What is hospice?  The purpose of hospice is to provide quality, compassionate support and care for people facing a life-limiting illness and their families. Hospice care is founded on the belief that, even when cure is no longer possible and time is measured in months or weeks, there is still an opportunity for quality of life, comfort, dignity, and hope. The care is provided by a trained team of health professionals and volunteers in the setting of choice (home, long-term care facility, hospital) supporting the physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs of the patient while supporting family members throughout this difficult time. Hospice reaffirms the right of every person and family to participate fully in the final stage of life. Hospice care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and most private insurance companies and is available to persons of any age, religion, or race.

Q: **What is the most significant role of the spiritual care person?**
A: Spiritual care throughout the end-of-life journey affords individuals and their loved ones the opportunity to reflect on personal beliefs, relationships, and life choices. Spiritual care staff traditionally counsels individuals, offering guidance and presence in the potential search for meaning, comfort, strength, and hope.

Q: **Does the spiritual care counselor represent a particular faith or religious practice?**
A: No, the spiritual care counselor respects the spiritual beliefs, faith traditions, and practices of all individuals. The spiritual care staff member does not replace an individual’s clergy connection; however, this individual may be a liaison with these specified community clergy.

Q: **What are the most frequently asked questions related to spirituality and end of life?**
A: “Why is this happening?”
“What do I believe?”
“What does life mean?”
“How can I have hope?”

Q: **Does the spiritual care counselor compete or attempt to replace the individual’s traditional spiritual leader within their faith tradition?**
A: Absolutely not, the spiritual care counselor may be a conduit for contacting the leadership of an individual’s traditional faith organization or may be a source of additional support with that person’s community clergy.

Q: **Is spiritual care synonymous with religion?**
A: It may be but not necessarily.

Q: **How are spiritual beliefs, issues, or concerns addressed?**
A: An intentional exploration may include but is not limited to the following interventions:
- Reflecting on one’s relationship with God
- Exploring the meaning of life
- Discussing spiritual beliefs and other concerns
- Seeking spiritual direction
- Reconciling life choices
- Praying, meditating, reading scripture
- Finding inner peace and comfort
- Memorializing through ritual and ceremony
- Talking about important relationships and sharing life stories
- Exploring one’s contributions and achievements through life review