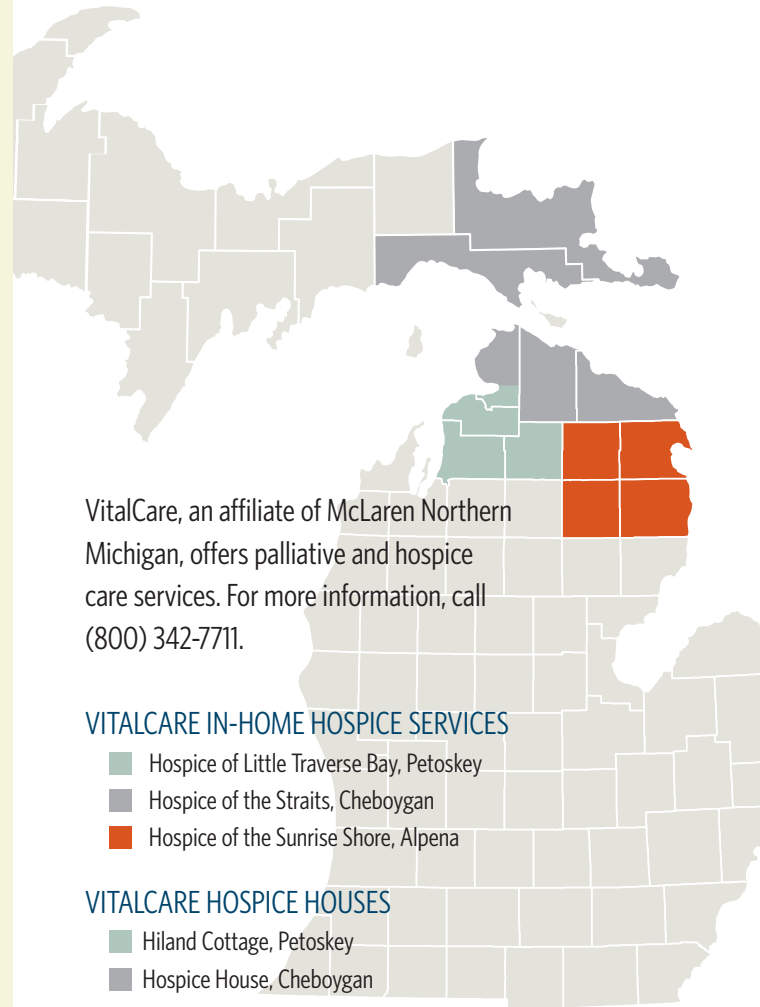


Taking the First Step



It sounds like a contradiction, but if you think about it, we all share the same future. Eventually, we and those we love, will all face end-of-life

choices. Wouldn't it be better to make choices and decisions now, rather than leave it up to others? Peace of mind comes with making your wishes known.



VitalCare, an affiliate of McLaren Northern Michigan, offers palliative and hospice care services. For more information, call (800) 342-7711.

VITALCARE IN-HOME HOSPICE SERVICES

- Hospice of Little Traverse Bay, Petoskey
- Hospice of the Straits, Cheboygan
- Hospice of the Sunrise Shore, Alpena

VITALCARE HOSPICE HOUSES

- Hiland Cottage, Petoskey
- Hospice House, Cheboygan

Make Your Wishes Known



NORTHERN MICHIGAN

(800) 248-6777
northernhealth.org

416 Connable Avenue
Petoskey, Michigan 49770



NORTHERN MICHIGAN

Starting the Conversation: Knowing When the Time is Right

Start the conversation about your end-of-life wishes with someone whom you trust: a family member, a friend, a member of the clergy, your nurse, or your physician. Sharing your thoughts and wishes before you face a medical crisis will bring comfort to you and your loved ones.

Now is the time to begin. Take that first step. Start the conversation with a trusted individual. Call (800) 342-7711, and ask to speak with the Hospice manager on call for more information.



END-OF-LIFE-PLANNING IS EMPOWERING

We know what we want for ourselves and our loved ones, but few of us follow through by making our wishes known. Statistics tell a powerful story.

- **90%** of people polled say that talking with loved ones about end-of-life care is important, yet **only 27%** have actually done so.
- **60%** of people polled say that making sure their family is not burdened by tough decisions is extremely important, yet **56%** of those have not communicated their end-of-life wishes.
- **80%** of people polled say that if seriously ill, they would want to talk to their doctor about medical treatment at the end of life, yet **only 7%** report having had this conversation with their doctor.
- **82%** of people say it's important to put wishes in writing, but **only 23%** have actually done it.

SOURCE: theconversationproject.org

THINKING ABOUT OUR CHOICES

It's not easy talking about the end of life. Even medical professionals find this topic difficult. But talking about your wishes before a medical crisis occurs gives a clear picture of the care you want.

- What measures do you want taken to prolong your life?
- What are your thoughts about pain management?
- How do you feel about life support systems?
- Do you want to be in your home, if possible?

THE BENEFITS OF PLANNING

Details are easier to handle when completed before a medical crisis. Below are a few recommendations.

- Prepare documents such as a Living Will, Advance Directive, or Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, which designate someone you trust to make decisions for you if you are not able
- Understand your personal medical conditions including the current stage and expected course
- Keep up-to-date prescription information
- Prepare detailed end-of-life care and treatment wishes
- Consider counseling for you and family members
- Keep financial plans and insurance policies up to date
- Communicate with related social agencies, if needed