



### **Role of the Supportive Care Nurse**

To provide scheduled or “just in time” conversations with patients (and families) when they are coping with late-stage chronic illnesses and can benefit from timely, skilled discussions about their goals of care and the treatment options that are aligned with those chosen goals.

### **Patients Who Will Benefit Most**

- Those with late-stage illnesses such as cancer, CHF, COPD, neuromuscular diseases, kidney disease, AIDS or dementia
- Those who have complex needs due to multiple co-morbidities or complicating factors such as diabetes or dementia
- Those who have repeated hospitalizations or trips to the ER, are in and out of rehab or who frequently call the office seeking help
- Those whose caregivers appear to need education and/or support in order to better understand and manage the patient’s complex condition

### **How to Suggest a Patient Meeting with the Supportive Care Nurse**

- **For patients with complex care needs / multiple co-morbidities**

*As you know, your health needs are pretty complex. And, there are a number of options for how we can take care of you. We think it would be very useful for you to speak with our Supportive Care Nurse. She will sort out all of your concerns, identify your greatest needs and help you determine what types of care you would or would not like to have. Then, when we talk about your treatment options in the future, we can make sure that anything we propose is supportive of your wishes.*

- **For patients with frequent hospitalizations / trips to the ER/rehab**

*I know you’re tired of going in and out of the hospital and we’d really like to keep that from happening, too. I want you to meet with our Supportive Care Nurse so she can spend some time discussing your condition and what types of care you do or do not want to have. That will help us manage things in the future so that we can keep you out of the hospital and enjoying a better quality of life.*

- **For patients with short life expectancy**

*Your health is continuing to decline and we want to make sure that, as we move forward, the care we provide will be exactly what you want—not too much and not too little. I’d like you to meet with our Supportive Care Nurse. She will spend some time with you to discuss your thoughts on this so we can understand your wishes and assure you the best quality of life possible.*