

# Communication



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[palliativealliance.ca](http://palliativealliance.ca)

# Environmental Scan Findings

- Silent culture surrounds death and dying
- Communication is difficult in the LTC home
- No formal communication strategies to discuss residents transitioning to palliative care or end-of-life care

# Communication Issues

- Common definition / language
  - Palliative care
  - End-of-life care
  - Care Planning
  - Advance Care Planning
- Perceptions
  - Palliative care is more work
  - Palliative care means less care than restorative care

# Strategies to Improve Communication

- Research team / Quality improvement team
- Quality Improvement strategies
  - Education
  - Direct care
  - Policy and program
  - Community partnerships

# Communication Interventions

1. Research Project
2. Palliative Care Resource Teams
3. Education
4. Communication Quality Improvement Interventions

# Palliative Care Resource Teams

- **Not** a clinical team, this is related to program development
- Palliative Care requires an interdisciplinary team including but not limited to staff representing the following:
  - Nursing
  - PSWs
  - Dietary
  - Housekeeping
  - Administration
  - Physiotherapy
  - Administration
  - RAI coordinator
  - Social Work
  - Spiritual Care
  - Maintenance
  - Volunteers

# Team Roles

- Mentoring other Staff / Families
- Providing Emotional Support for Staff/ Families/ Residents
- Provide Information regarding Training / Tools for Other Staff Members
- Clarification on resident status after a Hospital Transfer
- Educating / Providing Information to Residents and Families
- Provide Input into Guidelines / Policies and Procedures
- Promote Palliative Approach and End-of-Life Care Services to Residents and Families

# Creating the Team

## Palliative Care Team Retreat

**Goal:** To discuss and create consensus on the foundation of the team:

- Membership
- Goals
- Mission and values
- Areas of focus
- Determining Resources
- Communication Strategy, etc

**Outcome:** Basis of the Resource Team





# Team Meetings

- 1 per month (more frequent when starting up the team)
- Often scheduled at shift change
- Approximately 1 hour in length



# Team Initiated Interventions

- Butterfly indicator
- Comfort Care Bags
- Palliative Care Bulletin Board
- Sympathy Card
- Memory Boxes

# Butterfly Indicator

Place butterfly on:



- Accepted symbol in PC Community
- Staff uniforms to identify members of the palliative care resource team
- Resident's chart to indicate resident requires palliative or EOL care
- Resident's door frame after death to notify staff that there is a body in the room
- Resident's place setting in dining room to inform residents and families the resident has died

# Comfort Care Bags

- Resident become like 'family' to front line staff
- Support front line staff to communicate with families at the end of life
- Way to provide family members with end-of-life education in the form of pamphlets and reading materials



# Palliative Care Bulletin Boards



- Education
- PC Team Members
- New Initiatives
- Tree showcasing

# Sympathy Cards

- After a resident dies a card is placed in the staff room for signing
- After 1 week PSW lead ensures that everyone has signed the card
- Card is mailed to the families



# Memory Boxes



- Placed on the resident bed after the body is removed
- Family can put important items in the memory box
- Provided by Hospice Northwest-Community Partner

# Key Messages

- Feedback Helps
  - Reporting research findings back to staff
  - Inviting families to provide feedback
  - Getting affirmation from colleagues and managers
- Effectiveness of Communication
  - Will increase as the team works together
  - Will improve the delivery of palliative care
- Shared Languages
- Roles & Purpose
  - Focus on the needs of the residents



# Further Information

Visit our website

[www.palliativealliance.ca](http://www.palliativealliance.ca)

Contact us

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