



MEDIA RELEASE

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What can you expect from palliative care when you have a terminal illness?

Providing quality care for people who are dying is imperative. Palliative Care Australia (PCA), the peak body for the palliative care community, has developed the *Standards for Providing Quality Palliative Care for All Australians*. These 13 standards set out what all Australians can expect from palliative care services.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report released this month quantifies the progress made by palliative care services in adopting and measuring their performance against the *PCA Standards*.

"The results that 66% of health regions in Australia have a plan for the delivery of palliative care is good progress", said Professor Margaret O'Connor AM, President of Palliative Care Australia.

Quality palliative care aims to maximise quality of life for people with a terminal illness and assist families, carers and communities during and after death. Quality palliative care involves coordinating care from many different health professionals and services, to address the physical, social, emotional, cultural and spiritual needs of the patient, their family and carers.

The Report reveals that of the services surveyed, 96% have formal working partnerships with other health care service providers, thereby expanding the care they are able to deliver.

These relationships are critical to quality care. Palliative Care Australia welcomes the contribution made by the work of the AIHW and looks forward to working collaboratively with the palliative care network and community to:

- enable linkages/mapping between the palliative care *Standards* and other health care standards
- enable data collection that is administratively easy to use and that measures performance against the *Standards*
- clarify the definitions of quality care measures, making it easier for families and carers to evaluate services
- ensure an awareness and environment that delivers quality palliative care for all.

Palliative Care Australia believes the results of this study are an important contribution to learning more about the delivery of palliative care throughout Australia.

*National Palliative Care Performance Indicators – Report on the National Palliative Care Performance Indicator Data Collection 2005

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