

NW Metro Specialist Palliative Care Services Quickguide

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A web version of this Services Quickguide, along with further information and resources can be found on our website, www.northwestpalliative.com.au

Your Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the Services Quickguide and other areas of our website, including any factual errors, omissions, broken links etc. along with other suggestions for enhancements we should consider.

Email your feedback to consortium@mcm.org.au or use our [website feedback form](#).



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Contents

Introduction

NW Metro regional map

Specialist palliative care overview

1. Community palliative care services
2. Palliative care units/wards/hospice of public hospitals
3. Palliative care consultancy services of public hospitals
4. Outpatient clinics with a palliative care focus
5. Day hospices
6. Paediatric palliative care
7. Palliative care consortium
8. Online clinical resources and education
9. Other Victorian service contacts

Appendix A: Victorian Government end of life and palliative care framework

Appendix B: Australian Government palliative care initiatives

Appendix C: Primary Health Networks

Appendix D: Palliative care defined

Appendix E: Principles of a good death

The [resources section of our website](#) has information on additional topics, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's journeys
- Advance care planning
- Aged care and palliative care
- Disability and palliative care
- Carers
- Community conversations and campaigns
- Cultural diversity
- Grief and bereavement support
- State/Territory and national palliative care organisations
- International palliative care organisations
- Palliative care publications and journals

Other sources of further information include:

- [The end of life and palliative care section of the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel](#)
- [The Victorian Government's Palliative Care Program website](#)
- [Palliative Care Victoria](#)

Introduction

Sometimes picking up the phone and having a conversation with a specialist palliative care service is the best way to get the information you need. This Services Quickguide provides information about specialist palliative care services for people living in the north and west metropolitan region of Melbourne (NW Metro):

- What are the different types of specialist palliative care services?
- Where can I access further information and check service details, including referral criteria?
- In what circumstances should we refer to specialist palliative care?
- How will specialist palliative care work in partnership with families and existing care providers?

In this guide, we have not attempted to include detailed information about referral criteria or models of care for each service. Rather, you are encouraged to check the websites listed for further information and phone to discuss referral and service delivery issues.

Palliative care partnerships and teamwork

The [Victorian Government's end of life and palliative care framework](#) notes that:

- Quality end of life and palliative care is everyone's responsibility (p22) and
- It is no longer possible to leave end of life care to (specialist) palliative care providers (p1).

The framework urges specialist palliative care services and the healthcare, human services, social and community sectors to work together to develop innovative new strategies to deliver care (p1). This Quickguide is designed to help this 'working better together' across sectors.

The key audience for this guide is ...

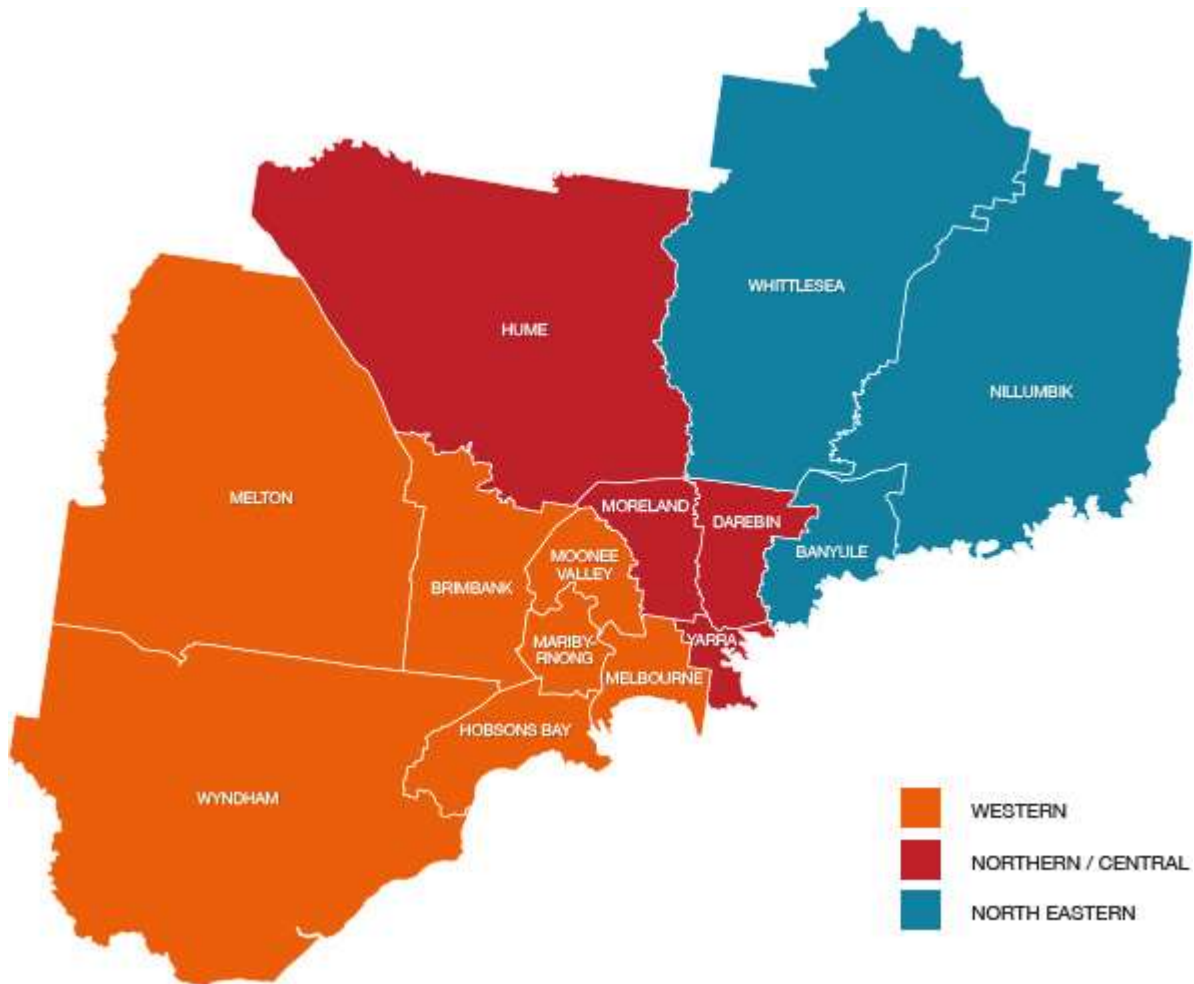
If you work within the specialist palliative care system, you'll already know most of what's in this guide. It wasn't written with you in mind. Likewise, if you are someone living with a life-limiting illness, or caring for someone with a life-limiting illness, while you may find parts of this guide helpful, it hasn't been written specifically for you. Good starting points for information for you are [Palliative Care Victoria](#) and the [end of life and palliative care section of the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel](#). We have also included [information for family and friends providing care within the resources section of our website](#).

The key audience for this guide is the wide variety of people working in the healthcare, human services, social and community sectors. You might be a nurse at a GP clinic, you might be a GP. You might work in a hospital. You might be part of a Primary Health Network. You might be a medical or allied health specialist. Maybe you work for one of Victoria's chronic illness services. Or perhaps you work for a community aged care provider or an aged care facility, or with people with a disability or in the mental health sector.

Palliative care is your business, and we hope this guide helps you consider ways you can work together with specialist palliative care services to provide people with a life-limiting illness and their families with the high quality support they need and deserve.

NW Metro regional map

The north and west metropolitan region of Melbourne (NW Metro) covers fourteen local government areas (LGAs) with three community palliative care sub-regions.



The western part of the region includes Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham. This is the community palliative care catchment area for [Mercy Palliative Care](#).

The northern/central part of the region includes Yarra, Darebin, Moreland, Hume. This is the community palliative care catchment area for [Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care](#).

The north-eastern part of the region: Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. This part of the region is the community palliative care catchment area for [Banksia Palliative Care Service](#).

Key demographics of the NW Metro region include:

- Measured by population, NW Metro is around one third (33%) of Victoria.
- The region is culturally diverse, with three out of every ten residents of the region (30%) being born in a non-English speaking country.
- In 2014, there were 9,520 deaths of residents in the region, around one quarter (25%) of all deaths in Victoria (38,042).

Specialist palliative care overview

The [Victorian Government's end of life and palliative care framework](#) summarises specialist palliative care as a designated sector “funded to provide care for those with the most complex end of life and palliative care needs” (p5).

The framework also notes: “Often the most valuable role palliative care specialists play is supporting other healthcare teams and professionals through consultation, advice and support to provide end of life care to their patients” (p5).

The types of specialist palliative care services summarised in this section are:

- Community palliative care
- Palliative care wards/units/hospice of public hospitals
- Palliative care consultancy services of metropolitan public hospitals
- Outpatient clinics with a palliative care focus
- Day hospices
- Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program
- Palliative Care Consortia

Community palliative care services

Community palliative care services work in partnership with health, aged and community services to support people to stay living at home as long as possible and to die at home if that is their wish.

Community palliative care includes support for family carers and close friends, including with bereavement.

Staffing of community palliative care services includes home visiting nurses and a variety of allied health professionals, therapists and volunteers.

In the NW Metro region, we have three community palliative care services:

- [Banksia Palliative Care Service](#)
- [Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care](#)
- [Mercy Palliative Care](#)

As outlined in our NW Metro regional map, people are ‘zoned’ to one of the region’s three community palliative services according to where they live, designated by local government areas (LGAs).

GPs, hospitals and other health, aged and community services can make referrals to community palliative care. People can also self-refer.

Specialist palliative care overview (continued)

Palliative care wards/units of public hospitals

Palliative care wards/units of public hospitals tend to be referred to by the term 'unit' or 'inpatient unit' rather than 'ward'.

Some hospitals have one dedicated palliative care unit. In other hospitals the number of palliative care 'beds' form part of a unit combined with other types of beds (e.g. geriatric evaluation and management).

The palliative care units of public hospitals available to residents of NW Metro include:

- [Austin Hospital Palliative Care Unit](#), Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre (of Austin Health), Heidelberg, 21 beds
- [Caritas Christi Hospice](#) (of St Vincent's Health Melbourne), Kew, 28 beds
- [McKenna House at Broadmeadows Health](#) (of Northern Health), Jacana, 24 beds
- [Royal Melbourne Hospital Palliative Care Unit](#) (of Melbourne Health) operating as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC), 12 beds
- [St Vincent's Hospital Fitzroy Campus Palliative Care Unit](#) (of St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne), 8 beds
- [Sunshine Hospital Palliative Care Unit](#) (of Western Health), 12 beds
- [Werribee Mercy Hospital's Gabrielle Jennings Centre](#) (of Mercy Health), 12 beds

In addition to specialist doctors and nurses, hospital palliative care units draw on support from hospital allied health teams and volunteers.

Unlike community palliative care services, access to bereavement support is not part of the service model for adult hospital based specialist palliative care services. Bereavement support available through hospitals will vary from service to service and will depend on the availability and expertise of staff from the hospital's allied health team.

Hospice

Hospice is a word associated with a concept of care focused on creating a natural and comfortable end of life experience for people with a life limiting illness and their families.

In some areas, community palliative care style services are referred to as 'hospice in the home' or 'home hospice'. Our region includes two services known as a day hospice.

Hospice is part of the name of one public hospital palliative care unit available for residents of NW Metro, [Caritas Christi Hospice in Kew](#). Caritas Christi is part of St Vincent's Health Melbourne. The Caritas building is physically separate from St Vincent's main hospital campus in Fitzroy. In terms of service type, Caritas Christi is funded on the same 'palliative care bed' basis as all public hospital palliative care units.

Specialist palliative care overview (continued)

Palliative care consultancy services of metropolitan public hospitals

Palliative care consultancy services of metropolitan public hospitals are teams of specialist doctors and nurses who provide palliative care advice to assist treating teams across all areas of the hospital.

Palliative care consultancy advice may include: pain and symptom management, including emotional and spiritual distress; assistance with decision-making and family/patient communication; discharge planning; linking in with community palliative care services and/or possible admission to the hospital's palliative care unit.

In addition to seeing hospital inpatients, staff from palliative care consultancy teams are often involved in outpatient clinics, including both specialist palliative care clinics and other clinics where palliative care issues need to be considered.

All referrals to palliative care consultancy services are internal to hospitals via hospital staff making contact with the service. All metropolitan public hospitals have a palliative care consultancy service, including the following available to NW Metro residents:

- [Austin Health Palliative Care Consultative Service](#)
- [Melbourne Heath Palliative Care Consulting Service](#) (operating as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre)
- [Northern Heath Palliative Care Consult Service](#)
- [Peter McCallum Cancer Institute \(Peter Mac\) Pain and Palliative Care Team](#) (operating as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre)
- [St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Palliative Care Consultation Service](#)
- [Werribee Mercy Hospital's Palliative Care Consultancy](#)
- [Western Health Palliative Care Consultancy](#)

Outpatient clinics with a palliative care focus

Outpatient clinics of public hospitals involve people attending an appointment at the hospital to see a medical specialist and/or other professionals from a specialist medical care team.

The specialist palliative care clinics run by hospitals are run by palliative care consultancy teams, sometimes in collaboration with community palliative care services, e.g. the [Symptom Management and Referral Team \(SMART\) clinics at Sunshine and Footscray hospitals](#) are a combined initiative of the Western Health Palliative Care Consultancy Service and Mercy Palliative Care.

Other palliative care clinics in NW Metro include [Austin Health's palliative care clinic](#) and a range of clinics run by [Melbourne Health](#) and [Peter Mac](#) operating together as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

In addition, staff from palliative care consultancy teams are often involved in other clinics where palliative care issues need to be considered, e.g. [the renal, respiratory and heart failure clinics at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Fitzroy campus](#).

Specialist palliative care overview (continued)

Day hospices

Day hospices provide centre-based activities and support for people living with a life-limiting illness who are living in the community and are able to travel to the day hospice location. Day hospices aim to support people through their illness, managing symptoms and promoting wellbeing.

Activities may include cooking, gardening, craft, various therapies, conversation, companionship and other tailored one off support such as the Western Health/Mercy Palliative Care 'Wellcare Wishes', where a person expresses a wish and an experience is tailored to suit them and their family in order to create special memories. Staffing includes a mix of nurses, counsellors and volunteers. Medical support is also available. Benefits include time-out (respite) for carers.

Residents of NW Metro can access two day hospices:

- [The Wellcare program at Sunshine Hospital](#) and
- [The Palliative Day Care program of Caritas Christi in Kew.](#)

Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program

The Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program (VPPCP) is a collaboration of the [Royal Children's Hospital \(RCH\)](#), [Very Special Kids \(VSK\)](#) and Monash Health.

Funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, the VPPCP is a consultation-liaison team responsible for the facilitation of care of children with palliative care needs and their families. The team do not provide direct patient care. Rather, team members facilitate better communication between hospitals and care providers in the community, thus allowing more children to be cared for at home.

The VPPCP team is comprised of specialist doctors, case managers/social workers, occupational therapists and nurses who work closely with each of the member organisations to coordinate care and provide appropriate advice regarding various aspects of patient management. Educational activities for staff from both hospital and community agencies are also offered by the VPPCP.

Palliative care consortia

Palliative care consortia promote collaborative approaches to quality improvement in palliative care, including co-operation between specialist palliative care services and people working in healthcare, human services and the social and community sectors.

There are eight palliative care consortia in Victoria including three in metropolitan Melbourne and five in regional and rural Victoria. The work of the [North and West Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium](#) includes the management of [funded projects to improve palliative care in aged care facilities and disability group homes.](#)

1. Community palliative care services

As outlined in our NW Metro regional map, people are 'zoned' to one of the region's three community palliative services according to where they live, designated by local government areas (LGAs). See details below, including suburb listings for LGAs.

Banksia Palliative Care Service

Catchment Area: Local government areas (LGAs) of Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea. See also listings by suburb.

Referrals Phone: 9456 9744. Switchboard: 9455 0822

Fax: 9455 3199

Website: <http://www.banksiapalliative.com.au/>

Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care

Catchment Area: Local government areas (LGAs) of Darebin, Hume, Moreland and Yarra. See also listings by suburb.

Phone: 9486 2666

Fax: 9482 5094

Website: <http://www.melbournecitymission.org.au/services/palliative-care>

Mercy Palliative Care

Catchment Area: Local government areas (LGAs) of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham. See also listings by suburb.

Phone: 9364 9777

Fax: 9364 9198

Website: <http://www.mercyhealth.com.au/hcmhs/clinics/Pages/Palliative%20Care.aspx>

After-Hours Community Palliative Care

Normal 'business hours' of community palliative care services are 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, existing community palliative care clients and their families/carers have access to an after-hours contact number where a nurse can provide phone advice and, if necessary, initiate an after-hours home visit.

Also of note:

RDNS (formerly known as the Royal District Nursing Service) has partnership arrangements with all three of the region's community palliative care services, including for the provision of after-hours services.

Phone: 1300 33 44 55

Website: <http://www.rdns.com.au/services-we-provide/individuals/services-we-provide/palliative-care-and-bereavement-support>

Suburbs within LGAs for community palliative care eligibility

In most cases the whole of a suburb is within one LGA. Some suburbs are split between LGAs, e.g. parts of Bundoora are in Banyule and Whittlesea (and therefore zoned to Banksia Palliative Care Service). Other parts of Bundoora are in Darebin (and therefore zoned to Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care).

Banksia Palliative Care Service

Banyule: *Briar Hill, Bundoora (part), Eaglemont, Greensborough, Heidelberg Heights, Heidelberg West/Bellfield, Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe East, Lower Plenty, Macleod, Montmorency, Rosanna, St Helena/Eltham North, Viewbank, Watsonia, Watsonia North, Yallambie.*

Nillumbik: *Arthurs Creek, Bend of Islands, Christmas Hills, Cottles Bridge, Diamond Creek, Doreen (part), Eltham, Eltham North, Hurstbridge, Kangaroo Ground, North Warrandyte, Panton Hill, Plenty, Research, Smiths Gully, St Andrews, Strathewen, Watsons Creek, Wattle Glen, Yan Yean (part), Yarrambat.*

Whittlesea: *Beveridge (part), Bundoora (part), Donnybrook, Doreen (part), Eden Park, Epping, Humevale, Kinglake West, Lalor, Mernda, Mill Park, South Morang, Thomastown, Whittlesea, Wollert, Woodstock.*

Melbourne City Mission Palliative Care

Darebin: *Alphington, Bundoora (part), Coburg, Fairfield, Kingsbury, Macleod, Northcote, Preston, Reservoir, Thornbury.*

Hume: *Attwood, Broadmeadows, Bulla, Campbellfield, Coolaroo, Craigieburn, Dallas, Gladstone Park, Goonawarra, Greenvale, Jacana, Kalkallo, Konagaderra, Meadow Heights, Melbourne Airport, Mickleham, Oaklands Junction, Roxburgh Park, Sunbury, Somerton, Tullamarine, Upfield, Westmeadows, Yuroke.*

Moreland: *Brunswick East, Brunswick West, Coburg, Coburg North, Fawkner, Glenroy, Gowanbrae, Hadfield, Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Pascoe Vale South, Fitzroy North (part), Tullamarine (part).*

Yarra: *Alphington (part), Abbotsford, Burnley, Clifton Hill, Collingwood, Cremorne, Fairfield (part), Fitzroy, Fitzroy North (part) North Carlton, Princes Hill, Richmond.*

Mercy Palliative Care

Brimbank: *Albion, Cairnlea, Deer Park, Delahey, Hillside, Keilor, Kings Park, St Albans, Sunshine, Sydenham, Taylors Lakes.*

Hobsons Bay: *Altona Meadows, Altona North and Brooklyn, Altona – Seaholme, Laverton, Newport West, South Kingsville and Spotswood, Williamstown.*

Maribyrnong: *Braybrook, Footscray, Kingsville, Maidstone, Maribyrnong, Seddon, Tottenham, West Footscray, Yarraville.*

Melbourne: *Carlton, Docklands, East Melbourne, Kensington/Flemington, Melbourne and the CBD, North Melbourne, Parkville, Port Melbourne, Southbank, South Yarra (part), West Melbourne.*

Melton: *Brookfield, Burnside/Burnside Heights, Caroline Springs, Diggers Rest, Eastern Corridor, Eynesbury, Hillside, Kurunjang, Melton South, Melton Township, Melton West, Rockbank, Taylors Hill.*

Moonee Valley: *Aberfeldie, Airport West, Ascot Vale, Avondale Heights, Essendon, Essendon Fields, Essendon North, Essendon West, Flemington (part), Keilor East (part), Moonee Ponds, Niddrie, Strathmore, Strathmore Heights, Travancore.*

Wyndham: *Cocoroc, Eynesbury, Hoppers Crossing, Laverton (part), Laverton North, Little River (part), Mambourin, Mt Cottrell, Point Cook, Quandong, Tarneit, Truganina, Werribee, Werribee South, Williams Landing, Wyndham Vale.*

2. Palliative care units/wards/hospice of public hospitals

Austin Health Palliative Care Unit

145 Studley Rd Heidelberg, Ward 8 South, Level 8, Olivia Newton John Cancer and Wellness Centre

21 palliative care beds

Phone: 9496 2542

Fax: 9496 4213

Website: <http://www.austin.org.au/palliative-care/>

Caritas Christi Hospice

104 Studley Park Rd Kew

28 palliative care beds

Referrals Phone: 9231 5000 (Caritas switchboard). For admissions, ask for Admissions Coordinator.

Fax: 9853 1509

Website: <https://svhm.org.au/home/our-services/departments-and-services/p/palliative-care-services/our-services/inpatient/inpatient-campuses>

Northern Health Palliative Care Unit (McKenna House at Broadmeadows Health)

35 Johnstone St Jacana

24 palliative care beds

Intake Phone: 8405 2806 or 8405 2807. McKenna House general phone: 8345 5235

Fax: 8405 2805

Website: <http://www.nh.org.au/services/mckenna-house>

Royal Melbourne Hospital Palliative Care Unit of Melbourne Health

300 Grattan St (Cnr Royal Parade) Parkville, Ward 7 West

12 palliative care beds operating as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre

Phone: 9342 2580

Fax: 9342 2584

Website: <https://www.thermh.org.au/patients-visitors/services-clinics/palliative-supportive-care>

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (Fitzroy Campus) Palliative Care Unit

41 Victoria Parade Fitzroy, Building A, Level 6

8 palliative care beds

Referrals Phone: 9231 5000 (Caritas Christi switchboard). Admissions process for SVMH Fitzroy shared with Caritas Christi. Ask for Admissions Coordinator. Fitzroy hospital campus switchboard: 9231 2211.

Referrals Fax: 9853 1509 (Caritas Christi shared admissions process).

Website: <https://svhm.org.au/home/our-services/departments-and-services/p/palliative-care-services/our-services/inpatient/inpatient-campuses>

2. Palliative care wards/units/hospice of public hospitals (continued)

Sunshine Hospital Palliative Care Unit of Western Health

176 Furlong Rd St Albans, Ground Floor Sub-acute

12 palliative care beds in a combined GEM/Palliative Care ward

Phone: 8345 1792

Fax: 8345 0695

Website: http://www.westernhealth.org.au/Services/Cancer_Services/Pages/Palliative-Care.aspx

Werribee Mercy Hospital Palliative Care Unit (Gabrielle Jennings Centre)

300 Princes Hwy Werribee

12 palliative care beds

Phone: 8754 3731

Fax: 9216 8751

Website: <http://www.mercyhealth.com.au/hcmhs/services/o-r/Pages/Palliative%20Care.aspx>

Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC)

Palliative care services of Melbourne Health (including those based at Royal Melbourne Hospital) and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac) operate together as a shared service of the [Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre \(VCCC\)](#). The services include the 12 bed inpatient unit at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, cancer and non-cancer outpatient clinics, and the inpatient palliative care consultation service that covers the Parkville Precinct (Royal Melbourne Hospital, Royal Women's Hospital and Peter Mac).

3. Palliative care consultancy services of public hospitals

Austin Health Palliative Care Consultative Service

Phone: via hospital switchboard 9496 5000 and ask for the palliative care clinical nurse consultant or registrar to be paged.

<http://www.austin.org.au/palliative-care/>

Melbourne Heath Palliative Care Consulting Service (based at Royal Melbourne Hospital)*

Phone: 9342 7820.

<https://www.thermh.org.au/health-professionals/clinical-services/palliative-supportive-care>

Northern Heath Palliative Care Consult Service (based at Epping Hospital)

Phone: via Epping hospital switchboard 8405 8000.

<http://www.nh.org.au/services/palliative-care-services>

Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac) Pain and Palliative Care Team*

Phone: 8559 7960.

<https://www.petermac.org/services/treatment/palliative-care>

Royal Children's Hospital (Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program)

Phone: 9345 5374.

http://www.rch.org.au/rch_palliative/

St Vincent's Hospital Palliative Care Consultation Service

Phone: 9231 2827 or via hospital switchboard 9231 2211 and ask for Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Consultant pager 1335.

<https://svhm.org.au/home/our-services/departments-and-services/p/palliative-care-services>

Werribee Mercy Hospital Palliative Care Consultancy

Phone: via hospital switchboard 8754 3000.

<http://www.mercyhealth.com.au/hcmhs/services/o-r/Pages/Palliative%20Care.aspx>

Western Health Palliative Care Consultancy (based at Sunshine Hospital)

Phone via the Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Consultant (CNC) 8345 1964 (Sunshine) or 8345 7068 (Footscray).

http://www.westernhealth.org.au/Services/Cancer_Services/Pages/Palliative-Care.aspx

Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC)

Palliative care services of Melbourne Health and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac) operate together as a shared service of the [Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre \(VCCC\)](#). This includes the respective palliative care consultation services that work together through the VCCC to cover the Parkville Precinct (Royal Melbourne Hospital, Royal Women's Hospital and Peter Mac).

4. Outpatient clinics with a palliative care focus

Austin Health palliative care clinic

The Austin Health palliative care clinic is for people known to Austin Health. People need to be well enough to attend clinic without causing any distress to themselves or their carers. The focus of the clinic is specialist medical treatment advice. The clinic is not multidisciplinary.

The clinic is currently held on Thursday afternoons. To discuss possible referrals, contact the Registrar of the [Austin Palliative Care Consult Service](#) on 9496 5000 (Austin Switchboard) and ask for pager 1739 during business hours. See also [outpatient clinics referral form](#) and [referral process summary](#).

Northern Health

Northern Health is not currently running any outpatient clinics with a specific palliative care focus. Northern Health Palliative Care Consult Service staff are available to attend other clinics on request. For enquiries phone [Northern Health Palliative Care Consult Service](#) via the Epping hospital switchboard 8405 8000.

Royal Melbourne Hospital (Melbourne Health) and Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute (Peter Mac) operating together as part of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre

Palliative care services of Melbourne Health (including those based at Royal Melbourne Hospital) and the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre (Peter Mac) operate together as a shared service of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC).

In addition to involvement in various clinics at the Royal Melbourne (e.g. Nephrology Supportive Care Clinic – advanced kidney diseases and Palliative Advanced Lung Clinic – respiratory, non-cancer) VCCC palliative care staff run two specialist palliative care clinics at Peter Mac on Monday and Thursday afternoons. In addition, people can be seen at other times by the outpatient team. Many palliative care outpatient appointments are made outside of the formal clinics in order to fit in with a person's other appointments with their treating teams.

For enquiries contact the [Peter Mac Pain and Palliative Care team](#) on 8559 7960 or see [Peter Mac's Pain and Palliative Care referral process summary](#). The [Melbourne Health Palliative Care Consulting Service](#) can be contacted on 9342 7820.

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (SVHM) Fitzroy Campus

Specialist palliative care outpatient clinics are held twice weekly in the Cancer Centre at SVHM Fitzroy.

There is also specialist palliative care attendance at three weekly non-malignant clinics: respiratory, renal, and heart failure.

For enquiries contact the [SVHM Palliative Care Consult Service](#) on 9231 2827, or via hospital switchboard 9231 2211 and ask for the Palliative Care Clinical Nurse Consultant pager 1335. Referral to a specialist palliative care outpatient clinic is via a medical referral to SVHM cancer centre reception email: Cancer.RECEPTION@svha.org.au or fax 9231 3172.

4. Outpatient clinics with a palliative care focus (continued)

Western Health Symptom Management and Referral Team (SMART) Clinics

The Outpatient SMART Clinics are a combined initiative of the Western Health Palliative Care Consultancy Service and community palliative care service Mercy Palliative Care.

There are currently three SMART Clinics.

The Footscray Hospital SMART Clinic (Wednesday mornings) is open to all patients with a non-malignant life limiting illness and is run in parallel to general oncology and lung oncology clinics. Referral fax: 8345 6856.

The two SMART Clinics at the Sunshine Hospital Radiotherapy Centre (Monday and Thursday mornings) are for cancer related issues. Referral fax: 8395 9830.

Patients require a medical referral to these clinics. For enquiries phone the [Western Health Palliative Care Consultancy](#) Clinical Nurse Consultant on 8345 1964 (Sunshine) and 8345 7068 (Footscray).

5. Day hospices

The Palliative Day Care program at Caritas Christi in Kew (of St Vincent's Health Melbourne)

Referrals Phone: 9231 5000 (Caritas Christi switchboard)

Fax: 9853 1509

<https://svhm.org.au/home/our-services/departments-and-services/p/palliative-care-services>

The Wellcare program at Sunshine Hospital (of Western Health and Mercy Palliative Care)

Phone: 8345 1226

Fax: 8345 1997

http://www.westernhealth.org.au/Services/Cancer_Services/Pages/Palliative-Care.aspx

6. Paediatric palliative care

Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program (VPPCP)

Phone: 9345 5374

Fax: 9345 6240

http://www.rch.org.au/rch_palliative/

Very Special Kids (VSK)

Phone: 9804 6222 or 1800 888 875

Fax: 9822 1252

<http://www.vsk.org.au/>

Basic Symptom Control in Paediatric Palliative Care (internationally used clinical tool)

The Victorian Paediatric Palliative Care Program section of the Royal Children's Hospital website provides a link to [Basic Symptom Control in Paediatric Palliative Care](#), a clinical tool used by children's palliative care doctors and nurses across the world. It provides guidelines for treating a wide range of symptoms experienced by children with life-limiting or complex health conditions.

7. Palliative care consortium

North and West Metropolitan Region Palliative Care Consortium

Phone: 9486 2666 (via Melbourne City Mission Palliative care switchboard) or 0404 255 317 (Consortium Manager's mobile)

<http://www.northwestpalliative.com.au>

8. Online clinical resources and education

Caresearch

CareSearch is an online resource designed to help those needing information and resources about palliative care. Funded by the Australian Government, the website includes sections designed specifically for health professionals and other sections for people with a life limiting illness and their carers, family and friends.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/Caresearch/Default.aspx>

End of Life Essentials: Education for Acute Hospitals

End of Life Essentials, a project of Flinders University, provides e-learning and resources for doctors, nurses and allied health professionals to improve the quality and safety of end of life care in hospitals. The content of End of Life Essentials has been informed by the national consensus statement 'Essential elements for safe and high-quality end-of-life care' of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/3866/Default.aspx>

Centre for Palliative Care and Palliative Care: Getting Started (free online training)

The Centre for Palliative Care is part of St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and is a Collaborative Centre of The University of Melbourne. The Centre's website includes a resources section with links to various clinical practice guidelines documents and an education section with professional development and training opportunities, including the free online training Palliative Care: Getting Started.

<http://www.centreforpallcare.org/> and www.palliativecaregettingstarted.org

HealthPathways Melbourne (for GP teams) including palliative care and advance care planning pathways

HealthPathways Melbourne is an online portal, designed to be used at the point of care by GP teams working in the northwest and eastern regions of Melbourne. HealthPathways aims to guide best-practice assessment and management of common medical conditions, including when and where to refer patients.

<https://melbourne.healthpathways.org.au>

The Palliative Care Bridge

The Palliative Care Bridge is a NSW palliative care education program. The site provides educational videos and resources on palliative care.

<http://www.palliativecarebridge.com.au/>

Decision Assist

Decision Assist is an Australian Government funded project that aims to enhance the provision of palliative care and advance care planning services to older people. The Clinical Links, Resources, Using Technology, and Education and Training sections of the Decision Assist website (located within the Caresearch site) provides a range of clinical information designed for use by GPs, aged care staff and others.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/2583/Default.aspx>

Palliative Care Online Training (for health and other professionals working with older people)

The Palliative Care Online Training project provides free online palliative care training for health and other professionals who work with older people. The project is run by the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) and Silver Chain Training.

<http://www.palliativecareonline.com.au/>

9. Other Victorian service contacts

Palliative Care Victoria (PCV) including PCV Service Provider Search

PCV is the statewide peak body for palliative care. The PCV website includes various resources for families, patients and health care service providers, including a service provider search facility.

<http://www.pallcarevic.asn.au/> and <http://www.pallcarevic.asn.au/service-provider-search/>

Better Health Channel

Better Health Channel is a Victorian Government website that aims to help people understand and manage their health and medical conditions. The palliative care section of Better Health Channel includes a range of information on topics such as 'palliative care options and services' and 'dying and death explained'.

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/palliative>

Department of Health and Human Services (Victorian Government) Palliative Care Program

The Palliative Care Program website of the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services provides a range of information about palliative care in Victoria.

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/palliative-care>

RDNS

RDNS provides clinical and home nursing to people in Australia, New Zealand and Asia. RDNS care is designed to assist people to remain living in their own homes. RDNS has partnership arrangements with all three of the region's community palliative care services, including after-hours services.

<http://www.rdns.com.au/services-we-provide/individuals/services-we-provide/palliative-care-and-bereavement-support>

Decision Assist 24hr Palliative Care Phone Advisory Service

For health professionals working with recipients of aged care services, including GPs and aged care staff, the Decision Assist Phone Advisory Service provides advice on a palliative approach, including medication, symptom management and psychosocial support.

Phone: 1300 668 908

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/3295/Default.aspx>

Victorian Aboriginal Palliative Care Project of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

VACCHO's Victorian Palliative Care Project aims for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have access to palliative care services and for palliative care services to provide culturally safe services to Aboriginal people.

Phone: 9411 9411

<http://www.vaccho.org.au/wd/vapcp/>

Centre for Palliative Care

The Centre for Palliative Care is part of St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne and is a Collaborative Centre of The University of Melbourne. The Centre has a statewide role in palliative care education and research in Victoria, with networks and collaborative projects extending nationally and internationally.

<http://www.centreforpallcare.org/>

Appendix A: Victorian Government End of Life and Palliative Care Framework

The [Victorian Government's end of life and palliative care framework](#) was released in July 2016. The vision, guiding principles, goals, and priority areas of the framework are summarised below.

Vision

All Victorians and their families receive the best possible end of life care that places them at the centre where preferences, values, dignity and comfort are respected and quality of life matters most.

Guiding Principles

1. Dying is part of life: dying is a normal part of life and being human, not just a biological or medical event.
2. The person is central to care: a person's care is tailored and holistic; their rights, values and preferences are respected and they determine their own care whenever possible.
3. Carers are important: carers receive recognition, support and are valued throughout their caring experience and after a person's death.
4. All people have information they discuss openly: people, their carers and families have information they understand about genuine choices that they can discuss authentically with their doctor and service providers.
5. Decision making is legalised and respected: people's decisions that may involve substitute decision-makers, health providers, families and carers are recognised and respected in accordance with relevant legislation.
6. Services are high-quality and coordinated: individuals, their carers and families receive coordinated, integrated care from skilful staff.
7. Care and services are monitored: underpinning end of life care are best practice evidence, effective monitoring, evaluation of patient-centred outcomes and supporting innovation.

Goals

- People experience optimal end of life care.
- People's pain and symptoms are managed using quality interventions.
- People's preferences and values are recognised and respected in their end of life care.
- Better support for carers.
- People are cared for in their place of choice.
- Where possible, people can choose to die in their place of choice.

Priority areas

Priority 1: Person-centred services.

Priority 2: Engaging communities, embracing diversity.

Priority 3: People receive services that are coordinated and integrated.

Priority 4: Quality end of life and palliative care is everyone's responsibility.

Priority 5: Specialist palliative care is strengthened.

Appendix B: Australian Government Palliative Care Initiatives

The Australian Government Department of Health

The Australian Government Department of Health website includes details about the National Palliative Care Strategy and projects funded under the National Palliative Care Program (see listing below).

<http://www.health.gov.au/palliativecare>

Palliative Care Australia

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) is national peak body for palliative care in Australia. The PCA website has a range of information for people living with a life-limiting illness, carers and health professionals.

<http://palliativecare.org.au/>

Carers Australia

Carers Australia, in collaboration with Palliative Care Australia (PCA) have been funded to deliver training to increase the palliative care knowledge and skills of counsellors and other health professionals.

www.carersaustralia.com.au

Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA)

Run by Queensland University of Technology, PEPA aims to enhance the capacity of health professionals to deliver a palliative approach. PEPA runs workshops and placements in specialist palliative care services.

<http://www.pepaeducation.com/>

Palliative Care Curriculum for Undergraduates Project (PCC4U)

PCC4U improves the skills of the health workforce by promoting the integration of palliative care training within health training courses, including undergraduate curricula. The project is led by Queensland University of Technology, with Flinders University and Curtin University of Technology.

<http://www.pcc4u.org/>

Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration (PCOC)

PCOC is run by the Australian Health Services Research Institute (AHSRI) of the University of Wollongong. It utilises standardised clinical assessment tools to measure and benchmark palliative care outcomes.

<http://ahsri.uow.edu.au/pcoc/index.html>

Quality of Care Collaborative Australia for Paediatric Palliative Care (QuoCCA)

QuoCCA aims to improve the quality of palliative care provided to children through research, education and evaluation activities in each state and territory of Australia. The project is led by Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service (CHQ HHS) through the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital.

<https://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/3682/Default.aspx>

Listen, Acknowledge, Respond (co-existing mental illness)

Listen, Acknowledge, Respond is a project of Charles Sturt University, Integrated Living Australia and the Amaranth Foundation focused on people with a life limiting illness and a coexisting mental illness. The project aims to improve the skills and knowledge of the mental health and allied health workforce.

<http://listenacknowledgerespond.com.au/>

Appendix B: Australian Government Palliative Care Initiatives (continued)

Cabrini Health Online Religious and Culturally Sensitive Advance Care Planning

Cabrini Health's Centre for Nursing Research have been funded by the Australian Government to develop an advance care planning resource, with consideration of various religious and cultural communities.

<http://www.cabrini.com.au/research-and-education/research-programs/cabrini-centre-for-nursing-research/>

Caresearch

CareSearch is an online resource run by Flinders University. The website includes sections for health professionals and other sections designed for people with a life limiting illness and carers/family.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/Caresearch/Default.aspx>

End of Life Essentials: Education for Acute Hospitals

End of Life Essentials, a project of Flinders University, provides e-learning and resources for doctors, nurses and allied health professionals to improve the quality and safety of end of life care in hospitals. The content of End of Life Essentials has been informed by the national consensus statement 'Essential elements for safe and high-quality end-of-life care' of the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/3866/Default.aspx>

The Palliative Care Clinical Studies Collaborative (PaCCSC)

PaCCSC is a national research network run by the Flinders University School of Medicine. PaCCSC aims to generate research evidence to support the use of medicines and other interventions at the end of life; and build capacity within the health workforce in the conduct of clinical research.

<http://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/2476/Default.aspx>

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) Palliative Care Data Analysis

The AIHW's palliative care data includes a range of national and state/territory statistics.

<http://www.aihw.gov.au/palliative-care/>

Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning in General Practice: A training package for Practice Nurses

HammondCare in NSW has been funded to develop a nationally relevant palliative care and advance care planning in general practice training package for Practice Nurses.

<http://www.hammond.com.au/>

Decision Assist

Decision Assist is a project led by Austin Health that aims to enhance the provision of palliative care and advance care planning services to older people. It includes telephone advice services and resources for GPs.

<https://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/2583/Default.aspx>

Palliative Care Online Training (for health and other professionals working with older people)

This project of the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) and Silver Chain Training provides free online palliative care training for health and other workers working with older people.

<http://www.palliativecareonline.com.au/>

Appendix C: Primary Health Networks

Australian Government funding for Primary Health Networks (PHNs)

On 1 July 2015, the Australian Government established 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) across Australia. At the same time 61 Australian Government funded organisations known as 'Medicare Locals' ceased to exist.

The [PHN section of the Australian Government Department of Health website](#), outlines that PHNs were established to:

- Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for people, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and
- Improve coordination of care to ensure people receive what is described as 'the right care in the right place at the right time'.

PHNs work with general practitioners, other primary health care providers, secondary care providers and hospitals. The six key priorities for targeted work by PHNs are: mental health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, population health, health workforce, eHealth, and aged care.

Palliative care is an area of interest for all PHNs. For example, the HealthPathways Melbourne initiative for GPs, including the palliative care pathways, is a PHN initiative. PHN's are also active in supporting the delivery of after-hours GP services, including cooperation with after-hours palliative care services. Also, some PHNs have been active in Advance Care Planning initiatives.

The catchment area for our Consortium's NW Metro region overlaps with two PHNs.

North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN)

NWMPHN's catchment area includes thirteen local government areas, eleven of which are shared with our Consortium's NW Metro region: Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Yarra, Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham.

<http://www.mpcn.org.au/>

Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (EMPHN)

The boundaries of EMPHN include wholly, or partially, twelve local government areas in Victoria, including three from our Consortium's NW Metro region: Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea.

<http://www.emphn.org.au/>

HealthPathways Melbourne is an online portal, designed to be used at the point of care by GP teams working in the northwest and eastern regions of Melbourne. HealthPathways aims to guide best-practice assessment and management of common medical conditions, including when and where to refer patients. Pathways available include palliative care and advance care planning.

<https://melbourne.healthpathways.org.au>

Appendix D: Palliative Care Defined

Palliative care language can be very confusing! In this section we provide a guide to different terms and descriptions used in the palliative care field.

Quality of life and living well with a life-limiting illness

Palliative care is about quality of life, helping people with a life-limiting illness to live as well as possible and, when the time comes, to die with dignity and as much control as possible over pain/symptoms and other circumstances. Palliative care also supports family and friends providing care for a person with a life limiting illness, including with post-death bereavement support.

Common palliative care terms

There are a number of different definitions of palliative care used in Australia and internationally. For example, 'hospice', 'end of life care' and 'supportive care' are sometimes used interchangeably with palliative care. A 'palliative approach' is sometimes used to describe palliative care provided by non-specialist palliative care services (e.g. aged care facility staff).

Sometimes 'end of life' care is used to describe the last weeks/days and hours of life. At other times, 'end of life' care is used to describe care from early in the course of an illness through to death and post-death support for carers. The [Victorian Government's end of life and palliative care framework](#) defines end of life care with a 12 month time-frame: *"the care needed for people who are likely to die in the next 12 months due to progressive, advanced or incurable illness, frailty or old age"* (p5).

In Australia, using definitions outlined in the [Palliative Care Outcomes Collaboration \(PCOC\)](#) many specialist palliative care services use the following classification of phases of care: stable; unstable; deteriorating; terminal; bereavement.

Carers and bereavement support in palliative care

Sometimes family carers and friends are specifically included in definitions of palliative care, but sometimes they are absent from the words used. However, in practice, all approaches to palliative care include support for family carers and close friends, including with post-death bereavement support.

Not just the very end of life

Palliative care is not just about the very end of life. The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) definition of palliative care](#) includes that palliative care is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life. The Victorian Government's end of life and palliative care framework notes that palliative care can be provided at the same time as other treatment intended to reverse or resolve particular conditions.

Illness terminology

In this Quickguide, among the range of terms used to describe an illness (or condition) where death as a consequence of that illness can be reasonably expected in the future - including terms such as 'life-threatening', 'terminal', 'progressive' and 'incurable' - we have chosen to use 'life-limiting illness' as a general descriptor. Examples of life-limiting illnesses include many types of cancer and other conditions such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Motor Neurone Disease (MND), liver disease, renal disease, heart disease, dementia, and many more.

World Health Organisation definition of palliative care

The [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) definition of palliative care](#) outlines:

“Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual.

“Palliative care:

- *provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;*
- *affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;*
- *intends neither to hasten or postpone death;*
- *integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;*
- *offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;*
- *offers a support system to help the family cope during the patients illness and in their own bereavement;*
- *uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;*
- *will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness;*
- *is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications.”*

Note: The World Health Organisation (WHO) also provides additional principles relating to palliative care for children. This includes: “Palliative care for children is the active total care of the child’s body, mind and spirit, and also involves giving support to the family.”

Victorian Government end of life and palliative care framework definitions

The definitions used in [Victorian Government’s end of life and palliative care framework](#) include:

- End of life care: “the care needed for people who are likely to die in the next 12 months due to progressive, advanced or incurable illness, frailty or old age” (p5).
- Palliative care: “an approach to care that improves the quality of life of people and their families who are facing the problems associated with a progressive illness. It does this by preventing and relieving suffering through early identification and assessment, by treating pain and other physical, psychosocial and spiritual problems and by addressing practical issues” (p5).
- Specialist palliative care: A designated sector “funded to provide care for those with the most complex end of life and palliative care needs.” (p5). Also noted is that: “Often the most valuable role palliative care specialists play is supporting other healthcare teams and professionals through consultation, advice and support to provide end of life care to their patients” (p5).

Appendix E: Principles of a Good Death

The specifics of a 'good death' vary for each individual and defy neat definition.

Smith's twelve good death principles

In a [British Medical Journal editorial \(January 2000\)](#), '[A good death: An important aim for health services and for us all](#)', Richard Smith discussed the following twelve principles of a good death published the previous year in a UK report on the future of health and care of older people.

- *To know when death is coming, and to understand what can be expected;*
- *To be able to retain control of what happens;*
- *To be afforded dignity and privacy;*
- *To have control over pain relief and other symptom control;*
- *To have choice and control over where death occurs (at home or elsewhere);*
- *To have access to information and expertise of whatever kind is necessary;*
- *To have access to any spiritual or emotional support required;*
- *To have access to hospice care* in any location, not only in hospital;*
- *To have control over who is present and who shares the end;*
- *To be able to issue advance directives which ensures wishes are respected;*
- *To have time to say goodbye, and control over other aspects of timing;*
- *To be able to leave when it is time to go, and not to have life prolonged pointlessly.*

Source: Debate of the Age Health and Care Study Group (1999) *The future of health and care of older people: the best is yet to come*. London: Age Concern, quoted in Smith, R (2000) '[A good death: An important aim for health services and for us all](#)'. BMJ Volume 320, pp 129-130.

*Hospice care in this context doesn't refer to a specific place of care, rather a concept of care focused on creating a natural and comfortable end-of-life experience for people with a life-limiting illness and their family and friends. For example, in Victoria, community palliative care services are designed to support people to stay living at home as long as possible and to die at home if that is their wish. In some areas, community palliative care style services are known as 'hospice in the home'.

Additional good death principles

In line with the [World Health Organisation \(WHO\) definition of palliative care](#), including the focus on early identification, quality of life and the role of carers and family, additional principles of a good death may include:

- *To have access to support to enhance quality of life and to live as actively as possible until death.*
- *For family and close friends (primary carers and others involved in providing informal care and/or supporting the primary carer) to have access to a support to help them in their caring role and with their own psychosocial, spiritual and bereavement needs.*

Further Information and Your Feedback

A web version of this Services Quickguide, along with further information and resources can be found on our website www.northwestpalliative.com.au.

The [resources section of our website](#), covers additional topics including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's journeys
- Advance care planning
- Aged care and palliative care
- Disability and palliative care
- Carers
- Community conversations and campaigns
- Cultural diversity
- Grief and bereavement support
- State/Territory and national palliative care organisations
- International palliative care organisations
- Palliative care publications and journals

Other sources of further information include:

- [The end of life and palliative care section of the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel](#)
- [The Victorian Government's Palliative Care Program website](#)
- [Palliative Care Victoria](#)

Your Feedback

We welcome your feedback on the Services Quickguide and other areas of our website, including any factual errors, omissions, broken links etc. along with other suggestions for enhancements we should consider.

Email your feedback to consortium@mcm.org.au or use our [website feedback form](#).



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