

## PALLIATIVE CARE EXPERTISE SHARED IN THE COMMUNITY

Bethesda Health Care in Claremont has an outstanding reputation in the provision of palliative care for the past 13 years, through their 23 bed in-patient Palliative Care Unit. They have also offered a mobile consultancy advisory service since 2010 – the Metropolitan Palliative Care Consultancy Service (MPaCCS), and it is really making a difference in the residential care sector.

The primary aim of MPaCCS is to support, and build capacity in residential aged care facilities, mental health facilities, disability services and correctional services, ensuring those living with cancer and other life limiting conditions have equitable access to timely quality end of life care. A large part of the service is supporting the workforce with advance care planning and avoidance of unnecessary hospital admissions, through good planning, communication and coordination of end of life care. .

MPaCCS increases the hospital's scope to provide more care, particularly to those who do not require in-patient accommodation but need end of life care for cancer and life-limiting illnesses, and to benefit from Bethesda Health Care staff's expertise and experience.

The MPaCCS team takes a holistic, patient-centred approach to facility support and operates as true multidisciplinary team. In addition to educating and mentoring facility staff about specific nursing, medical and psychosocial interventions, MPaCCS believes three important and overlapping factors contribute to a resident in a care facility 'dying well':

- Physical environment and resources
- Knowing the patient
- Philosophy, culture and organisation of care

One such facility that has benefitted from MPaCCS is Leighton Aged Care Home in West Perth, managed by the Hall & Prior Health and Aged Care Group. They said that *'Hall & Prior's internal palliative care support services work hand-in-hand with MPaCCS to help support staff through the palliative care process.*

*The MPaCCs team consistently work with Hall & Prior to help provide the best possible care – which includes attending meetings at aged care homes, facilitating extra education and support for families and staff facing challenges in palliative care and using evidence based recommendations to provide best practice.*

*Along with providing specific advice relevant to the care needs of individuals, the MPaCCS team also work with Hall & Prior staff to highlight broader-based palliative care topics. Each quarter Hall & Prior clinical staff meet for a palliative care link team meeting, and are joined by the MPaCCS team who contribute valuable insights into our procedures.*



# Media Release

28 March 2019



*We're pleased to work with MPaCCS as part of our broader clinical network within the community."*

Sally Coppock, Clinical Nurse Specialist at MPaCCS said, "that 35% of deaths in Australia are people who live in residential aged care facilities. The majority of these people are unable to access quality palliative care. We work together with the residential care facility to improve the facility and staff practices involving palliative care." These improvements include:

- Supporting Family Meetings
- Robust Advance Care Planning
- Introducing SPICT - *Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool* - assist health care providers identify people who might be at risk from deteriorating and benefit from early access to palliative care.
- Promoting and Developing Palliative Link Teams
- Facilitating Case Review and Debrief

Sally also said "in past eight years there has been a positive change to the palliative care experience and patient journey in residential care." She feels that staff in these facilities have become more empowered and confident to provide a more holistic approach to the residents as well as communicating well with allied health and the treating GP.

National Advance Care Planning Week (1 – 5 April) is an annual initiative by Advance Care Planning Australia that encourages all Australians, regardless of their age or health status, to make their future health care preferences known.

The initiative challenges people to start conversations with loved ones about what living well means to them and to consider who they would want to speak for them, if they were too sick to speak for themselves. Both Bethesda Health Care and Hall & Prior will be celebrating this week and promote the benefits of Advanced Care Planning.

Bethesda Health Care is an independent 88-bed award-winning hospital in Claremont who has been providing care and service to the Western Australian community for more than 70 years.

[www.bethesda.org.au](http://www.bethesda.org.au)

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About Palliative Care:

Palliative care is an approach that improves quality of life for patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-limiting illnesses, including cancer and diseases such as chronic respiratory disorders, cardiac conditions and neurological disorders such as Motor Neurone Disease (MND). Care involves a plan that helps prevent and relieve suffering by early detection and intervention for pain, anxiety and restlessness. Other symptoms such as insomnia, constipation and nausea are also addressed as part of the treatment plan.

