

Joint Statement from Palliative Care NSW and UTS IMPACCT

Advancing Palliative Care in NSW: Priorities for Action

National Palliative Care Week was held the 11th- 17th May 2025, with the theme “What’s your plan?”. Following this successful awareness week, we encourage the NSW Government to develop a statewide strategic plan to address current and projected needs to ensure those in NSW who need it have access to high quality palliative and end-of-life care.

This statement is informed by research evidence and a Palliative Care Policy Roundtable held on 4 March 2025 in Sydney. The Roundtable brought together 46 stakeholders from the NSW Government, health and aged care sectors, community groups, consumers, clinicians and academia. The discussion aimed to capture diverse perspectives on palliative and end-of-life care and was timed to inform the NSW Government’s review of its *End of Life and Palliative Care Framework 2019–2024*. Proceedings were led by a presentation from visiting Professor [Fliss Murtagh](#), co-lead of the [UK NIHR Policy Research Unit in Palliative and End-of-Life Care](#).

Palliative care plays a vital role in improving quality of life for people facing serious, life-limiting illness and their families by addressing physical, emotional, psychosocial, and spiritual needs. It is care that should be accessible across all healthcare settings and provided not just by specialist services but integrated with other health and social services, including primary and acute healthcare, and the aged and the community care sectors.

The current *NSW Framework* provides a strong foundation by emphasising the need for person-centred, coordinated care and equitable access. However, growing demand from our ageing population, geographic variations in service availability, and disparities in access between population subgroups highlight the need for ongoing implementation to ensure all individuals, regardless of location, diagnosis, sociodemographic and cultural background receive timely and appropriate care.

To strengthen palliative and end-of-life care in NSW, we call for action in these key areas:

- **A needs-based approach** to palliative care — one that prioritises access to care based on a person’s needs rather than prognosis or diagnosis.
- **Investment in relational care across multiple settings**— building on the *NSW Framework*’s focus on person-centred care, we should invest in and expand effective models that prioritise early access to services enabling connection and continuity across multiple settings – particularly the health and aged care sectors.

- **Workforce development and capacity-building** — sustained and comprehensive workforce development using contemporary and experiential educational approaches are required to attract, retain and upskill healthcare professionals and workers, ensuring continuity of care and building strong patient-provider relationships for all health and aged care professionals well as specialist palliative care.
- **Investigation of enabling technologies** — exploring digital solutions that enhance care integration timeliness, and access, without losing human connection when its most needed.

Furthermore, there is a compelling case for establishing a dedicated palliative care policy centre in NSW along similar lines to the UK's to enable:

- showcasing and scalability of innovative evidence-based models of care, especially those shown to be effective outside hospital settings;
- service mapping to identify gaps, fragmentation, and opportunities for improved integration;
- more coordinated workforce development and capacity-building;
- service and population-level data, artificial intelligence and emerging technologies to better inform evidence-based policy and service innovation.

Palliative Care NSW and IMPACCT commend the longstanding commitment of the NSW Government to strengthening palliative and end-of-life care across the state. We recognise the significant progress made through state and Commonwealth strategic frameworks, investment, and service enhancements to date that have aimed to ensure individuals and families receive the care they deserve. Building on this foundation, we look forward to working closely and creatively with government partners, health services, communities, and other stakeholders to address emerging challenges, foster innovation, and ensure equitable, person-centred care for all residents of NSW.

Palliative Care NSW and UTS IMPACCT will be releasing a detailed report of the findings from the Palliative Care Roundtable discussions in the coming months.



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