

ACSA 2019

Home-based end-of-life care: *caring@home* resources

The majority of Australians say they would prefer to be cared for and, if possible, to die at home, however, more than 50% die in hospital. Many people, in the terminal stage, are admitted to in-patient facilities because their symptoms cannot be adequately controlled at home.

caring@home, an Australian Government funded project, represents a person-centred model of care that supports the community-based aged-care population to die at home with optimal symptom control. The project has produced resources for organisations, healthcare professionals and carers to support carers to help manage breakthrough palliative symptoms safely using subcutaneous medicines.

caring@home resources, applicable to all jurisdictions in Australia, include:

- *Guidelines for the handling of palliative care medicines in community services* developed by NPS MedicineWise
- A template example policy and procedure for organisations to tailor and guide the operational implementation of the resources
- The palliMEDS app for prescribers
- Online education modules for nurses concerning training of carers
- A comprehensive *caring@home* package for carers that contains step-by-step guides, a diary, videos, a practice demonstration kit and a colour coded labelling system.

caring@home is evidence-based and facilitates high-value care; it supports person-centred outcomes and improves service performance efficiency and effectiveness. National implementation of the project is proceeding apace. To date, more than 250 community services have ordered the free resources. Preliminary evaluation by the University of Technology indicates the project has significantly improved community nurses' knowledge, skills and confidence in providing palliative care for community-based patients.