

what is palliative care?

palliative care
and disability

fact sheet series

February 2016

Updated January 2024

southern metropolitan region palliative care consortium

Information for disability services staff working in group homes

what is palliative care?

When someone is diagnosed with a terminal illness, the goals of care change from achieving a cure to achieving quality of life. Palliative care aims to make the patient comfortable, to improve quality of life, and to provide support to carers, family and friends.

what support can palliative care provide?

The 'palliative approach' is for people who do not have specialist needs and can be looked after by their own doctor, community health professionals and staff in the home.

Specialist palliative care is for people with greater needs and delivered by palliative care professionals, who are trained to help with difficult issues such as managing pain and other symptoms. They include palliative care doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational and speech therapists, counsellors, social workers, music therapists, art therapists, other staff and trained volunteers.

Specialist palliative care is available in three settings:

- in hospitals (palliative care consultancy)
- in specialist palliative care hospices (palliative care inpatient units)
- community palliative care (to help residents stay in their home as long as possible)

Depending on the needs of the resident, their families and staff in the group home, palliative care services may help with a specific issue for a short time, or they may become more involved over a longer period of time.

how do I refer to palliative care?

Anyone can self-refer to community palliative care service, but your doctor may assist you with the referral to provide medical information. If you are not sure, feel free to contact your local community palliative care service.

You can find your local palliative care service by entering your postcode on this website:

www.pallcarevic.asn.au

[smrpcc website](http://www.smrpcc.org.au)

