

# The Four Paths to Eligibility

All four paths lead to the same destination: identification and support of a six-month prognosis

## Path One



Meets **ALL** the Local Coverage Determination (LCD) criteria

### The LCDs

- Developed by the MACs • Provide medical criteria for determining prognosis but not consistent predictors of prognosis
- Use as guidelines for documenting terminal illness
- If a patient meets certain criteria, they are deemed eligible
- If a patient doesn't meet the LCD, may still be eligible for the MHB but must document why (best done by a physician)
- Not the legal standard for hospice eligibility however, are followed by reviewers when reviewing for payment determinations

## Path Two



Meets most of the LCD criteria AND has documented **rapid clinical decline** supporting a limited prognosis

### Indicators of Rapid Clinical Decline

- Nutritional decline
- Functional decline
- Progressive deterioration while receiving appropriate care
- Hospital utilization
- Serial lab assessments

## Path Three



Meets most of the LCD criteria AND has **significant comorbidities** that contribute to a limited prognosis

Terminal Diagnosis: The condition established after study to be chiefly responsible for the patient's admission to hospice

Related: Secondary conditions or related co-morbid conditions that directly emerge or result from the terminal condition or co-morbid conditions associated with the terminal illness; interconnected with the terminal condition and impact prognosis

Unrelated: Conditions or diagnoses that are independent of the terminal condition

## Path Four



**Physician's clinical judgment** is that the patient has a limited prognosis

Clinical assessment + experience + evidence based knowledge