



Media Release

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Improving Understanding of Grief and Bereavement

Today Palliative Care Australia (PCA) in partnership with the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement (ACGB) launched a joint policy statement on grief and bereavement at the 2018 ACGB Conference.

The policy statement highlights the importance of addressing the psychological, spiritual and cultural needs of an individual, and how palliative care can offer a support system which helps carers and families cope during the person's illness and in bereavement.

Palliative and end-of-life care is an all-inclusive approach which not only aims to improve the quality of life for people living with a life-limiting illness, but also supports families, carers and the community throughout the dying process and in bereavement.

"Everyone at some point will experience the death of someone close to them. Grief is the normal emotional reaction to loss, but the course and consequences of bereavement will vary for each individual," Ms Callaghan said.

The policy statement, released on [Dying to Know Day](#), will help to bring to life conversations and community awareness around death, dying and bereavement.

The statement acknowledges that support for those experiencing grief can be from many informal and professional sources, however for approximately 7% of the grieving population who have prolonged grief disorder, targeted specialist services should be available regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location.

"With 35% of all deaths in Australia occurring in residential aged care PCA and ACGB believe there is a need to ensure awareness of grief and bereavement of all staff who work in aged care, including non-clinical, as often long-term and close relationships are formed with residents and their families," Ms Callaghan said.

Improved education and understanding of grief and bereavement, including identification of prolonged grief disorder, for health and aged care professionals is one of the key recommendations of the joint statement.

"Bereavement can be emotionally intense, destabilising and exhausting, on this Dying to Know Day it is important to reflect on how grief and bereavement touches many Australians," Ms Callaghan said.

The Grief and Bereavement policy statement can be accessed [here](#).

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