

## What are some of the questions I should be asking my team?

- How do I contact the Palliative Care team and how often can I contact them?
- Which health specialist should I contact first if my health deteriorates quickly?
- Can you explain my medications to me, and the likely side effects?
- Are there any complementary therapies that might be helpful?
- How important is my diet?
- Can I keep driving?
- Do you think I will experience pain?
- Can I get oxygen to use at home if I need it?
- Is there someone who can come visit me at home from time to time for company?

You can find more information in the brochure *Asking Questions Can Help* which you can find on the Palliative Care Australia website.

## Support for carers and loved ones

An important part of the Palliative Care team is to support carers and loved ones. Be assured that you are very important part of the support provided by Palliative Care.

There will be times when you need to take some time-out from your caring role. Your local volunteer service may offer a respite service where a volunteer can come and visit your home and stay with your loved one while you go out. Ask the Palliative Care team for more information about respite support.

Carers can ask questions of the Palliative Care team too, and you can find more information in the brochure *Asking Questions Can Help*.

## Contact Palliative Care NSW

Phone 02 8076 5600  
info@palliativecare.nsw.gov.au  
706/50 Clarence St, Sydney NSW 2000  
www.palliativecare.nsw.gov.au



## Want more information?

It's always best to talk to your doctor and care team for any information, but if you want to find out more about Palliative Care please contact us or see the link below.

### Palliative Care Australia Inc

The *Asking Questions Can Help* booklet is available for download from the Palliative Care Australia website.

[www.palliativecare.org.au](http://www.palliativecare.org.au)



Your  
Palliative  
Care

**Support. Comfort. Quality of Life.**  
**This is what you should expect from your experience in Palliative Care.**

Palliative Care is a clinical specialty in its own right, just like other medical specialties. Which means that when you are seen by the Palliative Care team you will receive expert care and support.

Palliative Care aims to give comfort to a person when curative treatment is no longer appropriate: when someone is approaching and reaching the end of life. This might be your situation.

Palliative Care also aims to support a person while they are undergoing treatment for other conditions. For example a person might still be having chemo, or dialysis, or need help with diabetes, or have dementia or Motor Neurone Disease.



“When the Palliative Care nurse came to see us I thought ‘oh no, not the Palliative Care nurse! But when we realised how much they could do to help us, that thought became ‘thank goodness, it’s the Palliative Care nurse’”.



**Does being involved in Palliative Care mean that I will die soon?**

It’s true that Palliative Care is often timed ‘at the end of life’. But it is also true that some people are involved with Palliative Care for months or even years. It all depends on your condition and your journey.

The research shows that if you have a life-limiting condition then the sooner you are involved in Palliative Care the better. The better your symptoms will be controlled, the better your pain will be managed, the better your family and loved ones will be supported.

**What is a Palliative Care team?**

When you are involved in Palliative Care you will find that you are supported by a team of people who bring diverse and specialised skills into their work.

The team members may include your General Practitioner, Palliative Care specialist doctors and nurses, social workers, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, grief and bereavement counsellors, pastoral care workers and volunteers.

**Where do I get Palliative Care?**

This depends on your medical needs, your support network and your local services.

Your hospital may have a specialised Palliative Care ward or unit for people who need a higher level of medical support or assistance.

Many health services offer Palliative Care through community nursing so that you can stay at home in a familiar environment with more autonomy.

People in residential aged care benefit from a palliative approach as they approach the end of their life.

Wherever you are, ask about what support services are available that could provide additional assistance to you and your loved ones, such as Palliative Care trained volunteers.

Some people will come and go to hospital during their time with Palliative Care. This is not unusual, and helps the team to support them better with pain or other changes in their condition.

You can find more information about services including a location of services in NSW on the Palliative Care NSW website.

**How do I take control of my experience in Palliative Care?**

Be involved with the team. Ask questions. Talk with your General Practitioner. Prepare and Advance Care Plan

An Advance Care Directive is a statement written by you in advance, as part of your Plan, which guides clinicians your care. An Advance Care Directive must be observed by the team if and when you are unable to communicate your wishes to them.

Communicating with your team, your GP and your loved ones, and preparing an Advance Care Plan are the best ways to take control of your experience in Palliative Care.

You can find more information in our brochure Advance Care Planning.

**How will my pain be managed?**

It’s perfectly normal to be worried about how your pain will be eased. Your loved ones will also be worried about this on your behalf.

Not everyone will experience pain, but if you do there are many medications and many different ways of administering the dose.

Other treatments and techniques will also help to relieve discomfort, and these include aromatherapy and massage.

You can find more information in our brochure *Learn More about Pain Management.*