



**This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/sound-living-hospice-care>

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Sound Living: Understanding hospice care

K-State extension specialist explains how hospice care can help the dying and their families

By Lisa Moser, K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Just as newborns require a lot of care, so too do the elderly as they face their approaching death. For many, that care comes through a nurturing provider known as hospice.

“Hospice is a form of care that focuses on comfort, not healing,” said Erin Martinez, K-State Research and Extension specialist on adult development and aging. “With hospice, we are helping people live out the end of their life with dignity to make the entire dying process be the best it can be.”

Martinez said that a hospice team is comprised of many people, including doctors, nurses, aides, social workers and religious aids (for those who would like that counsel).

“This team of folks specialize in death and dying to make it a great experience for both the patient and the family,” Martinez said. “These folks keep the patient comfortable and educate the family on the dying process.”

To qualify for hospice care, the patient must be diagnosed with a terminal illness that will allow them to live less than six months if the disease were to run its normal course, Martinez said.

She added that hospice care can be done in the person’s home, or in a facility that feels like a home environment.

“Hospice is a family-based decision, but it is up to the individual about how they want to experience the end of their life,” Martinez said.

To help families learn more about hospice care and the services available, K-State extension specialists have created a fact sheet titled, [Understanding Hospice](#), available online from the [K-State Research and Extension bookstore](#).

Martinez said: “When we reach the end of our life, death can be complicated for some and smooth for others. The goal of hospice is to make this an easier process for all.”

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story

Understanding Hospice, [https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/item/understanding-hospice-fact-sheet MF3656](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/item/understanding-hospice-fact-sheet_MF3656)

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