

Palliative care

Palliative care is a term that is used when someone is supported through a serious progressive illness. It also includes care for their families. The aim of palliative care is to achieve the best quality of life for patients with life-threatening illnesses and their families, and can be part of end-of-life care.

What is Palliative Care?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has defined palliative care as follows:

- provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms
 - affirms life and regards dying as a normal process
 - intends neither to hasten or postpone death but to enhance quality of life
 - integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care
 - offers support to help patients live as actively as possible until death, and to help the family cope during the illness and in bereavement
 - is applicable early in the course of illness alongside other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy
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What is Specialist Palliative Care?

Although palliative care is often provided by hospital staff, or carers working in people's homes, there are also [Specialist Palliative Care Teams](#) who can provide:

- Assessment, advice and care for patients and families in all settings, including hospitals and care homes.
 - Inpatient facilities in hospices or hospitals for patients who would benefit from continuous support and care.
 - Home care for patients with who wish to stay at home, often known as 'hospice at home'. This may involve the specialist palliative care service working alongside the patient's own doctor and district nurse to provide advice, nursing, and medical, social and emotional support.
 - Day care facilities that offer a range of opportunities for social interaction, support and friendship. Many also offer creative and complementary therapies.
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Who Provides Palliative Care?

Hospices

Hospices care for the whole person, aiming to meet their physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs in the last stages of their life.

Hospice care can be provided at home, in day care, and in the hospice itself. The average length of stay is just 13 days and half of those admitted to a hospice return home again. All care is provided free of charge.

Hospices can provide a range of services including:

- pain control and symptom relief
- skilled nursing care
- counselling, complementary therapies, physiotherapy and spiritual care
- activities such as art, music, reminiscence, beauty treatments;
- and bereavement support.

Marie Curie Hospice aims to improve the quality of life for people living with life threatening illnesses, whilst supporting their families and carers. Whilst most of the patients have cancer-related conditions, their services are available to people with other conditions.

Referral to the hospice is usually arranged by the patient's GP or hospital doctor.

St Oswald's Hospice provides specialist care for local adults, young people and children. They are situated in Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne and offer a day hospice, lymphoedema service, an inpatient unit, complementary therapy service and a consultant outpatient clinic.

Adults with life limiting conditions are referred for pain and symptom management and end of life care. They care for patients with cancer, as well as those with end stage neurological, cardiac and respiratory conditions.

Other Local Help and Advice

Specialist Palliative Care Team at Newcastle Primary Care Trust consists of Macmillan Clinical Nurse Specialists and consultants in palliative medicine. They can provide:

- advice on pain management
- support and advice to professional colleagues
- an educational service to carers and professionals;
- and support for patients and carers.

Home Group – Services for Older People provide support at home to adults who are coming to the end of their life, or have been diagnosed with a terminal illness. The service aims to help them make practical arrangements and choices to enable them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, and includes support with:

- arranging home aids and adaptations

- applying for benefits
 - putting your affairs in order
 - learning a new skill
 - taking up a new hobby
 - giving you someone to talk to
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Other Useful Organisations

Hospice UK is the leading charity supporting hospice care throughout the UK and provide information, support and opportunities to get involved.

Lifespan is a local charity which brings ease and support to people with serious and life-threatening illness, and to the family members and friends who care for them.

National Council for Palliative Care is the umbrella charity for all those involved in palliative, end of life and hospice care

Dying Matters aims to raise awareness of death, dying and bereavement. Their website offers a variety of free resources to help start those conversations, including information for carers who look after someone approaching the end the end of their life.

Other Useful Information

- [Planning for your future care](#) – NHS booklet
- [Advance decisions article](#)

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Useful Organisations

St Oswald's Hospice

Email: enquiries@stoswaldsuk.org

Website: www.stoswaldsuk.org

Telephone: 0191 285 0063

Address: Regent Avenue, NE3 1EE

Marie Curie Hospice

Email: newcastle.hospice@mariecurie.org.uk

Website: <https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/hospice-care/newcastle>

Telephone: 0191 219 1000

Address: Marie Curie Hospice, NE4 6SS

Specialist Palliative Care Team

Website: http://www.newcastle-hospitals.org.uk/services/cancer_services_palliative-care.aspx

Telephone: 0191 213 8606

Address: Freeman Hospital, NE7 7DN

National Council for Palliative Care

Email: enquiries@ncpc.org.uk

Website: www.ncpc.org.uk

Telephone: 020 7697 1520

Address: The Fitzpatrick Building, N7 9AS

Hospice UK

Website: <https://www.hospiceuk.org/>

Telephone: 020 7520 8200

Address: Hospice House, WC1X 9JG

Lifespan

Email: info@lifespanteam.org.uk

Website: <http://lifespans-charity.com/>

Telephone: 01434 673 777

Address: Mallan House, Bridge End Ind Est, Hexham. NE46 4DQ, NE46 4DQ

Home Group

Website: <https://www.homegroup.org.uk/Care-and-Support/Our-Care-Services/Older-People>

Telephone: 0191 607 4635

Address: 2nd Floor Bravington House, N1 9AF

Dying Matters

Website: www.dyingmatters.org

Telephone: 08000 21 44 66

Related Articles

[Looking after someone](#)

[Advance Decisions](#)

[When someone dies: a practical guide](#)

[Bereavement](#)

[Arranging a funeral](#)

[Choosing a care home](#)

[How to pay for adaptations to your home](#)