

Media Release



Wednesday 27 May 2020

Self-care matters!

PCA launches new online resources to help support those who care for others...

Have you ever wondered why self-care matters? Do you suspect self-care is important but don't know why or how you can find time to plan and practice it, especially whilst caring for others in your professional capacity?

The palliative care workforce has an essential job to do, and they give much of themselves to caring for others. In doing so, exhaustion and burn-out become real risks if no time is taken for self-care.

The [National Palliative Care Strategy 2018](#), endorsed by Australian, state and territory governments, acknowledges this when it states that "all individuals involved in palliative care need to be supported to maintain their own resilience and well-being while working in this often challenging area" and that "care providers [should] have the support they need to maintain their health and wellbeing".

As part of [National Palliative Care Week](#) Palliative Care Australia (PCA) has launched new online self-care resources to address these important issues, offering practical step-by-step guidance to help individuals create their own self-care plan and put it into practice.

"Palliative Care Australia is delighted to launch this practical online tool to help health workers improve their overall health and wellbeing by focusing on self-care," said PCA Board Chair, Professor Meera Agar.

"Self-care is more important than ever. It is actually vital to our ability to function as productive members of the community. When you take a moment for yourself to re-centre your energies and to focus on your emotional needs, you allow yourself to take better care of others"

"As care providers, we need to acknowledge that that, over time, caring for others can take a toll on all of us, and that we need to take the time to care for ourselves. We also need to connect with our loved ones. Therefore, it is essential to have a self-care plan and to stick to it as much as possible," said Prof Agar.

Designed by internationally recognised self-care researcher, Dr Jason Mills, Self-Care Matters is a comprehensive, evidence-based resource created to foster self-care in individual and team contexts, including practical tools that highlight self-care as fundamental to caring well for others.

Dr Mills said the Self-Care Matters resources can be used by anyone involved in palliative care, including doctors, nurses, social workers and other allied health professionals, aged care staff, pastoral care workers and volunteers.

palliativecare.org.au



His Excellency General the Honourable David John Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley, Patrons

“Self-care is for everybody!” said Dr Mills.

“From my research with people working in the field of palliative care, it’s clear that holistic wellbeing and quality of life are important for everyone—of course those receiving care, but also those providing and enabling it.

“Self-care is highly relational to those around us, and we all have the same human vulnerability and potential for suffering. In the same way that Dame Cicely Saunders’ elucidation of ‘total pain’ clarifies the need for total care; self-care, then, can be best understood as an important conduit to the promotion of holistic wellbeing and quality of life for everyone in the palliative care community, whatever their role may be.

“It’s more important than ever to open up conversations about how to look after our emotional, physical and mental wellbeing – and back that up with practical and achievable plans to put this into practice.”

The Self-Care Matters resources are available free of charge via PCA’s website and include:

- information about the importance of self-care, understanding self-care, practising self-care and planning for self-care
- short videos featuring well-known clinical and non-clinical experts in the palliative care sector, sharing their personal insights on self-care
- guided meditation audio clips
- writeable PDF self-care planning tool for users to complete at their own pace.

View the Self-Care Matters resources at palliativecare.org.au/resources/self-care-matters

National Palliative Care Week runs from 24 – 30 May 2020, with the theme “Palliative Care...It’s more than you think!”. Visit PCA’s [website](#) for more information including [campaign materials](#), [events](#), [FAQs](#) and PCA’s “What is Palliative Care?” [brochure](#).

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