



For Further Information Contact:

Eurobodalla Palliative Care Service

Moruya NSW

Telephone: 1300 795 440

or (02) 4474 5100

Fax: (02) 4474 5111



Level 1
73 Vulcan Street
MORUYA NSW 2537

Phone: 02 4474 5100
Fax: 02 4474 5111
Email: sblogg@senswdgp.com.au

Eurobodalla Palliative Care Service

A Guide to Referral



What is Palliative Care?

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A Guide to Referral

What is Palliative Care?

Definition

Palliative Care involves the management of physical and emotional symptoms, and the provision of social and spiritual support to both clients and carers, from diagnosis and at the relevant stages of a progressive disease, which is beyond the reach of cure.

Principles

Provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms

Integrates the psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of care

Offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death

Offers a support system to help the family cope during the patients illness and in their own bereavement

Affirms a life and regards dying as a normal process

- Neither hastens or postpones death

Who should be Referred?

Most patients will have advanced cancer, but other patients with advanced disease of poor prognosis in whom intensive treatment is proving futile should be considered for referral to the Palliative Care Service. People with HIV infection, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, parkinson's disease and chronic end-stage respiratory, cardiac, renal & liver disease are included in this group.

Referral should have a specific purpose: it may be for advice on symptom control, co-ordination of home and family support, provision of special equipment, family counselling, recruitment of a volunteer or consideration for placement in an inpatient facility.

When should a Patient be Referred?

It is commonly suggested that palliative care should focus on the three months prior to death, when discomforts and fears are more likely to be troublesome. But prognosis is very inaccurate, and it is often advantageous for a palliative care service to establish contact with a family early in the course of a progressive illness, which will probably go on to cause death.

Model of Service

Eurobodalla Palliative Care Service is a program rather than a place like a hospice or hospital. The service is responsive to needs as the patient and the family perceive them.

Many in-patient admissions are for assessment and symptom control, with patients discharged home for further care by community nurses. Often a respite admission of pre-arranged length is suggested to assist families who are exhausted by the demands of care or are having difficulty coming to terms with the terminal nature of the illness.

A family may wish to continue care at home but lack confidence and knowledge. There may be a need for equipment, which the palliative care service can facilitate or provide. A volunteer offering moral support, friendship and the opportunity for a carer to take time out for the shopping or respite may be particularly useful.

How to make a Referral

There is a single point of access to the Eurobodalla Palliative Care Service using the

1300 795 440

TELEPHONE HELPLINE

Should you or your relatives require any