

FACT SHEET

Compliance with New Jersey FamilyCare Community-Based Palliative Care Benefit: Spiritual Care



Information for Healthcare Providers and Administrators

Background

In December 2023, New York Governor Phil Murphy signed AB 5225 into law, requiring the development of palliative care benefit covered as a benefit of New Jersey FamilyCare. This new community-based palliative care benefit goes live **February 1, 2026**, requiring providers to deliver, interdisciplinary care to beneficiaries with serious illness in home and community based settings. The benefit includes specialized medical care, emotional, and spiritual support delivered by an interdisciplinary care team to patients with serious illness.

What the Benefit Covers

- **Palliative Care Services:** Pain and symptom management, [emotional and psychosocial support](#), [advance care planning](#), and [spiritual care](#).
- **Eligibility:** Individuals diagnosed with serious, life-limiting illnesses who meet Medicaid criteria for palliative care.

Expectations for Spiritual Care & Chaplain’s Role

Comprehensive palliative care includes a professional healthcare chaplain who serves as the spiritual care specialist of an interdisciplinary team.

Interdisciplinary Team	Chaplain’s Scope
<p>Required Providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overseeing physician (MD, DO)• Lead clinician (MD, DO, NP or PA)• RN & LCSW/LPC/LMFT• Mental health professional• Chaplain• Child Life Specialist (for pediatrics) <p>Optional Providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Home health aide• Pharmacist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spiritual Assessment of patient and family spiritual and existential needs• Care planning and care that includes interventions to address unmet needs• Documentation of spiritual care interventions• Support advance care planning facilitation• Collaboration with other team members to support holistic care• Grief Support and Caregiver Support

Chaplain Qualifications

Chaplains that are qualified to provide spiritual care services within New Jersey’s palliative care program must meet one of the following criteria:

- Board Certification in Healthcare Chaplaincy
OR
- Minimum Education requirements + 12 units of CEU

Provider Preparations

1. Review and understand New Jersey Medicaid palliative care regulations and guidance.
2. Assess current staffing and resources to meet interdisciplinary team standards.
3. Establish protocols for spiritual care assessment and documentation.
4. Train staff on benefit requirements and best practices in palliative care.
5. Update policies, procedures, and electronic health records to support compliance.
6. Engage in ongoing quality improvement and readiness monitoring.

How SpirituWell Supports Compliance & Quality Care

SpirituWell helps providers meet New Jersey Medicaid palliative care requirements:

- **Board Certified Healthcare Chaplain Team:** Provide professional, interfaith spiritual care
- **Assessment Tools:** Standardized instruments for spiritual and existential needs.
- **Documentation Support:** Templates and best practices for compliant record-keeping.
- **Clinical Integration:** Chaplain performed care planning and interventions
- **Staff Training:** Education for interdisciplinary teams about spiritual needs and existential distress of patients with serious illness.

References

- New Jersey Legislature. A-5225 (2023) – Community-Based Palliative Care Benefit Requirements. [Link to Bill](#)
- Coalition to Transform Advanced Care (C-TAC). NJ Governor Signs Medicaid Palliative Care Bill Into Law (2024). [Link to Article](#)
- Goals of Care Coalition of New Jersey, TFA Analytics, Ramy Sedhom, MD, Penn Center for Cancer Care Innovation. Palliative Care in New Jersey: Gaps and Opportunities to Improve Access (2024). [Link to Report](#)

Learn More

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