

	Department: Corporate Compliance	Policy No.: 503
	TITLE: INITIAL AND COMPREHENSIVE PATIENT ASSESSMENTS	
Effective Date: 1/1/15	Revised: 1/1/15	

INITIAL AND COMPREHENSIVE PATIENT ASSESSMENTS

SCOPE:

All Ascension At Home, LLC colleagues. For purposes of this policy, all references to “colleague” or “colleagues” include temporary, part-time and full-time employees, independent contractors, clinicians, officers and directors.

PURPOSE:

To provide guidance to all of Ascension At Home, LLC and its subsidiaries’ (the “Company”) colleagues for performing initial and comprehensive patient assessments for all hospice patients.

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Company that all initial and comprehensive patient assessments will be performed for all hospice patients in accordance with applicable laws and this Policy.

PROCEDURE:

Initial Assessments

- Professional Conducting Assessments. At a minimum, a hospice registered nurse is to conduct the initial assessment.
- Timing. An initial assessment visit must be performed on all Medicare patients within 48 hours after the election of hospice care. A Company physician, patient or representative may request that the initial assessment be completed in less than 48 hours after the election is made.
- Contents of the Initial Assessment: The Company professional assessing the patient will determine the patient’s need for hospice care as well as the patient’s need for physical, psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual care related to the patient’s terminal illness and related conditions.

Comprehensive Assessments

- Professional Conducting the Assessment. The Company's interdisciplinary group ("IDG"), in consultation with the patient's attending physician, if any, must complete the comprehensive assessment.
- Timing. A comprehensive assessment visit must be performed on all Medicare hospice patients within five (5) calendar days after the election of hospice care.
- Contents of the Comprehensive Assessment. The Company IDG will determine the patient's prescription, over-the-counter, and other drugs, as well as an initial bereavement assessment of the needs of the patient's family. The comprehensive assessment will also include a thorough evaluation of the caregiver's and family's willingness and capability to care for the patient.
- Areas of Assessment. The Comprehensive Assessment must take into consideration the following factors:
 1. The nature and condition causing admission.
 2. Complications and risk factors that affect care planning.
 3. Functional status, including the patient's ability to understand and participate in his or her own care.
 4. Imminence of death.
 5. Severity of symptoms.
 6. A review of all of the patient's prescription and over-the-counter drugs, herbal remedies and other alternative treatments that could affect drug therapy.
 7. An initial bereavement assessment of the needs of the patient's family and other individuals focusing on the social, spiritual, and cultural factors that may impact their ability to cope with the patient's death.
 8. The need for referrals and further evaluation by appropriate health professionals.
- Updates to the Comprehensive Assessment. The comprehensive assessment must be updated and revised by the Company IDG as frequently as the patient's condition warrants due to a major decline or improvement in the patient's health status, but not less frequently than every 15 days.
- Patient Outcome Measures. The comprehensive assessment must include data elements that allow for measurement of outcomes. These data elements must be

an integral part of the comprehensive assessment and must be documented in a systematic and retrievable way for each patient.

- Results of Assessment. If, based upon the Comprehensive Assessment (or any update to such Comprehensive Assessment), the Company determines that admission is not appropriate; the Company will notify the patient, the patient's physician and the referral source of this determination.