



# Media Release

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## New survey shows Australians don't plan for the end

**Australians don't have an end-of-life plan and are not discussing their care wishes with their families, survey shows.**

Despite the consensus amongst Australians being that talking about their end-of-life care is important, most haven't actually had the conversation with their loved ones.

According to the Palliative Care Australia survey commissioned for National Palliative Care Week 21-28 May, 85 per cent of Australians believe that it is important to have a conversation with family about the care one would like to receive at end-of-life, but only a third of those surveyed have actually had the discussion.

PCA CEO Liz Callaghan says that Australians clearly agree on the importance of planning for the end of life and need to take steps to inform their loved ones about what is important to them.

"The survey found that over a third of people who hadn't talked to their family found the subject uncomfortable. A further 27 per cent were avoiding the discussion because they didn't want to upset their loved ones.

"One in four Australians have had a family member die in the past 12 months and less than half of those people talked to that person about their end-of-life wishes.

"Dying is a normal part of life and everyone deserves a positive end-of-life experience. It's important we normalise conversations around death so that people can plan ahead and their families know what they would want if they could no longer talk for themselves.

"Palliative Care Australia has developed the Dying to Talk Discussion Starter to help people work out what is right for them, and give them tips on how to start talking," said Ms Callaghan.

Even when it comes to indirect communication, Australians are failing to take action, with 83 per cent of Australians believing that it's important to put their end-of-life wishes in writing, and only 21 per cent doing so.

With the focus of National Palliative Care Week on aged care, the survey showed over 80 per cent of Australians think that it is important for aged care services to provide palliative care to their clients.

"An overwhelming majority of Australians think that aged care services should provide palliative care to their clients. 86 per cent of people surveyed also thought it is important that aged care services be clear about what palliative care they are able to provide.

"Palliative Care Australia encourages people looking at aged care options ask the services if they provide a palliative approach to care and if they have links with specialist palliative care services," Ms Callaghan said.

For more information about National Palliative Care Week visit: <http://palliativecare.org.au/national-palliative-care-week/>

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An independent survey was conducted via an online research panel in April 2016 with 1,006 Australian men and women aged 18 years and above participating. Pure Profile conducted the survey and utilised a geographically and age demographically representative sample.

<b>Have you had a family member die within the past 12 months?</b>		
Yes	255	25%
No	751	75%
Total	1006	100%
<b>Were you required to participate in or make any health care decisions for this person?</b>		
Yes	80	31%
No	175	69%
Total	255	100%
<b>Did you have a conversation with them about their end-of-life wishes before they died?</b>		
Yes	118	46%
No	137	54%
Total	255	100%
<b>Do you think that helped you to make decisions about the care of your family member?</b>		
Yes	106	90%
No	12	10%
Total	118	100%
<b>Do you feel it is important to have a conversation with your family about how you would want to be cared for at the end of your life?</b>		
Yes	858	85%
No	148	15%
Total	1006	100%
<b>Have you already had a conversation with family about how you would like to be cared for at the end of your life?</b>		
Yes	338	34%
No	668	66%
Total	1006	100%
<b>If no, why not?</b>		
I'm too young	352	53%
I'm not sick	267	40%
I don't want to upset my loved ones	179	27%
The subject makes me uncomfortable	234	35%

I'm waiting for them to bring up the topic first	46	7%
Total	668	100%

<b>Do you think it is important to put your wishes about your end of life care in writing?</b>		
Yes	838	83%
No	168	17%
Total	1006	100%

<b>Have you done this?</b>		
Yes	176	21%
No	662	79%
Total	838	100%

<b>Do you have any of the following in place?</b>		
A will	464	46%
Life insurance	280	28%
Funeral insurance	116	12%
Power of attorney	196	19%
Advance Care Plan	29	3%
Advance Health Directive	37	4%
A nominated person to make health decisions for you	235	23%
None of the above	349	35%
Total	1006	100%

<b>Which is your preferred place of death?</b>		
Home	701	70%
Hospital	193	19%
Nursing home or aged care facility	42	4%
Hospice	70	7%
Total	1006	100%

<b>Are you currently or have you ever been provided care by an aged care service?</b>		
Yes	39	4%
No	942	94%
Unsure	25	2%
Total	1006	100%

<b>If yes, was the provision of palliative care a deciding factor in choosing the aged care service?</b>		
Yes	20	51%
No	16	41%
Unsure	3	8%
Total	39	100%

<b>If you need aged care support in the future, would the provision of palliative care be a deciding factor in choosing an aged care service?</b>		
Yes	403	43%
No	140	15%
Unsure	399	42%
Total	942	100%
<b>Do you have a family member being provided care by an aged care service?</b>		
Yes	174	17%
No	795	79%
Unsure	37	4%
Total	1006	100%
<b>If yes, was the provision of palliative care a deciding factor in choosing the aged care service?</b>		
Yes	69	40%
No	53	30%
Unsure	52	30%
Total	174	100%
<b>How important do you think it is for aged care services to provide palliative care to their clients/residents?</b>		
Extremely important	434	43%
Important	382	38%
Neutral	176	17%
Unimportant	9	1%
Extremely unimportant	5	0%
Total	1006	100%
<b>How important do you think it is for aged care services to be clear about whether they offer palliative care?</b>		
Extremely important	529	53%
Important	330	33%
Neutral	135	13%
Unimportant	7	1%
Extremely unimportant	5	0%
Total	1006	100%