

Questions to Ask a Hospice

Bring this to the interview. A good hospice will welcome every question on it.

THE BASICS — verify before anything else

- ☐ Are you Medicare-certified, and how long have you served this area?
- ☐ Are you for-profit or nonprofit — and who owns the company?
- ☐ What is your Medicare star rating and your “would recommend” percentage?
- ☐ Can you give us references? (Watch how they react as much as what they say)

THE CARE — what actually happens

- ☐ What will the first week look like, day by day?
- ☐ How often will the nurse visit — and does that increase as the end nears?
- ☐ Who answers at 2 a.m., and how fast can someone be at the bedside?
- ☐ If symptoms spiral at home, can you provide continuous care here?
- ☐ Which facility do you use when symptoms can't be managed at home?

THE FAMILY — what's expected of us

- ☐ What exactly will our family be expected to do between visits?
- ☐ Will you teach us hands-on — medications, turning, bathing?
- ☐ How do we use the 5-day inpatient respite benefit when we need a break?
- ☐ What grief support comes after — for how long, and for whom?

THE TEAM — who's behind the nurse

- ☐ Will we have one consistent nurse, or a rotation?
- ☐ How quickly does the doctor adjust medications when comfort slips?
- ☐ What do the social worker, chaplain, aides, and volunteers actually do?

WALK AWAY IF...

They pressure you to sign today · They're vague about visit frequency · They dodge the ownership question
There's no 24/7 nurse line · They recruited YOU — cold calls or door-knocks when no doctor referred them
You can interview more than one hospice — and Medicare lets you switch if you've chosen wrong.