§ 131E-201. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless a different meaning or construction is clearly required by the context:

(1) "Commission" means the North Carolina Medical Care Commission.

(2) "Department" means the Department of Health and Human Services.

(3) "Hospice" means any coordinated program of home care with provision for inpatient care for terminally ill patients and their families. This care is provided by a medically directed interdisciplinary team, directly or through an agreement under the direction of an identifiable hospice administration. A hospice program of care provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of patients and their families, which are experienced during the final stages of terminal illness and during dying and bereavement.

(3a) "Hospice inpatient facility" means a freestanding licensed hospice facility or a designated inpatient unit in an existing health service facility which provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of terminally ill patients and their families in an inpatient setting.

(4) "Hospice patient" means a patient diagnosed as terminally ill by a physician licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina, who the physician anticipates to have a life expectancy of weeks or months, generally not to exceed six months, and who alone, or in conjunction with designated family members, has voluntarily requested and been accepted into a licensed hospice program.

(5) "Hospice patient's family" means the hospice patient's immediate kin, including a spouse, brother, sister, child, or parent. Other relations and individuals with significant personal ties to the hospice patient may be designated as members of the hospice patient's family by mutual agreement among the hospice patient, the relation or individual and the hospice team.

(5a) "Hospice residential care facility" means a freestanding licensed hospice facility which provides palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of terminally ill patients and their families in a group residential setting.

(5b) "Hospice services" means the provision of palliative and supportive medical and other health services to meet the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and special needs of patients and their families, which are experienced during the final stages of terminal illness and during dying and bereavement.

(6) "Hospice team" or "Interdisciplinary team" means the following hospice personnel: physician licensed to practice medicine in North Carolina; nurse holding a valid, current license as required by North Carolina law; social worker; clergy member; and trained hospice volunteer. Other health care practitioners may be included on the team as the needs of the patient dictate or at the request of the physician. Other providers of special services may also be included as the needs of the patient dictate.

(7) "Identifiable hospice administration" means an administrative group, individual, or legal entity that has an identifiable organizational structure, accountable to a governing board directly or through a chief executive

officer. This administration shall be responsible for the management of all aspects of the program.

(8) "Palliative care" means treatment directed at controlling pain, relieving other symptoms, and focusing on the special needs of the patient and family as they experience the stress of the dying process, rather than the treatment aimed at investigation and intervention for the purpose of cure or prolongation of life. (1983 (Reg. Sess., 1984), c. 1022, s. 1; 1993, c. 376, s. 5; 1997-443, s. 11A.118(a).)