



Media Release

Thursday, 28 May 2015

New statement aims to improve palliative care delivery in hospitals

Improving hospital patient care for those facing the end of their lives is the main objective of the release today of a new consensus statement, says Palliative Care Australia (PCA) CEO Liz Callaghan.

Today's launch of the National Consensus Statement: Essential Elements for Safe and High Quality End-of-Life Care in Brisbane is part of National Palliative Care Week.

"Many Australians die in hospital, despite more than 70% wanting to die at home. It is vital that those who are receiving care in hospital are well served by a multidisciplinary team with the patient at the centre of care.

"Today's consensus statement sets out principles of care that put the patient first, considers values and wishes and recognises the importance of training in palliative care.

"These principles are particularly important in the acute setting – where the fast pace of care and focus on interventions can often be challenging for those with a terminal condition.

"It puts forward new models of care for Australian hospitals to consider when managing patients with terminal conditions to ensure safe and high quality care, which is particularly important at end of life.

"The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care statement is endorsed by all Health Ministers, which is welcome recognition for palliative care.

"This week PCA is also encouraging all Australians to start talking about dying. What do we want at the end of our lives? These are important conversations we need to have with our family and friends so when the time comes they are guided by us to advocate on our behalf.

"The statement provides the principles and elements that lead to high quality end of life care in acute settings, with the focus on the patient. It is also important to recognise that a patient's wishes may change over time and the depth of the conversation that includes goals of care and an individual's values will have a significant impact on the success of care. For them, and for their families.

"We know that for every Australian who dies the impact of that death, whether a positive or negative experience, ripples through the lives of their family and friends long after they are gone. As a country we need to work harder to make sure all Aussies have a good death. To do that, we need to take the first step and talk about it." Ms Callaghan said.

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National Palliative Care Week: Sunday 24 May – Saturday 30 May
Palliativecare.org.au

Download the National Consensus Statement: Essential Elements for Safe and High-Quality End-of-Life Care and information sheet from: www.safetyandquality.gov.au/endoflifecare

