



**Mid North Coast Rural Palliative Care Project –
Care Assistant Palliative Approach Course 2005**

**End of life care &
Bereavement support**

**Paula Hicks CNC
Palliative Care**

Purpose

- To assist the staff in developing skills needed in providing end of life care to the resident and support to the family.

What are these needs?

- Loss, grief and bereavement issues.
- Dignity during the dying process.
- Providing care that neither hastens nor prolongs dying.
- Ability for staff to care before and after death

Loss, grief & bereavement issues

- LOSS – the severing or breaking of an attachment to someone or something, resulting in a changed relationship

Loss, grief & bereavement issues

- GRIEF - the normal response to loss. It includes a number of responses, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. They are usually associated with unhappiness, anger, guilt, pain and longing for the lost person or thing.

Loss, grief & bereavement issues

- Bereavement – the total reaction to loss and includes the process of healing or “recovery” from the loss.
- While there are similarities between people this is an individual issue for each person

Factors that Impact on grief, loss & bereavement

- Attitudes on death and dying –staff and family
- Past experiences
- Cultural and spiritual beliefs
- Social supports
- Services available
- Involvement in the dying process

Grief, loss & bereavement issues

- How can we support the resident, family and ourselves through these processes?
- Use the following case study entitled “Mollie” to identify ways of support.
- Discuss factors which helped Mollie.
- What does your facility do regarding bereavement follow up?

Dignity during the dying process

- What is your definition of dignity?

Dignity

- Research suggests that while each persons perception is different the following factors may influence our opinions;
 1. Progression of the disease or age,
 2. Ability to recognise friends and family,
 3. Capacity to communicate,
 4. Continence. (Chochinov 2002)



Dignity during the dying process

Physical Aspects

Physical issues can impact on the residents dignity and may include many of the following;

1. Pain
2. Lethargy and weakness
3. Rapid weight loss
4. Continence issues
5. Respiratory issues
6. Skin and wound break down
7. Dry mouth

Dignity during the dying process

Psychological / Emotional Distress

How the resident and family copes may depend on some of the following factors;

1. Cognitive ability
2. Open communication and understanding
3. Involvement with the team in the dying process
4. Cultural and spiritual issues

