# What exactly is palliative care?





Palliative care isn't just about the very end of life. So, what is it all about then?

### **PALLIATIVE CARE IS AN APPROACH THAT**

- improves the quality of life of patients (adults and children) and their families who are facing problems associated with life-limiting illness
- prevents and relieves suffering through the early identification, correct assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, whether physical, psychosocial or spiritual.

Palliative care takes a holistic approach, meaning it treats the whole person, and encompasses their physical, psychological, social, spiritual and practical needs.

#### **PALLIATIVE CARE**

Introduction to palliative approach

Living with a lifelimiting illness with any prognosis

#### **END-OF-LIFE CARE**

Ongoing medical treatments Symptom Management as appropriate

Unit / Home Managing Quality of

Life

Palliatve

surgery

Supports

Palliative Care

Condition is non-curative

Weeks to months to live

Symptom

**Palliatve** Chemotherapy/ Radiotherapy

**TERMINAL CARE** 

Psychosocial support of patient / family

Symptom Management

Spiritual care

Days to hours of life

Management Spiritual healthcare

Maximising community supports

Psychosocial support







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#### **GOOD PALLIATIVE CARE SHOULD**

- Maximise quality of life
- Respect the person's goals and preferences
- Provide relief from pain and other symptoms
- Provide spiritual and psychosocial support
- Allow opportunities for the person and/ or their representative to discuss care and care goals
- Be timely and responsive
- Advise what equipment is needed to aid care in the home
- Help with connections to other support services, such as home help and financial support
- Involve a team of specialists
- Support family and friends
- > Provide counselling and grief support



Remember - palliative care can be brought in at the point of diagnosis of a life-limiting illness.

## **Suggested resources**

The Palliative Care Handbook

The Palliative Care - End of Life FlipChart

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