

Palliative Care—An Inside Look

“I have cancer, and I don’t know if palliative care is right for me.”

This guide was created using the views of real cancer patients enrolled in palliative care services in Fresno. It highlights their experiences and understanding of this service, which is available to you.

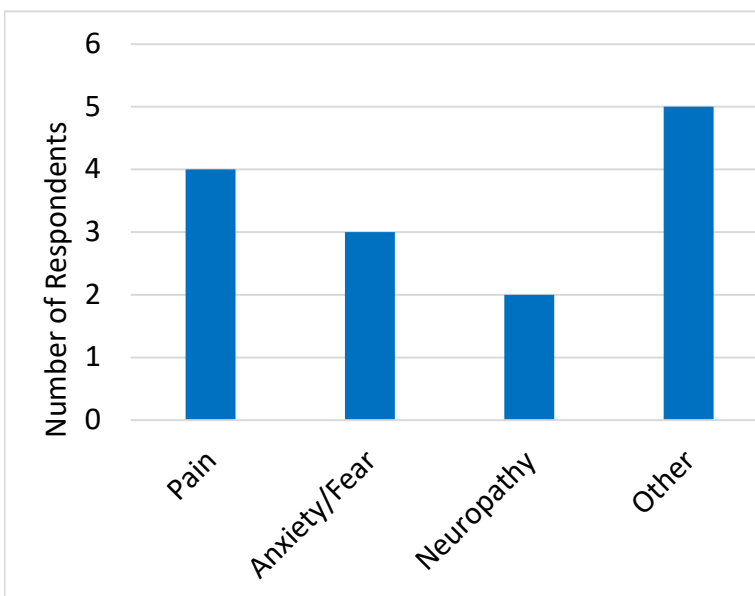


What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is a support service that focuses on improving quality of life. Those enrolled in this service receive help in the following aspects: pain and symptom management, nutritional support, counseling, and spiritual care.

“It’s a multi-disciplinary way of healthcare. And tries to explore different pathways to get them help, so that they can live better.” - 61-year-old patient with breast cancer.

Figure 1. Aspect of care most helped by palliative services, according to 14 patients.



Initial Thoughts vs Experiences

When first referred to palliative care, patients described feeling afraid. They had anxiety of the unknown, including not understanding how palliative care differed from hospice. After receiving services, most patients realized the role of palliative was to aid in their treatment journey, and it was not hospice.

“There is no fear anymore.” - 32-year-old patient with colon cancer.

Overall Experience and Next Steps

Palliative care is a support service that helps cancer patients along their treatment journey. Patients who have received services describe many benefits. If you are interested in receiving palliative care, talk to your doctor about getting a referral.

“It is the most caring, generous of spirit care I have ever received.” - 55-year-old patient with colon cancer.

“It’s been amazing, because if it wasn’t for this, I was gonna stop all my treatments.” - 54-year-old patient with breast cancer.

“So far I haven’t been suffering in any pain because of palliative care.” - 58-year-old patient with multiple myeloma.