

palliAGED

Practice Tips for Nurses in Aged Care



palliAGED
PALLIATIVE CARE AGED CARE EVIDENCE

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**Introduction
& Care Provider
Issues**

2

**Decision-Making
& Communication**

3

Care Issues

Introduction

The following collection of palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets has been developed to support people providing palliative care to older people approaching the end of life. Palliative care is an approach to care that emphasises quality of life when providing support for people with a life-limiting illness and their family and carers. A life-limiting illness is one that will cause a person to die sooner than they would have without the illness. Commonly encountered life-limiting illnesses include dementia, cancer, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), and advanced stages of heart, liver, kidney, and lung disease.

Palliative care may also be relevant to the older person approaching their natural end of life without a life-limiting illness but experiencing similar care issues.

The palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets for nurses have been developed for nurses new to palliative care, and for those responsible for careworker training and education. A companion collection written for careworkers is also available. Each Tip Sheet highlights a different care issue and provides information to support the provision and improvement of care. Through recognition of needs and awareness of what might be done, care providers can actively support the older person's quality of life and sense of dignity.

The palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets also support care provider personal development, encouraging staff to develop capacity and gain confidence in providing palliative care.

The information is of a general nature, and health and care professionals should use their best clinical judgement in the way in which it is used and seek professional medical care and advice as required.

The online versions of palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets are regularly updated to reflect new evidence and best practice. It is recommended that you check for updated to the information in this booklet by visiting www.palliaged.com.au

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Using palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets

The palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets for nurses in aged care are suitable for nurses newly engaged with providing palliative care, and for those responsible for the training and education of careworkers (personal attendants) who support older people with palliative care needs. This is part of a companion series, with a second collection of related content available for careworkers. The aim is to develop capacity and foster further development of skills by individuals and within teams. The following describes the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets for nurses.

To facilitate selection of the most relevant palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets the collection has been divided into:

1. Introduction & Care Provider Issues
2. Decision-Making & Communication Issues
3. Care Issues

There is no recommended order for working through the series. Each palliAGED Practice Tip Sheet can be used on its own or as part of a group, with other relevant Tip Sheets indicated on the second side. For those interested, within the online version the evidence and references used to develop the palliAGED Tip Sheets are also listed.

The first side of each palliAGED Practice Tip Sheet includes a description of:

- What it is
- Why it matters
- What I need to know

In the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets for nurses, this is then followed with tips as to what Actions to take and Tools that may be of use. This is not a recommendation for the tools listed, but serves to highlight the availability of useful tools that might be considered in providing care.

The second side of each palliAGED Tip Sheet provides an opportunity to reflect on what the information

presented means in terms of current and future care. Completion of the reflection questions might be useful to demonstrate professional development and/or staff training. They might also help to identify gaps at an organisation and/or individual level in the understanding and provision of palliative care. This might highlight opportunities for care improvement. Reflection points could also be used as a group activity to initiate co-worker discussions.

The palliAGED Tip Sheets complement the palliAGED Practice and Evidence Centres available at www.palliaged.com.au. Health and care professionals looking to gain more detailed information on providing palliative care are strongly encouraged to access the palliAGED website for evidence-based guidance and knowledge resources about palliative care in aged care. palliAGED incorporates and updates the evidence-based information previously contained in the Guidelines for a Palliative Approach in Residential Aged Care (APRAC) and the Guidelines for a Palliative Approach for Aged Care in the Community Setting (COMPAC). The palliAGED website content and the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets have been reviewed by experts in aged care, palliative care, and evidence. Their knowledge and practical experience have contributed greatly to the rigour and applicability/suitability of these resources to contemporary aged care in Australia.

Introduction & Care Provider Issues

1

Decision-Making & Communication

Care Issues

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