

WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY HOSPICE

Financial Assistance (Charity Care) Policy

Effective Date: 05.05.2025

Approved By: Shelly McDiarmid, Chief Executive Officer & Board of Directors

Policy Number: **AD.F01**

NHPCO standard(s): OE 3.3, SA 5.6; SA 5.7

State Laws, Rules, Codes: NA

L-Tag – None

1. Purpose

Walla Walla Community Hospice (WWCH) is committed to providing compassionate end-of-life care regardless of a patient's ability to pay. This policy outlines the criteria and procedures for determining eligibility for charity care, within reasonable limitations and the financial ability of WWCH to provide charity care, for individuals who do not have sufficient financial resources to pay for care. This policy also ensures fair and consistent application of financial assistance to qualified patients. This policy applies to all charity care approved on or after May 5, 2025.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all hospice services provided directly by WWCH to eligible patients who are unable to pay for their care. It does not apply to services billed by third-party providers.

3. Policy Statement

WWCH offers charity care to patients, or their financial guarantor, who meet financial eligibility requirements. Charity care may cover all or a portion of hospice service costs, depending on financial need. There is no state or federal requirement for hospices to provide charity care. However, Walla Walla Community Hospice's charity care program aligns with industry best practices and supports WWCH's mission to ensure access to hospice services for all individuals regardless of financial status. WWCH reserves the right to limit financial assistance commensurate with budgetary constraints.

4. Eligibility Criteria

Charity care is approved for no more than 30 days per application for residents within Walla Walla Community Hospice's service area. Additional requests may be submitted if charity is needed beyond 30 days. Charity care eligibility takes into account household size and is based on:

- Household income relative to the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
 - 0–199% of FPL: 100% charity care.
 - 200–299% of FPL: Sliding scale discount (e.g., 75%–25%).
 - >300% FPL – Not eligible for charity care.
- Asset review, excluding primary residence and retirement accounts.
- Lack of other financial resources, including insurance coverage, government programs, or third-party payers.

5. Application Process

Patients or families may request a charity care application at any time before, during, or after the hospice episode.

A completed application includes:

- Complete application form.
- Proof of household income (e.g., pay stubs, tax returns).
- Proof of assets (e.g., bank statements).
- Explanation of financial hardship.

If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out to our finance team at: 509.525.5561.

6. Review and Determination

WWCH Finance Team will review applications, and determinations are generally made within 10 business days. Applicants will be notified in writing of the determination and any applicable covered amount. All information is kept confidential and used solely for the purpose of determining eligibility.

7. Appeals

Applicants may appeal a charity care denial, within 10 business days of charity care decision, if providing additional information to support eligibility. Appeals should be submitted in writing and will be reviewed by WWCH Controller and CEO or their designee. Final decisions on appeals will be made within 10 business days.

8. Communication of Policy

Charity care information is made available:

- On the WWCH website.
- In hospice admission packets.
- Upon request by patients, families, or caregivers.

Language assistance is provided for non-English speakers and individuals with disabilities.

9. Recordkeeping and Reporting

WWCH maintains records of all charity care determinations. Aggregate charity care data will be reported to the Board of Directors annually and included in community benefit reports as required.

10. Non-Discrimination

WWCH provides charity care in a manner that is free from discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected status.

Revision History

Date: 05.05.2025

Description: Revision

Approved By: WWCH Board
of Directors;