

# Palliative Care Community Medications Project

WA Cancer and Palliative Care Network



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Delivering a Healthy WA



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Health

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**Developing a statewide approach to  
palliative care medication  
prescribing, access and utilisation,  
resulting in equality for patients.**

***Funded by:***

***Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing***

***National Palliative Care Program***

***Palliative Care for People Living at Home Initiative***



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# Background

## *Areas of need identified:*

- Access to medications not equal
- Knowledge about use of medication lacking
- Protocols not available
- Relevant patient information unavailable



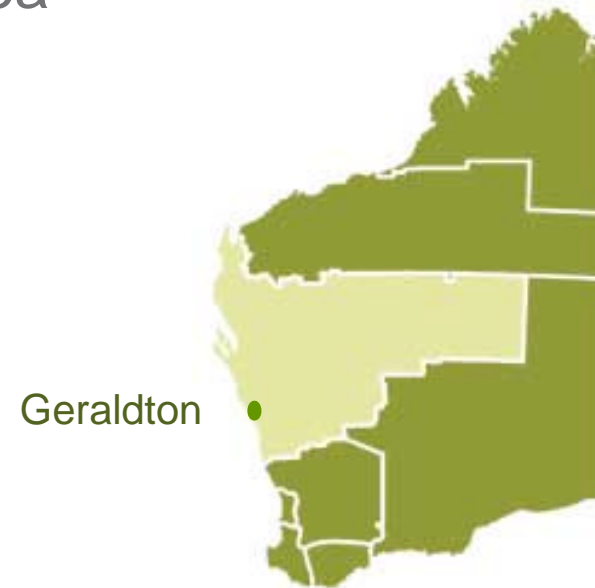
# Purpose

- Standardise availability of medications
- Develop and implement medication protocols
- Establish links between community pharmacists and palliative care teams
- Develop and implement strategies for medication management in the community



# Establishing project

- Midwest region of WA as pilot area
- Reference Group
- Medication Advisory Committee (validation group)



# Process

## ***Review current systems of medication management***

- Define how medications are currently accessed, prescribed and utilised
- Determine current difficulties and gaps

## ***Collected information from many sources***

- Focus groups, individual interviews, teleconferencing
- Community nurses, GPs, pharmacists, nursing home staff, AMS, Drug and Alcohol, RFDs, prisons, hospital staff, patients and carers



# Work in progress

## *Protocols developed for medication use in terminal phase care*

- Dyspnoea
- Excessive secretions
- Pain
- Terminal agitation

## *Distributing and informing health professionals*



# Work in progress

## ***Standardised medication lists developed for:***

- Community pharmacies
- Palliative care services
- Currently seeking feedback and endorsement

## ***Establishing pharmacy links***

- Community pharmacists with regional pharmacist
- Pharmacists with regional palliative care service
- Pharmacists with palliative care specialists



# Work in progress

## *Providing relevant medication information/education*

- Patients and carers
- Health professionals- GPs, community nurses and pharmacists

*What is required? What is available? Where are the gaps?*

## *Patients assessment of current consumer information*

- Questionnaires and interviews



# Proposed outcomes

## ***Timely availability of palliative care medications***

- Drug formularies for regional hospitals
- Shelves of community pharmacies

## ***Evidence of appropriate prescribing practices***

## ***Community pharmacists are recognised members of palliative care teams***

## ***Improvement in access to relevant medication information for patients***



# THE GOAL

**A statewide approach to palliative care medication prescribing, access, utilisation and management resulting in equality for patients.**

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