

Note: Certain cancers with poor prognoses (e.g, small cell lung cancer, brain cancer, and pancreatic cancer) may be hospice eligible without fulfilling the other criteria in this section.

Heart Disease (End stage CHF, Refractory Angina, Valve Disease (ex: severe critical aortic stenosis)

Patients will be considered to be in the terminal stage of heart disease (life expectancy of six months or less) if they meet the following criteria. (1 and 2 should be present. Factors from 3 will add supporting documentation.)

1. The patient is or has been already optimally treated for heart disease, or are patients who are either not candidates for surgical procedures or who decline those procedures.

2. Patients must meet the criteria for the New York Heart Association (NYHA) Class IV.

3. Documentation of the following factors will support but is not required to establish eligibility for hospice care:

- a. Treatment-resistant symptomatic supraventricular or ventricular arrhythmias;
- b. History of cardiac arrest or resuscitation;
- c. History of unexplained syncope;
- d. Brain embolism of cardiac origin;
- e. Concomitant HIV disease;
- f. Cardio renal syndrome.

Liver Disease

Patients will be considered to be in the terminal stage of liver disease (life expectancy of six months or less) if they meet the following criteria. (1 and 2 should be present.)

1. The patient should show both a and b:
 - a. Prothrombin time prolonged more than 5 seconds over control, or International Normalized Ratio (INR) > 1.5;
 - b. Serum albumin < 2.5 gm/dl.

2. End stage liver disease is present and the patient shows at least one of the following:
 - a. Ascites, refractory to treatment or patient non-compliant;
 - b. Spontaneous bacterial peritonitis;
 - c. Hepatorenal syndrome (elevated creatinine and BUN with oliguria (< 400 ml/day) and urine sodium concentration < 10 mEq/l);
 - d. Hepatic encephalopathy, refractory to treatment, or patient non-compliant;
 - e. Recurrent variceal bleeding, despite intensive therapy.

Pulmonary Disease

Patients will be considered to be in the terminal stage of pulmonary disease (life expectancy of six months or less) if they meet the following criteria. The criteria refer to patients with various forms of advanced pulmonary disease who eventually follow a final common pathway for end stage pulmonary disease. (1 and 2 should be present.)

1. Severe chronic lung disease as documented by both a and b:
 - a. Disabling dyspnea at rest, poorly or unresponsive to bronchodilators, resulting in decreased functional capacity, e.g., bed to chair existence, fatigue, and cough;
 - b. Progression of end stage pulmonary disease, as evidenced by increasing visits to the emergency department or hospitalizations for pulmonary infections and/or respiratory failure.

2. Hypoxemia at rest on room air, as evidenced by pO₂ less than or equal to 55 mmHg, or oxygen saturation less than or equal to 88%, determined either by arterial blood gases or oxygen saturation monitors or hypercapnia.

Renal Disease

Patients will be considered to be in the terminal stage of renal disease (life expectancy of six months or less) if they meet the following criteria.

Acute or Chronic Renal Failure (1 and either 2, 3 or 4 should be present. Factors from 5 will lend support.)

1. The patient is not seeking dialysis or renal transplant, or is discontinuing dialysis.
2. Creatinine clearance < 10 cc/min (<15 cc/min. for diabetics); or < 15cc/min (< 20cc/min for diabetics) with comorbidity of congestive heart failure.
3. Serum creatinine > 8.0 mg/dl (>6.0 mg/dl for diabetics).
4. Estimated glomerular filtration rate (GFR) <10 ml/min.
5. Signs and symptoms of renal failure:
 - a. Uremia;
 - b. Oliguria (< 400 cc/24 hours);
 - c. Intractable hyperkalemia (> 7.0) not responsive to treatment;
 - d. Uremic pericarditis;
 - e. Hepatorenal syndrome;
 - f. Intractable fluid overload, not responsive to treatment.