

Palliative Care

*It's more
than they think.*



The ultimate aim of palliative care is to help your patients live as well as possible, for as long as possible.



PalliativeCare
AUSTRALIA

What is palliative care?

Palliative care plays a fundamental role in the care of many people with life-limiting illnesses, helping to improve the quality of life of both patients and their families across a patient's illness.

Improving quality of life involves prevention, early identification, assessment, and management of a range of problems, whether medical, psychosocial, or spiritual.

Palliative care enhances quality of life by treating burdensome symptoms arising from life-limiting illnesses throughout their disease journey – not just at the end of life. Palliative care specialists often work alongside other specialist medical teams in a shared care model to support patients, and their involvement does not require stopping treatment used to stabilise or manage a condition.

Who is palliative care for and when should they receive it?

Palliative care is appropriate for anyone with a life limiting illness, including, but not limited to, advanced cancer, progressive neurological diseases, and advanced organ dysfunction.





The leading causes of death in Australia are now related to chronic diseases and as the population ages this will continue to increase. Often these patients have complex needs and symptoms that would benefit from a palliative approach to care.

Every service has slightly different criteria for referral. In general, referral to specialist palliative care is appropriate for patients diagnosed with advanced and progressive life-limiting conditions that create complex physical, psychological, or social problems.

The referral needs to be discussed and consented to by the patient and/or their family. It is also ideal if patients have commenced advance care planning to think about their future care. If you have any questions about eligibility for referral it is advisable to speak to your local palliative care team.

How can palliative care help you and your patients?

Early palliative care has been shown to prolong life in a number malignant and non-malignant illness, as well as improve quality of life and reduce symptom burden. It also reduces the number of hospital admissions, and visits to the emergency department, as well as shortening hospital lengths of stay.

Palliative care can help with specific issues such as:

- Symptom management
- Equipment needs
- Future planning
- Providing support to families and caregivers
- Complex end of life care

How do I access palliative care for my patients or find out more information?

Speaking to your local palliative care service will provide you with up-to-date information about the services available in your area. Most services have access to community based palliative care, inpatient palliative care, inpatient consult liaison support and ambulatory outpatient services.

You can obtain general palliative care information through the Palliative Care Australia website.

You will also find additional information, as well as resources for the general public and a GP Kit, at the 'More than you think' campaign website.

To find out more, visit:

morethanyouthink.org.au

Or Palliative Care Australia

www.palliativecare.org.au



Clinician Campaign Resources

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