



# Media Release

**24 October 2016**

## **New Best Practice in Breast Cancer Statement Highlights Early Access to Palliative Care**

**Palliative Care Australia CEO Liz Callaghan welcomes the inclusion of early access to palliative care in Cancer Australia’s new statement to improve breast cancer care launched today to mark Pink Ribbon Day (24 October 2016).**

The [‘Influencing best practice in breast cancer’](#) statement includes twelve practices that to improve the care for people with a diagnosis of breast cancer. Practice 7 states that it ‘appropriate to offer palliative care early in the management of patients with symptomatic, metastatic breast cancer to improve symptom control and quality of life’.

Ms Callaghan says that the inclusion of early referral to palliative care for people with metastatic breast cancer is important.

“Metastatic breast cancer is largely forgotten – so much of the messaging around breast cancer is based on survival. While that is important, we know around 3,000 women will die from breast cancer each year and they need support and resources to live the best they can.

“We know people often feel accessing palliative care is giving up, with many people believing it is just for the last weeks of life. However, palliative care can improve the quality-of-life for patients and their families well before the end of their life,” Ms Callaghan said.

PCA is working with Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA) to develop a resource for people with a life-limiting breast cancer diagnosis to understand and access palliative care.

“We are developing a resource to help break down the barriers to accessing palliative care. It is designed to demonstrate the value of palliative, and how it supports people to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. Palliative care is family-centred care, and this is something women with metastatic breast cancer find valuable.” Ms Callaghan said.

This resource will be available early in 2017.

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