ABSTRACT TITLE

Supporting primary health professionals to proactively plan and implement quality home-based palliative care

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KEYWORDS

Carers

Primary health professionals

End-of-life care planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

caring@home has developed nationally consistent, practical, and evidence-based clinical resources for primary health professionals enabling them to implement proactive end-of-life care planning and symptom management of the dying person at home. Specialist palliative care teams can promote these resources to improve outcomes for patients and their carers.

INTRODUCTION

It is predicted that in future Australia there will be a substantial increase in the number of people approaching end-of-life. Most of these people will have one or more chronic diseases and will reside in the community. Few will require or have access to specialist palliative care. Care will be provided primarily by primary health professionals who will need to support families and carers.

For home deaths to be realised in such a climate, primary health professionals, e.g. GPs and NPs, will require a formalised, proactive process of care planning and standardised resources to support provision of optimal symptom management and quality palliative care.

HIGHLIGHTS

- National Core Community Palliative Care Medicines List supports access to medicines
- palliMEDS app including new paediatric content
- Prompts for End-of-Life Planning Framework
- Resources to support end-of-life planning and communication with patients and carers

METHODS

caring@home convened 3 advisory committees with representation from key clinical stakeholders from every State and Territory in Australia to advise on the review of existing resources, development of new resources and delivery of education for the primary health workforce.

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

The project developed resources that support:

- Primary health clinicians to use a standardised proactive approach to managing end-of-life care
  - Prompts for End-of-Life Planning Framework
  - Resources to support communication with patients and carers at points of transitioning goals of care
- Symptom management at end of life

  - A National Core Community Palliative Care Medicines List

  - palliMEDS app revised with paediatric content added

- Quality improvement processes
  - An end-of-life clinical audit for clinical services to routinely collect accurate end-of-life audit data

CONCLUSION

caring@home has successfully developed resources to support primary health professionals to provide quality palliative care. The resources will enable proactive end-of-life planning and optimal symptom management thereby supporting people to achieve care and death at home if that is their choice. These resources can be used by Specialist Palliative Care Services to support and educate primary health professionals.