

section 1.3: standards for providing quality palliative care

Australian standards for palliative care

Thirteen nationally accepted Australian standards of care for patients at the end of their life have been developed and revised in recent years.¹ These standards define the characteristics of quality care for palliative patients and are based on patients' fundamental rights within the health care system. The standards are designed to be used alongside other existing standards for health services, for example the ACHS Evaluation and Quality Improvement Program (EQulP).

standard 1

Care, decision-making and care planning are each based on a respect for the uniqueness of the patient, their caregiver/s and family. The patient, their caregiver/s and family's needs and wishes are acknowledged and guide decision-making and care planning.

standard 2

The holistic needs of the patient, their caregiver/s and family are acknowledged in the assessment and care planning processes and strategies are developed to address those needs, in line with their wishes.

standard 3

Ongoing and comprehensive assessment and care planning are undertaken to meet the needs and wishes of the patient, their caregiver/s and family.

standard 4

Care is coordinated to minimise the burden on patient, their caregiver/s and family.

standard 5

The primary caregiver/s is provided with information, support and guidance about their role according to their needs and wishes.

standard 6

The unique needs of the dying patient are considered, their comfort maximised and their dignity preserved.

standard 7

The service has an appropriate philosophy, values, culture, structure and environment for the provision of competent and compassionate palliative care.

standard 8

Formal mechanisms are in place to ensure that the patient, their caregiver/s and family have access to bereavement care, information and support services.

standard 9

Community capacity to respond to the needs of people with a life limiting illness, their caregiver/s and family is built through effective collaborative partnerships.

standard 10

Access to palliative care is available for all people based on clinical need and is independent of diagnosis, age, cultural background or geography.

standard 11

The service is committed to quality improvement and research in clinical and management practices.

standard 12

Staff and volunteers are appropriately qualified for the level of service offered and demonstrate ongoing participation in continuing professional development.

standard 13

Staff and volunteers reflect on practice and initiate and maintain effective self-care strategies.

references

¹ *Standards for Providing Quality Palliative Care for all Australians* (2005). Palliative Care Australia, ACT.