

End of life care matters for everyone

In Australia we have one of the highest life expectancies in the world.

People are now living longer but often with higher rates of chronic and age-related conditions which may be life limiting. In the next 25 years the number of people aged over 65 years in the central and eastern Sydney region is expected to significantly increase.



Older people in central and eastern Sydney are not a homogenous group. They are very diverse, with different abilities, cultural beliefs and needs for services and care. Older people are now choosing to age in place, with the majority wanting to be cared for to the end of their life at home in their community.

Although there is much to celebrate about people living longer, this does not mean living forever. As the number of older Australians grow, the number of Australians who die each year is expected to almost double, increasing the need for quality end of life care.

We know that death, dying, loss and bereavement will affect us all across our life time. Increasingly, end of life and palliative

care is being recognised as everyone's business, not just the domain of acute care and palliative care specialists but primary care, aged care and the whole community.

Primary health care has an important and growing role to play in end of life and palliative care. GPs, allied health professionals, aged care workers and pharmacists are well placed to assist people with planning for future care and in managing chronic or life limiting conditions. All health professionals need to have the knowledge and skills about end of life and palliative care as health care shifts focus to delivering more care, including palliative care in the community setting.

palliAGED offers free online evidence-based information, guidance, factsheets and resources, including mobile apps to guide care, which are available 24/7 to ensure everyone has access to reliable trustworthy information related to end of life and palliative care.

What people want for the last stage of their life is unique to each individual and their family's specific needs and cultural preferences. The key to living well and dying well is planning ahead. Creating an advanced care plan can guide the care people want to receive in the future particularly if they become critically or seriously ill and are unable to speak or advocate for themselves. Having the conversations and communicating what matters most to people, their values and preferences for care and treatment can assist people to have their choices respected and take the pressure off care givers trying to guess your needs in a crisis.



The palliAGED apps provide primary care clinicians with support at the point of care for advanced care planning, case management and prescribing related to common palliative care symptoms.

For more information about palliAGED resources visit www.palliaged.com.au

Understanding the issues of death, dying and bereavement and what end of life and palliative care can offer can help people make choices suitable to their unique needs. A palliative care approach is a holistic model which focuses on people's individual needs and aims to improve the quality of life for patients and families facing issues related to life limiting illness and can prevent and relieve suffering physical, emotional, spiritual or social.



Whether you are a health or aged care professional, patient, carer or family member, having access to trustworthy information to assist with end of life planning, treatment, symptom management or medicines and the issues related to grief and loss can be very beneficial.