

# Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework

Communique no. 3 – August 2017

This communique is issued by the Implementation Advisory Group (the group) for [Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework](#) (the framework), published in June 2016. The aim is to keep stakeholders and interested groups informed of progress and developments of activities under the framework priorities.

## Refining priorities

The group further discussed activities to be refined under the framework priorities, broadly categorised as 'how we deliver care' and 'education and training'. Models of care for consideration initially, include those that will improve after-hours care or provide 24/7 palliative care advice in rural and regional areas. The department will lead a work program to address core components including consistent responsive home-based care and early referral and intervention.

## Education and training

Education and training has been determined as a priority underpinning most framework initiatives. An audit document was tabled outlining current national and Victorian education initiatives. Further work will determine gaps in available education and help identify optimal strategies for workforce development and education across the broader health service delivery and education sectors. Some activities are dependent on the outcome of national Commonwealth Government funded programs such as the Palliative Care Education and Training Collaborative, with an announcement expected soon.

## The role of staff across wider sectors

A priority of the framework is that staff in the healthcare, human services, community and local government sectors are supported to provide end of life care to people in the community.

A draft document was tabled outlining how skills and knowledge could be best reflected to assist all sectors. After feedback from the group, further work to develop a tool or resource to best assist sectors will be progressed.



[Better Health Channel](#) has links to end of life information for consumers in over 20 languages under the tab:

***'Palliative care for culturally and linguistically diverse communities'***

## Terminology

In response to discussions on the differences in end of life and palliative care language and terminology, a preliminary draft analysis document was tabled for feedback. This analysis outlines end of life and palliative care terminology currently utilised in 21 instruments or public documents across Australia.

The group discussed developing a resource that describes consistent concepts as a result of the analysis. This could be tailored to specific audiences. A version could assist stakeholders and another provide guidance for consumers. Further work including consultation with other departments will be undertaken.

[Better Health Channel](#) features practical information for carers and family members providing end of life care, under the tab:

***'Support for family and carers'***



## Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill

The [Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying Final Report](#) was released on 21 July 2017. The final report sets out the Panel's recommendations for a safe and compassionate voluntary assisted dying framework for Victoria. It follows the Panel's interim report, released in May, which outlined the key themes that have arisen from the consultation process with stakeholders. The final report outlines a conservative assisted dying framework with 66 recommendations and 68 safeguards, that would allow a person at the end of life experiencing intolerable suffering to control the manner and timing of their death. A bill will be introduced to parliament this year.

If the bill is successful, a timeframe of 18 months will allow an implementation taskforce to prepare for commencement of the legislation. Education strategies and information across the health sector would be implemented during this time, ensuring health services are appropriately and adequately prepared.

Two [on-line video presentations](#) provide comprehensive overviews:



Professor Brian Owler, Chair of the Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying, provides an [overview of the Panel's recommendations](#).



Emeritus Professor Ian Maddocks, member of the Ministerial Advisory Panel, provides an [overview from his perspective as a Palliative Care Specialist](#).

## Support services

Please note that the Ministerial Advisory Panel on Voluntary Assisted Dying Final Report addresses issues relating to end of life care that some people may find upsetting. If viewing this material or thinking about end of life care has raised some issues regarding grief and bereavement or personal crises for your staff or clients, the helplines below provide telephone support and counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Some may provide on-line assistance.

<[Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement](#)> – telephone 1800 642 066

<[Lifeline](#)> – telephone 13 11 14

## Implementation Advisory Group

The group provides an advisory, advocacy and leadership role to the department and relevant stakeholders on the implementation of activities to meet the framework's aims. The group was established in late 2016.

Membership includes representatives of public, private and regional health services, metropolitan, regional and non-government palliative care services, Council of the Ageing, Leading Age Services Australia, Advanced Care Planning Australia, Victorian Disability Advisory Council, Municipality Association of Victoria, Carers Victoria, Palliative Care Victoria, Ethnic Communities Council Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria, Health Issues Centre, consumer representatives and Primary Health Networks representative.

## More information

<[www2.health.vic.gov.au/palliative-care](#)> - for health, human service, social and community sectors.

<[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/palliative](#)> - for consumers.

Implementation Advisory Group secretariat, *Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework*.

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To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 03 9096-0509 using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email [John.Carson@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:John.Carson@dhhs.vic.gov.au). Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne. © State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services August 2017. Where the term 'Aboriginal' is used it refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous is retained when it is part of the title of a report, program or quotation.