We know about end of life care

The work being taken forward by Marie Curie, Argyll and Bute Community Health Partnership and local independent and third sector partners is an excellent example of partnership working at its best. Through the Argyll and Bute Delivering Choice Programme, high quality palliative and end of life care will be delivered to address the needs of the local community. These services will provide care with empathy and dignity that meet the individual needs of every patient, in the place of their choice, wherever this is possible.

Michael Matheson MSP, Minister for Public Health

Palliative and end of life care

The Scottish Government’s Quality Strategy is designed to deliver the highest quality healthcare to the people of Scotland. It ensures that the NHS, local authorities and the third sector work together, and with patients, carers and the public, towards a shared goal of world-leading healthcare. The plan is geared towards helping the Scottish Government achieve the following national priority:

‘Our vision is that by 2020 everyone is able to live longer healthier lives at home, or in a homely setting.’

Strategy and leadership

Living and Dying Well, which was published in 2008, is the Scottish Government’s action plan for palliative care services. It calls for a more equitable provision of end of life care services for patients with any advanced, progressive or incurable condition across all care settings.

In January 2011, a progress report of the action plan, Living and Dying Well: Building on Progress, was published, outlining what has been achieved and what is still to do. A further progress report was published in 2012.

Commissioning

Living and Dying Well has led to a number of new policy initiatives and ways of working for end of life care, including commissioning.

In July 2010, A Partnership for Better Palliative and End of Life Care: Creating a New Relationship Between Independent Adult Hospices and NHS Boards in Scotland was published, indicating the Government’s desire for a more integrated approach to commissioning and delivery of palliative and end of life care services. It also emphasised that the partnerships should be underpinned by frequent reviews of activity and performance against agreed measures.
Healthcare standards and indicators

The Hospice Quality Improvement Forum, established by the Scottish Government in 2013, will develop a common set of quality measures, help benchmark between hospices, share good practice and act as a link to Healthcare Improvement Scotland.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland supports NHS Scotland in delivering care that’s high quality, based on evidence, safe, effective and person-centred; and scrutinises services to provide public assurance about the quality and safety of that care. It developed and published palliative and end of life care indicators in 2013.

NHS Scotland is currently developing national palliative care guidelines, based on the NHS Lothian Palliative Care Guidelines.

Integration of Health and Social Care (Public Bodies Act)

The Scottish Government has recently passed the Public Bodies Act in the Scottish Parliament, which places a legal duty on NHS Boards and local authorities to integrate adult health and social care services.

The aim of the Act is to create a more person-centred, outcome-focused model of health and social care delivery. It requires that the Scottish Government sets national health and wellbeing outcomes. Local authorities and NHS boards must then develop an integration plan and strategy for meeting those outcomes. The Act will come into force in 2015.

Reshaping Care for Older People

Reshaping Care for Older People is a Scottish Government initiative that’s addressing the care needs of the ageing population while reducing statutory sector funding. It provides £70 million funding a year to local partnerships of providers from local authorities and NHS Boards, as well as the private and voluntary sectors, to drive redesign and development of services.

The Government has commissioned Marie Curie Cancer Care to undertake a number of projects as part of the Reshaping Care for Older People programme.

We are delighted to be able to work in partnership with Marie Curie and NHS Lothian for this service, by providing the education for the nursing staff to benefit patients and families. Sharing our skills and knowledge in palliative care through education is a fundamental part of the philosophy of St Columba’s Hospice.

Margaret Dunbar, Chief Executive of St Columba’s Hospice

“...The service provides an excellent standard of care and support and is highly valued by service users and their carers. Marie Curie Nursing Service is committed to continually improving outcomes for people using the service. The staff team are highly trained and very committed to the work they do."
How Marie Curie is addressing and providing solutions to these initiatives

Delivering innovative and collaborative services across Scotland

As a trusted provider of end of life services, Marie Curie works collaboratively with the local NHS, social care services, hospices, and voluntary and private sector providers across Scotland, to offer flexible, efficient services and integrated models of care.

Examples of our work in Scotland:

• As part of a Reshaping Care For Older People initiative, we are delivering short episodes of palliative nursing care in the evenings and at weekends in partnership with Falkirk Community Health Partnership to support patients in the community with urgent end of life care needs out of hours.

• Our services in NHS Grampian and NHS Dumfries and Galloway provide out-of-hours palliative care nursing to patients in the community. We support the community team in caring for patients where short episodes of care are needed, responding to the changing clinical condition of the patient. The service is able to meet the needs of patients across the entire rural area, by working closely with the out-of-hours GP and nurse practitioners service such as the out-of-hours Grampian Medical Emergency Department service.

• Through our DCP Local project in Argyll and Bute, we are working in partnership with local providers to review existing palliative care services and address challenges around the provision of high-quality palliative care in a very remote population.

• In West Lothian we are working with NHS Lothian and Macmillan Cancer Support to provide specialist palliative care services for patients with any advanced, progressive and incurable illness, and support for their families. The West Lothian Palliative Care Service offers a range of multidisciplinary services to provide patients and their carers with specialist support and advice – whether in their own home, a care home or hospital.

• Working in partnership with NHS Fife, Fife Council, voluntary sector and private sector organisations, the Marie Curie Fife Service provides tailored care and support at home for terminally ill people and their families. In collaboration with local services including general practitioners and district nurses, the service offers nursing care at home, personal care after discharge from hospital, emotional support, and practical information. The service can prevent crisis hospital admissions and help those in hospital to be discharged quickly.

We know that some people may prefer to spend their final days in their own home or community rather than in hospital, and this service will help to ensure we are able to give a greater choice to our patients.

It will also enable us to provide more patients coming to the end of their lives with care that concentrates on relieving symptoms and giving physical, social, psychological and spiritual support.

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Melanie Hornett, Nurse Director, NHS Lothian

Quality

Reducing clinical risk is a major consideration when working with different providers. We can evidence the quality of our services through reports, surveys and training and development. The Marie Curie 2013 User Survey found 98% of respondents rated their overall experience of the Marie Curie Nursing Service as good (12%) or very good (87%).
A study by the Nuffield Trust found that Marie Curie patients in England are twice as likely to die at home than matched controls and fewer than 8% died in hospital compared to controls. Find out more: mariecurie.org.uk/impact

Hospice and nursing care
In 2013/14, there were 408 Marie Curie Nurses and healthcare assistants in Scotland supporting 4,774 patients in 30 county areas across Scotland.

Marie Curie operates hospices in Glasgow and Edinburgh, which provide high-quality specialist care to patients with any terminal illness and support for their families and carers. The hospice in Glasgow supported 1,264 patients in 2013/14, while Edinburgh saw 917 patients.

The Marie Curie Hospice, Edinburgh, also acts as a research hub and works in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh and other partners, such as NHS Lothian, to support evidence-driven, clinical practice in palliative and end of life care.

The Glasgow fast-track discharge service is funded by Reshaping Care for Older People. After its first successful year it has been extended across a second sector in Glasgow Community Health Partnership to support complex discharges and prevent crisis admissions. Working with the social care team, Marie Curie staff are trained to provide both health and personal care, delivering integrated patient-centred care.

Shortlisted for a Health Service Journal Care Integration award in 2013, the Glasgow fast-track discharge service was also highly praised at the 2014 NHS Scotland Event as “an excellent example of a multi-agency approach to improving the experience of patients and families” by the conference judging panel.

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Resources
View service case studies and evaluations: mariecurie.org.uk/commissioning

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Contact
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