

# Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework

Communique no. 8 – November 2018

This communique is issued by the Implementation Advisory Group (the group) for *Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework* (the Framework) [www2.health.vic.gov.au/palliative-care](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/palliative-care) released in July 2016. It aims to keep stakeholders and interested groups informed of progress and developments of activities under the Framework priorities. This communique follows the group's eighth quarterly meeting.

## Funding model review

In November 2017, the Victorian Government asked an expert panel to review the funding model for palliative care services across Victoria. The review aimed to address any inequities that exist in the current funding model. It considered how to improve sustainability for palliative care services and improve their capacity to deliver flexible patient-centred care.

The former Minister for Health the Hon. Jill Hennessey released the expert panel's final report on 30 October 2018. The government has accepted all seven recommendations based on three themes: community palliative care, better integration of community and acute, and enhancing accountability across the system.

The recommendations include a transition over five years to a new needs-based allocation model. The panel believes these recommendations will support improvement to the palliative care service system to ensure it is more person-centred and more broadly integrated across the healthcare system. The review summary is available at: [www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/palliative-care/palliative-care-funding-review](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/patient-care/end-of-life-care/palliative-care/palliative-care-funding-review)

## Additional investment

A commitment of \$23.4 million for 2018–19 was included in the announcement on 30 October. This one-off investment is targeted towards metropolitan palliative care services, increased palliative care beds, hospital-based consultancy, workforce development and service integration. Read the full media release at: [www.premier.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/181030-More-Support-For-Terminally-Ill-Victorians.pdf](http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/181030-More-Support-For-Terminally-Ill-Victorians.pdf)

This investment comes on top of \$62 million the Andrews Labor Government already provided in November 2017 to expand rural and regional home-based palliative care, establish a state-wide 24-hour expert advice service and deliver grants for community-based end of life ancillary support services.

## Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

The *Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety* (the Royal Commission) was established in October 2018 by Australia's Governor-General. The terms of reference state that the inquiry and recommendations should have regard to 'all aspects of the quality and safety of aged care services', including but not limited to a list of issues that include 'end of life care'.

The group were provided with an overview and context of the Royal Commission by the Assistant Director of Care for Older People, Sylvia Barry. The Royal Commission is occurring in parallel to aged care reform with changes currently underway including new standards that take effect from July 2019.

The group unanimously agreed that end of life and palliative care are core business in aged care. The group discussed priorities including: the skill level and mix of aged care staff in providing fundamental palliative care, recognition of pain and deterioration, planning ahead, the importance of psychosocial care, relationship to primary care and the extent to which skills are core palliative care business in aged care.

More information on the Royal Commission is available at:

<https://agedcare.health.gov.au/royal-commission-into-aged-care-quality-and-safety>

## Palliative Care for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities

An overview on palliative care for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities was presented including work completed to date and information on access to services. *'Engaging communities, embracing diversity'* is a key priority of the Framework.

Much of this work funded by the department over recent years was developed and implemented through the *Cultural Responsiveness Strategy* by *Palliative Care Victoria* (PCV) in partnership with *Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria* (ECCV) and the *Multicultural Centre for Women's Health*.

The group highlighted successes including the valuable expertise, relationships and social capital with CALD organisations, 244 resources produced in 39 languages and many more ongoing activities. Continued long-term commitment and relationship development are necessary along with further consideration of best practice methods to communicate with CALD communities.

The group discussed challenges including smaller migrant and ethnic populations. It is also reported that there are some cultures with a high prevalence of either not believing in or understanding palliative care for various reasons.

Proposed strategies include developing an inter-generational strategy, using creative arts modalities to stimulate end of life discussion and the relevance of a 'trauma-based approach'. Populations that are not accessing the benefits of palliative care will also be a priority discussion at the next meeting.

	<p><b>Better Health Channel</b> &lt;<a href="http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/palliative">www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/palliative</a>&gt; features a page:  <b><i>'End of life and palliative care for older Victorians'</i></b>  Select from the tab: <b><i>'End of life and palliative care for all communities'</i></b></p>	
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### 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](http://www2.health.vic.gov.au/palliative-care)> - for health, human service, social and community sectors.

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

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