



Media Release

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Palliative Care Australia launches two key documents to improve palliative care for all Australians

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) will launch the 5th edition of the National Palliative Care Standards (the Standards) and the Palliative Care Service Development Guidelines (the Guidelines) at Parliament House today.

PCA CEO Liz Callaghan says these important documents will shape how palliative care is planned, funded and delivered in Australia over the next decade.

“The documents launched today had not been revised since 2005 and the palliative care sector and the health system has changed significantly during this time.

“Bringing these documents up to date will help guide governments, health services, health professionals and the public on what best-practice palliative care looks like, and how to ensure all Australians can access it when needed.

“This 5th Edition of the Standards has reduced the number of Standards from thirteen to nine. Importantly they have been mapped to align with other Standards such as the National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards and Aged Care Standards. These changes will make it easier for health services to implement and report against the Standards.

“Providing quality palliative care relies upon a committed team of professionals and volunteers who assist the person, their family and carers. The new version of the Standards will help specialist palliative care services build upon the improvements many of them have already made.

“The person receiving palliative care and their loved ones need to know what quality palliative care looks like, to work in partnership with their care team and ensure their physical, psychological, cultural, social and spiritual needs are met.

“In the Guidelines, PCA is calling for state and territory governments to fund 2.0 FTE palliative care consultants per 100,000 population for community based specialist palliative care services. The current national average only sits at 0.9 FTE palliative care consultants per 100,000 population according to AIHW data.

“Governments and health services must make it a priority to fund these positions, as well as ensuring the training pathways are there for doctors to be able to specialise in palliative care.

Together, these documents provide an overarching framework for the delivery high-quality palliative care. These documents are also designed to complement the work being undertaken by the Commonwealth to update the National Palliative Care Strategy, due to be released later in 2018.

“I thank all of the members of the working groups who worked tirelessly to update these documents over the past 12 months,” Ms Callaghan said.

Full versions:

The National Palliative Care Standards (5th edition) palliativecare.org.au/standards

Palliative Care Service Development Guidelines palliativecare.org.au/quality

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palliativecare.org.au

