The purpose of this toolbox is to help general practitioners and other health professionals find information when faced with decisions around palliative care patients.

Patients and family may seek after-hours support for symptom management; including palliative care emergencies, end of life process, verification of death, patient/carer distress and unanticipated need for medication. In many cases, the preferred option of patients is to be cared for at home. The following Facts, Apps and Information will assist that journey.

### Facts, apps and information

#### Advanced Care Planning

#### Advanced Health Directive

#### After-Hours Support
- North Brisbane A/H Palliative Care Services Support Pathways—access to support after-hours, location of key patient information, location of end of life care wishes, medication access after-hours, syringe driver support, patient summary feedback, service overview and referral information.
- National Phone Advisory Service Tel: 1300 668 908 24 hours / 7 days a week—specialist palliative care service 7 days a week 8:00am to 8:00pm—advanced care planning.

#### Apps
- GP Pain Help App—available via App Store, Google play, iTunes
  [www.gppainhelp.com](http://www.gppainhelp.com)
- palliAGEDgp—Smartphone App for GPs
- palliAGEDnurse—Smartphone App for nurses

#### Clinical Resources and Links
- Therapeutic Guidelines: Palliative Care
- Guidance to documentation about relevant medicines information and other aspects of clinical care
- Links to:
  - Symptom Management
  - Medication Management
  - Caregiver and Family
  - Health Professional
  - Legal and Ethical
- Guidelines for Subcutaneous Infusion Device Management in Palliative Care
- Guidelines for Syringe Driver Management in Palliative Care

#### Cultural Awareness
- Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit (AATSIHU)
- Sad News, Sorry Business: Guidelines for caring for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

#### Education and Training
- CareSearch Education section
- Decision Assist Advanced Care Planning
- Decision Assist GP Palliative Care
- Palliative Care Queensland
- Practice nurse education
- Program of Experience in Palliative Approach (PEPA)
  Tailored workshops for health professionals to develop skills for working with palliative care patients.
  [pepa@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:pepa@health.qld.gov.au) Tel: (07) 3646 6216
- eLearning modules
  Self-paced modules offer Introduction to Palliative Approach and Advance Care Planning.

#### Framework of Palliative Care for Community Based Aged Care
A tool for GPs to manage older patients with advanced chronic conditions (malignant and non-malignant) proactively.
[www.caresearch.com.au/Caresearch/Portals/0/Approach_and_Alive_Care/penology/Palliative_Care_Queensland.indd](http://www.caresearch.com.au/Caresearch/Portals/0/Approach_and_Alive_Care/penology/Palliative_Care_Queensland.indd)

### Palliative Care Toolbox

Helping plan and provide palliative care for patients

- Access to Palliative Care Resources
- Apps
- After-Hours Support
- Advanced Health Directive
- Advanced Care Planning
- Clinical Resources and Links
- Cultural Awareness
- Education and Training
- Framework of Palliative Care for Community Based Aged Care
- Facts, apps and information
- Self-paced modules offer Introduction to Palliative Approach and Advance Care Planning
- Therapeutic Guidelines: Palliative Care
- Practice nurse education
- Palliative Care Queensland
- Decision Assist Advanced Care Planning
- Decision Assist GP Palliative Care
- Decision Assist bi-monthly update

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**Newsletter Registration**

Decision Assist bi-monthly update
[http://us11.campaign-archive2.com/?u=4084c018a94c01b4fe476a007&id=b036b2dca264cb152eb1992](http://us11.campaign-archive2.com/?u=4084c018a94c01b4fe476a007&id=b036b2dca264cb152eb1992)
- Centre for Palliative Care Research & Education
  E: cpcre@health.qld.gov.au

**Palliative Care Australia**

- Access to Dept. of Health & Ageing’s Palliative Care online & print resources
  [www.palliativecare.org.au](http://www.palliativecare.org.au)

**Palliative Care Queensland**

  Monday to Friday 9:00am to 2:00pm
  Tel: 1800 660 055 (Qld only) | M: 0475 882 511
  E: enquiries@palliativecareqld.org.au

**Paediatric Palliative Care**

  Paediatric oncology patients: Tel: 1800 501 670
  All other paediatric palliative care patients: Tel: 1800 249 648

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This document has been developed as part of the Community Based Palliative Care Education Programme and was prepared by the Centre for Palliative Care Research and Education for the Brisbane North PHN. Version: February 2017

Keep informed & updated

**Palliative care toolbox**

**Frequently asked questions**

**What is palliative care?**

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem 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 patient’s illness and in their own bereavement;
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counseling, 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 the process of dying and its best management;
- uses interdisciplinary teams of health care professionals from various disciplines to offer patient and family support and also organismic support to each other through shared expertise and consultation.

**Who can help look after a palliative patient?**

Specialist Palliative Care Teams (SPCT)—throughout Queensland. SPCTs aim to ensure patients with life-threatening illness, and their family and carers, receive the best possible care to maintain their quality of life, manage distressing symptoms, maintain hope, and provide bereavement care for family and carers to support them after the patient’s death. These teams welcome contact from primary carers if assistance is needed in the patient’s care.

**What are the Support Pathways?**

Information on identified Services in Brisbane’s Metro North area that provide palliative care—


*Where can I find Service Provider listing for North Brisbane palliative care services?*


*Frequently asked questions:*


**Don’t patients towards or at end of life need to be in hospital?**

No. If the person prefers to be at home, surrounded by friends and family, in most cases end of life care can be delivered just as well, if not better, in their own home rather than in hospital.

**Isn’t it too difficult for families to care for somebody at home until they die?**

Families and carers need comprehensive support to be able to care for the palliative patient at home. Some try but find it is just too much. Most do it very successfully, with the support of Specialist Palliative Care Teams (SPCT), domiciliary nursing services, and other services such as allied health. SPCTs work with the family in making the decision about where care will take place, help the family to anticipate the patient’s progress and provide necessary support.

**What information is out there to help care for people towards end of life?**

CareSearch (evidence based Australian palliative care site)

**What if the family needs more help?**

PalAssist: a no-cost 24 hour 7 days a week telephone and online service for palliative care patients, carers, family and friends seeking practical information and emotional support from registered nurses and health professionals. Tel: 1800 772 273 Website: http://palassist.org.au/

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**System ‘Checklist’**

**For Quality After-hours Palliative Care**

Good after-hours care at the end of life for a person who is dying, their family, friends and carers requires each service involved in that care to have efficient and effective systems which support:

- continuity of care in the setting of choice
- timely communication between interdisciplinary teams, patients and carers
- capacity to deliver end of life care flexibly.

Stakeholders from hospital and community settings engaged in the Brisbane North PHN Community Based Palliative Care Education Programme identified that systems of interdisciplinary palliative care teams could be improved to enable services to work in a coordinated fashion towards achieving patient, carer and family goals.

General Practice, After-hours locum/Medical Deputising Services, Queensland Ambulance Service, Residential Aged Care Facilities, hospital & community palliative care services are invited to review their service policy & practice against this checklist & identify opportunities to optimise after-hours palliative care delivery.

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**Does your General Practice:**

- Use a **Framework** to proactively identify palliative care patients?
- Encourage General Practitioners to have conversations with patients about Advanced Care Planning and end of life care wishes?
- Share decision-making documents with interdisciplinary teams with patient consent?
- Support patients to upload their ACP and other decision making documents to My Health Record?
- Set up **Ambulance Management Plans** with the Queensland Ambulance Service?
- Coordinate case conferences for patients’ palliative care?
- Share the **General Practice Management Plan** (GPMP) of palliative care patients with other interdisciplinary teams?
- Provide written information to patients/carers about how to access after-hours support should they need it?
- Conduct pre-emptive medication planning and anticipatory planning for palliative patients?
- Use **Decision Assist** and other palliative care support tools e.g. PallAGED or GP PainHelp App?
- Know how to access specialist and community based palliative care support if needed?
- Monitor/review services provided for palliative care, including the patient/carer and family experience and satisfaction?

View the online version of the General Practice Checklist to access these links. Visit: www.brisbanenorthphn.org.au/page/healthprofessionals/palliative-care/