CARING TOGETHER: CO-DESIGNING A CULTURALLY SAFE PAEDIATRIC PALLIATIVE CARE RESOURCE

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KEYWORDS

Paediatric palliative care; culturally safe care; co-design; CALD communities; health literacy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (100 WORDS MAXIMUM)

Families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds often face barriers accessing paediatric palliative care (PPC) information in Australia. *Caring Together* is a co-designed resource developed with families and health professionals to improve access to culturally safe, easy-to-understand information. The resource was adapted into Easy Read, Arabic and Vietnamese through partnerships with communities. It provides a compassionate explanation of paediatric palliative care and supports families and health professionals to begin conversations, share wishes and hopes and make informed decisions. This project demonstrates the value of co-design and culturally responsive approaches in supporting equitable access to PPC information.

INTRODUCTION

In Australia, paediatric palliative care (PPC) resources are predominantly in English, creating barriers for families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Nearly 28% of Australians were born overseas, with more than 300 languages spoken at home and 23% of the population using a language other than English. CALD families often face challenges such as language barriers, lower health literacy and difficulty navigating unfamiliar systems, leading to inequitable access and poorer outcomes. Accessible, culturally safe and easy-to-read resources are essential to support informed decision-making and inclusion in PPC.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Co-designed PPC resource with families and clinicians across Australia
- Developed in Easy Read, Arabic and Vietnamese formats
- Focus on cultural safety, clarity and family-centred communication
- Supports understanding and decision-making for families and their children
- Promotes more equitable access to PPC information

METHODOLOGY/ PROCESS

The Caring Together booklet was co-designed in collaboration with nearly 40 participants, including healthcare professionals and families with lived experience across Australia. The English version was adapted into Easy Read, Arabic and Vietnamese through partnerships with community translators and cultural organisations. Engagement extended beyond translation, focusing on cultural nuance, tone and values to ensure meaningful alignment with each community's beliefs and preferences

RESULTS/ OUTCOMES

Launched at the end of December 2025,*Caring Together* offers clear, family-centred information on PPC, care teams, decision-making and family rights.Initial feedback from stakeholders indicates the resource improves accessibility, supports understanding, and is perceived as culturally respectful and relevant. It has also strengthened engagement with communities and highlighted the importance of culturally responsive approaches in resource development.

CONCLUSION

Caring Together demonstrates how co-design and culturally responsive approaches can improve access to PPC information for families from diverse backgrounds. By prioritising clarity, cultural safety and partnership with communities, the project supports more equitable and inclusive care.

This work highlights the importance of embedding co-design in future resource development to ensure that all families feel informed, respected and supported throughout their palliative care journey.