

### What Is Palliative Care?

Palliative care is support for you and your family/whānau during a life threatening illness.

These can be unsettling and emotional times: easing troublesome symptoms, and providing support for you and those around you can make a big difference.

Palliative care can often help early on in an illness that can not be cured – for instance, when you first find out what is wrong, or during treatments which may help lengthen life. It is also there for support and comfort at the end of life.

People who may find palliative care services useful include those with:

- Cancers that cannot be cured (though anticancer drugs and radiation may still be given).
- Illness that may continue to worsen even with the best treatment. For example, conditions such as emphysema, heart failure, dementia, and some kidney or liver problems.

### How Can We Help?

Our Palliative Care team can offer you help and support in many different situations. These might include times when:

- Your illness is causing discomfort e.g. pain, shortness of breath, or feeling sick.
- Your thoughts and feelings are troublesome e.g. when feeling down, sad, angry or worried.
- Your illness may cause problems elsewhere in your life for example, with your partner or children, work or money.
- You may be faced with decisions and choices about your treatment that are difficult to make.
- You want to think ahead and make plans for your future (advance care planning).
- Life may be ending, and death approaching. At this time, we may be able to help with comfort and support for you, your family/whānau.

### The Palliative Care Team

We are a team of specialist doctors and nurses based at Wellington Hospital. We have a great deal of experience, know-how, and expertise in helping people with problems that are due to life threatening illnesses.

### How can you see us?

- You can ask the team looking after you. They will then contact us if they agree we can help.
- With your permission, your family can ask to see us.

- Your doctors and nurses might ask you if you would like our help and support.

### When can we see you?

Our team is able to see you on your ward Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm.

We can usually see someone within one working day of being asked.

We don't visit at home, but can arrange visits by similar services if needed.

### Some common questions about us:

#### Are you from a hospice?

No. We are part of the hospital and are quite separate from any hospice. Seeing us does not mean you have been referred to hospice services. However, we do have close links with the local hospices. If you would like to know more about their service, or would like to be referred, your doctor can tell you more, as can we.

#### If I see you, will all my treatments be stopped?

Not at all. Your current treatments will continue for as long as they are helping you. We often suggest ways that might make things easier and more comfortable for you alongside any of your current treatments.

#### If I see you, does this mean I am dying?

We are here to help improve your comfort and provide support. When we see you is therefore not determined by how long you may have to live, but by your particular needs at that time.



### Contact us

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*Feedback about our service is welcome.  
Please do not hesitate to contact us.*