

End of Life Care Strategy

Promoting high quality care for all adults at the end of life



*What the End of Life Care Strategy
means for patients and carers*

July 2008

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Implementation of local end of life care visions, supported by this strategy, will mean that:

You will have access to:

1. The opportunity to discuss your personal needs and preferences with professionals who can support you. You will have the opportunity for these to be recorded in a care plan so that every service which will be involved in supporting you will be aware of your priorities. Your preferences and choices will be taken into account and accommodated wherever possible:

- ★ All health and social care staff will be trained in communication regarding end of life care;
- ★ Health and social care professionals will be trained in assessing the needs of patients and carers and, where necessary, reconciling differing requirements; and
- ★ A care plan will be offered to every patient and carer, to help ensure services are provided to meet their needs and preferences.

2. Coordinated care and support, ensuring that your needs are met, irrespective of who is delivering the service to you:

- ★ Every organisation involved in providing end of life care will be expected to adopt a coordination process, such as the Gold Standards Framework (www.goldstandardsframework.nhs.uk);
- ★ Local end of life care coordination centres will be established to coordinate care across organisational boundaries; and
- ★ End of life care registers will be piloted and established to ensure that every organisation which will be involved in care is aware of a patient's wishes.

- 3. Rapid specialist advice and clinical assessment wherever you are:**
 - ★ Patients and carers will have access to dedicated 24/7 telephone helplines and rapid access homecare services; and
 - ★ Specialist palliative care outreach services will be established in every area.
- 4. High quality care and support during the last days of your life:**
 - ★ A care pathway approach for management of the last days of life, such as the Liverpool Care Pathway (www.mcpcil.org.uk/liverpool_care_pathway), will be rolled out across England; and
 - ★ Facilities will be provided to support relatives and carers who wish to stay with a patient in hospital.
- 5. Services which treat you with dignity and respect both before and after death:**
 - ★ A major programme to provide training in end of life care for health and social care staff will be established.
- 6. Appropriate advice and support for your carers at every stage.**

To support this, your services will be:

- 7. Well planned and coordinated, ensuring you have access to the care you need, when you need it, irrespective of your condition or the setting in which you are being cared for, and that your choices are respected and will be taken into account:**
 - ★ PCTs will develop comprehensive local strategic plans for end of life care, based on an assessment of the needs of the population they serve.
- 8. Quality assured and delivered to a high standard:**
 - ★ Quality standards covering all providers of end of life care services will be developed (see Executive Summary paragraphs 17 and 24).

9. Monitored and assessed to ensure quality. Best practice will be identified and spread so that others may benefit:

- ★ A national intelligence network will be established to collect, analyse and publish data on service quality performance; and
- ★ A dedicated multiprofessional national support team will work with commissioners and providers to identify and spread good practice.

10. Informed by the experience of others who have been in a similar situation to you. Equally your experience will help inform the care of future patients, leading to year on year improvements in quality:

- ★ Surveys of bereaved relatives and carers will be introduced, based on the successful Views of Informal Carers – Evaluation of Services (VOICES) programme;
- ★ A comprehensive analysis of complaints relating to end of life care will be undertaken; and
- ★ A national End of Life Care Research Initiative will be launched to further our understanding of how best to care for people reaching the end of their life and support those caring for them.



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