



## PALLIATIVE CARE AND END OF LIFE

The best time to talk about our death is whilst we are well - a long time before we need to; however the moment a life-limiting or terminal diagnosis is received can often be the first time many consider their own mortality. When this happens there is often a series of conversations about end-of-life options, including palliative care.

Palliative care is not the end of treatment but the introduction of considering the most helpful, appropriate and beneficial treatments available for a person and their circumstances; it is not about giving up and nor is it just for the dying. Palliative Care is a system of support and a coordination of services designed to help people live as best they can with their life-limiting or terminal illness.

Palliative care can be part of a person's care plan years before they reach the end of their life.

Palliative Care Australia defines palliative care as; *'Palliative care is care that helps people live their life as fully and as comfortably as possible when living with a life-limiting or terminal illness.'* This is distinct from end of life care which Palliative Care says, *'is the last few weeks of life in which a patient\* with a life-limiting illness is rapidly approaching death. The needs of patients and their carers is higher at this time.'*

<https://palliativecare.org.au/what-is-palliative-care>,

There are different components to the discussions around palliative and end-of-life care, and Palliative Care Australia offer some valuable resources and information in relation to the aspects of care and they have referral services to many varied services.

The Australian Government provides information on Palliative Care across Australia and the types of care and services that are available. That information can be found here - <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/palliative-care/about-palliative-care/where-is-palliative-care-provided>.

Care Search is another resource which provides an exhaustive list of both National and State based options.

National - <https://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/118/Default.aspx>

State based - <https://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/119/Default.aspx>

*Note: Palliative Care uses the term 'patient' which has a medical orientation, this word refers to a person living with a life-limiting or terminal illness/condition*