

PALLIATIVE CARE POSITION STATEMENT

Palliative care is an interdisciplinary model of care focused on relief of the pain, stress and other debilitating symptoms and side effects of serious illness, such as cancer, cardiac disease, respiratory disease, kidney failure, Alzheimer's, AIDS, ALS, and MS. Its goal is to relieve suffering and provide the best possible quality of life for patients and their families. Palliative care can be offered simultaneously with life-prolonging and curative therapies for persons living with serious, complex, and eventually terminal illness and includes hospice care.

Due to a high symptom and treatment side effect burden, lung cancer patients may experience higher rates of pain and have greater unmet physical and psychosocial needs compared with those diagnosed with other types of cancer. These issues are compounded by a system of fragmented care, communication issues with health care providers, which can result in enormous strains on patients, their caregivers and other loved ones. Numerous studies have shown that adding palliative care along to treatment of lung cancer can result in better symptom and side effect control and increase quality of life, both for the patient and their loved ones.

GO₂Foundation for Lung Cancer, formerly Lung Cancer Alliance and the Bonnie J. Addario Foundation for Lung Cancer; strongly support and advocates for palliative care early in the disease, concurrent with active treatment in order to achieve better outcomes and improved quality of life for our community of patients, survivors and their caregivers. By its very nature, palliative care is patient-centered care — translating patient goals to appropriate treatments and palliative care has shown to extend survival with a high quality of life.

As a member of the Patient Quality of Life Coalition (PQLC), GO₂Foundation is working to ensure access to palliative care, including greater access to psychosocial services through enacting the Palliative Care and Hospice Education and Training Act.