What constitutes complementary therapy?
Complementary therapies are health care and individual therapies that people use as adjuncts to their conventional health care, and are understood as complementing conventional medicine. Examples include physical therapy, massage therapy and therapeutic touch, music therapy, aromatherapy, Reiki, reflexology, pet therapy and relaxation/imagery exercises. Our goal is to provide therapies that complement and can be used alongside medical treatments. These therapies are caring and relaxing treatments that aim to improve both the physical and mental well being of our patients.

What complementary therapies will be offered at the Duke Hospice Inpatient units?
Volunteers at the Duke Hospice Inpatient Units (IPUs)—have begun offering Touch Therapy (Healing Touch and REIKI) at Hock Family Pavilion. Volunteers (harp and hammered dulcimer) currently provide music at the bedside at both IPUs. On March 30, PETS at Duke started offering animal assisted activity visits at HFP. Our staff and touch therapy volunteers have been trained to offer aromatherapy and will incorporate this into their practice. We hope to expand these programs to Hospice at Meadowlands. In addition to Touch Therapy (Healing Touch and Reiki) and music at the bedside, volunteers are being sought to offer art therapy, music therapy, and massage therapy.

What constitutes these therapies and who will offer them?
Animal Assisted therapy is the use of trained therapy dogs/animals and handlers with patients to reduce and manage anxiety and promote improvement in the physical, social and emotional functioning of our patients by focusing on the attention provided by the pet. This therapy can provide a normalized experience which may enhance coping and relaxation. Duke Hospice will partner with Pets at Duke to provide pet therapy teams to visit patients at our IPUs beginning at HFP on March 30. Animal assisted therapy is available for our home/PARTners patients by referral to the Helping Paws agency.

Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that focuses on the creative process as a healing process, and on resulting artwork as a form of communication. Art therapy can be especially effective with individuals who have difficulty expressing themselves verbally, and those with highly developed verbal skills who use their verbalizations as a defense. The process of doing art is more important than the product. While a person creates, the art therapist pays attention to the person’s mood, facial expression, body posture, and emotional, verbal, as well as artistic expressions. Art therapists working in the hospice setting focus on strengths, and nurture and support the individual and the creative process. They help patients and their loved ones get in touch with deep feelings and issues revealed in their images. By making art and then verbally processing it, when appropriate, the patient or family member gain insight and understanding that have the potential to lower the anxiety and fear surrounding death. Training of an art therapist would typically include a Masters Degree in, or specializing in, Art Therapy. The course work requires extensive study of psychology, counseling, and art therapy practice as well as studio art and the creative process. Following this, to receive accreditation as a Registered Art Therapist (A.T.R.), the art therapist must accumulate 1,000 supervised, client-contact art therapy hours and must apply for credentialing.

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1 The majority of this information is taken from Complementary Therapies in End-of-Life Care, National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, 2003. Additional sources noted as appropriate.
2 http://www.nhpco.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=5563
Music therapy is the “use of music in the accomplishment of therapeutic aims: the restoration, maintenance and improvement of mental and physical health” (1999 American Music Therapy Sourcebook). The therapeutic experience can be designed specifically to address patients’ individual needs, cultural/spiritual backgrounds, and personal preferences. Some activities include Life review with music, Music listening, Topical songs with discussion, Participation in music experiences (singing, playing instruments), Lyric analysis, Song writing, Music with imagery or relaxation exercises. Training includes a bachelor’s degree, or higher, in music therapy, including an internship approved by the American Music Therapy Association.

Touch Therapy: Healing Touch is an eclectic combination of energy-based hand-mediated techniques that are gentle and non-invasive, and have been shown to be useful in improving sleep, healing wounds, and reducing pain, anxiety, depression, and other symptoms related to the care of the terminally ill, in promoting relaxation, and enhancing the quality of life. Despite the name, Healing Touch does not require physical touch: the techniques can be used within a few inches of the body. The tools are the therapist’s hands and their intent, and the techniques can be applied through meditation or prayer. The Healing Touch practitioners use their hands to assess the energy field surrounding the body, without touching the body.

Touch Therapy: Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. It is administered by "laying on hands" and is based on the idea that an unseen "life force energy" flows through us and is what causes us to be alive. If one's "life force energy" is low, then we are more likely to get sick or feel stress, and if it is high, we are more capable of being happy and healthy. In a standard treatment Reiki energy flows from the practitioner’s hands into the client. The client is usually recumbent but treatments can also be given while the client is seated or even standing. The client remains fully clothed. The practitioner places her/his hands on or near the client’s body in a series of hand positions around the head and shoulders, the stomach, and feet.

Massage therapy is well known for its contribution to pain and stress management and for evoking an overall relaxation response in the recipient. Pain control is often a primary concern for individuals who have cancer or other progressively debilitating diseases. Pain is a subjective sensation that is influenced by any number of physical, emotional and social circumstances. Stress and fear are known to increase the experience of pain. Massage has long proven useful as a primary or adjunct therapy for any condition that includes a stress component. The most commonly used general therapeutic massage strokes are effleurage (gliding stroke), petrissage (kneading stroke), friction, vibration (applied in a series of rapid shaking movements), tapotement (striking or tapping movements, applied alternately but smoothly by the hands), range of motion (applied to joints of the body). In North Carolina Licensed Massage and Bodywork Therapists (LMBT) must complete a 500 hour educational program at a board approved school and apply for licensure through the board. Additionally, a massage therapist working with hospice patients should have specialized training and/or experience in relating to those nearing the end of life.

Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils to benefit the mind, body, and spirit. The oils can be refreshing, calming, antiseptic, stimulating, meditative, or aphrodisiac. Essential oils can be used in a bath, inhaled, used in conjunction with a massage, in a compress, or in a mist as an air freshener. Aromatherapy has been used for dry, itchy skin and anxiety (lavender), odor control, restlessness, nausea (peppermint or sweet orange), shortness of breath (eucalyptus globules), constipation, edema, pain control and releasing emotional issues. Essential oils have also been used with wound care.