

# Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care



Support and tools for general practices  
to improve at home palliative care.

[nwmpn.org.au/palliative-care](http://nwmpn.org.au/palliative-care)

**phn**  
NORTH WESTERN  
MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative

# Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care

Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care (GCfAHPC) is one of 29 palliative care initiatives funded by the Department of Health and Aged Care. It is the only one led by PHNs and specifically targeting primary care. The project's goals are to:

- Improve access to palliative care at home.
- Support end-of-life care systems and services in primary health care and community care.
- Enable the right care at the right time and in the right place to reduce unnecessary hospitalisations.
- Generate and use data to support continuous improvement of services across sectors.
- Use available technologies to support flexible and responsive palliative care at home, including in the after-hours.

## Why general practice?

An estimated 60 to 70 per cent of Australians would prefer to die at home. GPs and other primary health care providers play an integral role in fulfilling these wishes, where possible. However, studies have shown many GPs lack confidence in providing this care. Reasons for this include patient complexity, inadequate training and insufficient resources. Poor communication and inadequate links with specialist palliative care services have also been identified as barriers.

Palliative care aims to improve the quality of life of patients with life-limiting illnesses. It is often associated with the care of people with cancer, but those with non-cancer end-stage chronic or complex conditions also have significant needs that GPs can help to address. If your practice has a high proportion of older adult patients, or a high number of patients with chronic conditions, including dementia, your practitioners could benefit from our GCfAHPC project activities.



# Activities to help you and your practice

**North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network offer a range of resources, education and activities to support you and your practice.**

## Online resources

These websites are designed for primary health care professionals and provide information, resources, education opportunities, and local service contact details. They provide a one-stop-shop for key information on these topics, including links to all relevant NWMPHN activities and resources.

- [Advance care planning](#)
- [Palliative care](#)
- [Voluntary assisted dying](#)

## Education

### Education at your practice

A nurse from a local community palliative care service will visit the practice to provide general palliative care education, information about service provision and processes, and referral pathways.

These visits are free for the practice and provide an opportunity to build relationships between the referrer and the provider and to help improve patient care when a palliative approach is needed.

Complete the expression of interest form to request a visit:

[nwmpnh.org.au/current-tenders/expressions-of-interest-palliative-care-education-for-general-practice/](http://nwmpnh.org.au/current-tenders/expressions-of-interest-palliative-care-education-for-general-practice/)

## Education sessions

In-person and virtual education sessions on a range of topics, including *Understanding the GP role in palliative care* and *Navigating difficult conversations*.

Sessions will have RACGP CPD accreditation where applicable.

Check our events calendar for upcoming sessions or subscribe to our newsletter to receive weekly education updates.

Events: [nwmpnh.org.au/resources-events/events/](http://nwmpnh.org.au/resources-events/events/)

Subscribe: [nwmpnh.org.au/resources-events/subscribe/](http://nwmpnh.org.au/resources-events/subscribe/)

# Activities to help you and your practice

## Webinar recordings

Recordings of previous education sessions. CPD hours for viewing recordings can be self-reported.

- [Chronic disease management, healthy ageing and palliative care](#) (27 September 2022)
- [Understanding the role GPs play in community palliative care](#) (14 March 2024)

## Quality improvement resources

**Quality improvement (QI) templates** are available for general practices to improve patient outcomes and deliver best practice care. These templates can help to improve the practice team's knowledge of advance care planning (ACP) conversations and documentation, local palliative care teams, how to identify priority patients for ACP and palliative care, and timely referral procedures.

The **end-of-life care QI workbook** has easy-to-follow steps for 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' (PDSA) cycles to analyse practice performance and make measurable improvements. It covers ACP, palliative care and voluntary assisted dying. Included in the workbook are: PDSA templates and examples, useful PEN CAT recipes, data collection ideas, advice on tracking changes in data, helpful resources and education, and further training ideas.

NWMPHN can help facilitate QI activities in your practice. Our team can provide support and guidance, coaching practice staff through the QI process and building your practice's QI expertise.

Time spent on quality improvement activities can be self-reported for CPD.

- [Improve your practice team's knowledge of advance care planning and palliative care](#)
- [Increase advance care planning for priority patients](#)
- [Increase timely referrals to palliative care](#)
- [End-of-life care quality improvement workbook for general practice](#)

Contact NWMPHN's quality improvement team on 9347 1188 or email [primarycare@nwmpnhn.org.au](mailto:primarycare@nwmpnhn.org.au)

## HealthPathways

There are 42 pathways in the palliative care suite, including pain management, pain medications, symptom control, caring for a dying patient at home or in an aged care home, terminal phase management, emergencies in palliative care, GP resources, and inpatient and community service referrals.

- [Palliative Care HealthPathways](#)
- [HealthPathways and palliative care case study](#).

If you do not have access to HealthPathways, you can [register here](#).



## Palliative care access to core medicines project

To facilitate timely access to palliative care medicines, more than 80 pharmacies in NWMPHN's region have agreed to stock a localised palliative care Core Medicines List (CML). The CML was informed by evidence and through consultation with local palliative care providers including GPs, nurses and pharmacists.

A pharmacy locator map allows prescribers and patients to identify local pharmacies who have committed to stocking the CML. The map also provides contact details and opening hours of the participating pharmacies. CML and pharmacy locator are on the [palliative care webpage](#) (half-way down the page).

Details of the commissioned project can be found on our [website](#).

## Publications

### Advance care planning

A range of resources to support practices and patients in advance care planning discussions and implementation.

- [Advance care planning MBS items](#)
- [Roles and responsibilities in advance care planning](#)
- [Advance care planning patient brochure](#)

### MBS items for palliative care

A guide for health professionals explaining MBS remuneration to support planned palliative care in a general practice or aged care setting.

- [MBS remuneration to support planned palliative care: a guide for health professionals](#)





# Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care



For further information or support contact NWMPHN's  
Project Lead - Older Adults and Palliative Care on  
(03) 9347 1188 or email [primarycare@nwmpnhn.org.au](mailto:primarycare@nwmpnhn.org.au)

[nwmpnhn.org.au/palliative-care](http://nwmpnhn.org.au/palliative-care)

**phn**  
NORTH WESTERN  
MELBOURNE

An Australian Government Initiative