

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN END-OF-LIFE DOULA AND HOSPICE?

Both end-of-life doulas and hospice care aim to provide comfort and support to individuals who are nearing the end of their lives. However, there are some key differences between the two.

Hospice care is a medical service provided by licensed professionals, while end-of-life doulas provide non-medical support and companionship to the dying person and their family. While not licensed medical professionals, they have received specialized training in providing non-medical support to dying patients and their families.

Also, hospice care is usually covered by insurance or Medicare, and is provided at no cost to the patient or their family. End-of-life doulas can either be volunteers, as in the case at Franke Tobey Jones, or they can be hired privately by the family and are paid directly by the family for their services.



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MORE INFORMATION

This program is open to any Franke Tobey Jones resident on hospice or who has received a terminal diagnosis. **To learn more, contact the FTJ Social Worker at 253-756-6313.**



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END-OF-LIFE DOULA
Sometimes you need help
navigating the process
of dying

WHAT IS AN END-OF-LIFE DOULA?

Compassionate Care

End-of-life doulas provide companionship, comfort and guidance to those facing a terminal illness or death. This non-medical holistic support encompasses emotional, spiritual and practical care for both the dying person and their family and loved ones to make informed decisions in a supportive environment. In many ways, the core function of an end-of-life doula is to be present and listen to the needs of the person who is dying and the needs of those around them who are grieving. Part of that process is giving the person who is dying the space to confront their grief and be an active participant in their own dying process.



WHAT DOES AN END-OF-LIFE DOULA DO?

Each dying person's needs are unique and specific to their situation, but the services offered by an end-of-life doula could include a mix of the following:

- Providing the opportunity to talk openly and honestly about the dying process.
- Alleviating the anxiety, guilt and shame often associated with death and dying.
- Opening the door for legacy work.
- Developing a plan for how the person's environment looks, feels, sounds and smells.
- Sitting vigil with a person as they near their final moments.
- Supporting the spiritual practices of all involved.
- Processing emotions and experiences with loved ones.
- Coordinating with family and friends to evaluate visitation.
- Providing respite for exhausted caregivers.
- Encouraging appropriate ways of touching and comforting the dying person.
- Guiding people through the stages of grieving.

“The medical piece is just a small part of somebody’s end-of-life experience and we have to acknowledge, as healthcare providers, that sometimes the medical pieces aren’t the most important pieces. Sometimes, it’s connecting, from one human to another,” says Palliative Medicine Physician David Harris, MD, and end-of-life doula.

