

Dying in Canada

Each year more than 259,000 Canadians die. In 2004 Statistics Canada projected that the rate of deaths in Canada will increase by 33% by the year 2020 to more than 330,000 deaths per year.

The Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association(CHPCA) estimates that more than 160,000 (or approximately 62%) of these annual deaths require access to hospice palliative care services.

Environmental Regard to Dying

96% of Canadians agree that it is important for individuals who are terminally ill to be able to spend their final days in the comfort and in familiar surroundings. Currently 80% of Canadians want to die at home, however approximately 75% of deaths today still take place in hospitals and long-term care facilities due to a shortage of home care workers, especially in urban, rural and remote areas.

Palliative Care and The Person

It is the individual's right to access information and services from an educated interdisciplinary team of professionals and volunteers who receive continuing palliative care education. Every individual has the right to participate in informed discussion about healthcare options which may optimize quality of life and choose the best possible options based on that information. We need to recognize the importance of culture, ethnicity and religion in the lives of seniors and their families, while respecting cultural ceremonies or rites associated with death, grief or mourning.

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4. Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories – 2000-2026, Statistics Canada, Catalogue #91-520, p.124
5. CHPCA fact sheet, April 2007
6. Rachlis, Micheal. Presentation to the Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) Education Session, Toronto, Ontario, April 6, 2006.
7. Quality End-of-Life Care: The Right of Every Canadian, Subcommittee to update “Of Life and Death” of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, Final Report, June 2000, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/36/2/parlbus/commbus/senate/Com-e/upda-e/rep-e/repfinjun00-e.htm>
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9. http://www.hc-sc-gc.ca/hcs-sss/pubs/care-soins/2002-caregiv-interven/sum-som_e.html
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Let's Talk About Palliative Care

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What is Palliative Care?

Palliative Care aims to relieve suffering and improve the quality of living and dying of individuals with a progressive and incurable illness.

Palliative care strives to meet physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs of individuals and their families with sensitivity to their personal, cultural and religious values.

Palliative Care is active care, applies to all ages and should be delivered in a patient focused, family centered environment

Palliative Care can and should be offered in conjunction with existing therapies and treatment.



Palliation Can Be...

Active Palliation: chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, aggressive antibiotic therapy, radiation therapy –offer symptom relief but may also prolong life

Comfort Palliation: interventions are non-invasive, include drug therapies and other symptom control, grief counseling and spiritual support, grief counseling and spiritual support. Most occurs at home with inpatient or respite care as necessary.

Urgent Palliation: for symptom emergencies, moderate to severe symptoms, or sudden complications. Relief of suffering is intent not shortening of life. Experience, skill, judgment, and courage are

Palliative Care and the Aging Population

Canada's population is aging. In the next 10 years, the numbers of Canadians aged 65 and over will increase by 20%. CHPCA estimates that over the next 40 years, demand for hospice palliative care services will dramatically increase

The Ontario Health Quality Council reports that 1 in 3 Ontarians lives with one or more chronic diseases. Of those, almost 4 of 5 over the age of 65 have one chronic disease, and of those, about 70% suffer from two or more Chronic Diseases account for 70% of all deaths.

