

Resources

- **Northern Care Alliance NHS Group and the Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland – COVID-19 and Palliative, End of Life and Bereavement Care in Secondary Care: Role of the specialty and guidance to aid care (Version 3: 06 April 2020)**

<https://apmonline.org/>

This guidance, which is been prepared for secondary care initially and is not intended to be comprehensive, has been prepared and collated locally by the Northern Care Alliance NHS Group and the Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland. While it is not nationally endorsed by the National Health Service, it may be useful to colleagues throughout the country when preparing their own guidance.

This will be a 'live' document that will be updated, expanded and adapted as further contributions are received and in line with changing national guidance. The most current version of the guidance document will be available on the Association for Palliative Medicine website Home Page at all times. It is advised that you always check that you are referring to the most current version

- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing symptoms (including at the end of life) in the community**

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng163>

The purpose of this guideline is to provide recommendations for managing COVID-19 symptoms for patients in the community, including at the end of life. It also includes recommendations about managing medicines for these patients, and protecting staff from infection.

- **Hospice UK – Coronavirus Guidance (COVID-19)**

<https://www.hospiceuk.org/what-we-offer/clinical-and-care-support/coronavirus->

Hospice UK has brought together links to official guidance and resources to provide information for people about the current outbreak of Coronavirus in the UK. We also have links to statements given by hospices in response. This page will be updated regularly over the next few weeks.

- **European Association for Palliative Care - Coronavirus and the palliative care response**

<https://www.eapcnet.eu/publications/coronavirus-and-the-palliative-care-response>

- **Marie Curie - Coronavirus and end of life care**

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/palliative-care-knowledge-zone/proving-good-quality-care/covid-19>

During the past few weeks there has been a huge range of new clinical guidance, advice and resources published by a range of organisations including professional bodies and government agencies to guide professionals in response to coronavirus (Covid-19).

We have created this new coronavirus section to bring together the latest guidance on palliative and end of life care. We have included information that might help you if you are working in primary care, community care or in a residential home setting.

We are continuing to monitor the guidance, and will follow the advice and updates from the Chief Medical Officers and Public Health England (acting for all of the UK).

Articles and research

- Ferguson, L. et al. **Palliative Care Pandemic Pack: a Specialist Palliative Care Service response to planning the COVID-19 pandemic.** *Journal of pain and symptom management* (2020): Published ahead of print. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2020.03.026>
Specialist Palliative Care services (SPCS) have a vital role to play in the global COVID-19 pandemic. Core expertise in complex symptom management, decision-making in uncertainty, advocacy and education, and ensuring a compassionate response are essential, and SPCS are well positioned to take a proactive approach in crisis management planning.

SPCS resource capacity is likely to be overwhelmed, and consideration needs to be given to empowering and supporting high-quality primary palliative care in all care locations. Our local SPCS have developed a Palliative Care Pandemic Pack to disseminate succinct and specific information, guidance, and resources designed to enable the rapid up-skilling of non-specialist clinicians needing to provide palliative care. It may be a useful tool for our SPCS colleagues to adapt as we face this global challenge collaboratively.
- Arya, A. et al. **Pandemic palliative care: beyond ventilators and saving lives.** *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (2020): Published ahead of print.
<https://www.cmaj.ca/content/cmaj/early/2020/03/31/cmaj.200465.full.pdf>
The current novel coronavirus, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic will likely strain Canada's health care system beyond capacity, and many people are expected to die as a result. In this article, we review the challenges involved in providing palliative care in a pandemic.
In Italy, hospitals were forced to triage patients at an early stage, with many older patients with comorbidities being denied access to critical care resources. Indeed, even in a well-resourced country, the number of people denied life-sustaining treatments in a pandemic could exceed the number who receive them. Some might view this as a failure of the system, but this would be unfair. No sustainable system of health care can hope to accommodate such a surge in demand. But those who are denied access to critical care have a right to expect high-quality palliative care in place of a ventilator. Failing to deliver palliative care in this context would compound the tragedy of the pandemic and would arguably be a more substantial failure of the health care system.
- Feder, S. et al. **Palliative Care Strategies Offer Guidance to Clinicians And Comfort for COVID-19 Patient and Families.** *Heart and lung* (2020): Published ahead of print.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.hrtlng.2020.04.001>
 - *The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has caused a fast-moving, highly distressing global health crisis. Patients of all ages face daunting illness while healthcare systems struggle to meet the growing demand for services. The need for palliative care (PC) is likely to be substantial, and yet, PC specialists are in short supply. PC is specialized health care for patients and families facing serious illness. Incorporation of PC principles into the care of COVID-19 patients and their families can help guide non-palliative specialist clinicians as they respond to the coronavirus pandemic. Alleviation of suffering during crises such as the one we now face is an ethical imperative that PC principles support, both for COVID-19 survivors facing days to weeks of distressing symptoms and uncertainty, as well as those who succumb to the disease. We discuss special considerations in applying core PC principles during the COVID-19 crisis as well as targeted strategies to support patients and families*
- Fusi-Schmidhauser, T. et al. **Conservative management of Covid-19 patients – emergency palliative care in action.** *Journal of pain and symptom management* (2020): Published ahead of print.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.1016%2Fj.jpainsymman.2020.03.030>
Covid-19 is rapidly spreading across the world. Many patients will present with a high symptom burden, which specialists in palliative care can help manage. Whilst the focus in the media has been

on mechanical ventilation, increasing numbers of patients will not be suitable for this support due to underlying health conditions. Instead, they will require a conservative approach and palliative care management.

After two weeks of caring for inpatients with Covid-19 in a Swiss hospital near Northern Italy, treatment plans have changed dramatically. In part, this is due to competition for palliative care drugs, which are also used in ICU. But these changes are also staffing-related. Healthcare workers are re-allocated from their own specialities to care for patients with Covid-19 and palliative care is new to them. Hence, palliative care assessment and treatment recommendations need to be clear and simple to enact, to achieve maximum palliation of symptoms. In addition, our decision-making needs to be rapid, as patients are likely to deteriorate quickly. This is emergency palliative care. In this paper, we describe the management plan for three types of patients who are not suitable for ventilation: stable, unstable, or at the end of life

- Fausto, J. et al. **Creating a Palliative Care Inpatient Response Plan for COVID19 – The UW Medicine Experience. Journal of pain and symptom management (2020): Published ahead of print.**

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpainsymman.2020.03.025>

Introduction: The COVID-19 pandemic is stressing healthcare systems throughout the world. Significant numbers of patients are being admitted to the hospital with severe illness, often in the setting of advanced age and underlying co-morbidities. Therefore, palliative care is an important part of the response to this pandemic. The Seattle area and UW Medicine have been on the forefront of the pandemic in the US.

Methods: UW Medicine developed a strategy to implement a palliative care response for a multi-hospital healthcare system that incorporates conventional capacity, contingency capacity, and crisis capacity. The strategy was developed by our palliative care programs with input from the healthcare system leadership.

Result: In this publication, we share our multi-faceted strategy to implement high-quality palliative care in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic that incorporates conventional, contingency, and crisis capacity and focuses on the areas of the hospital caring for the most patients: the emergency department, the intensive care units, and the acute care services. The strategy focuses on key content areas including identifying and addressing goals of care, addressing moderate and severe symptoms, and supporting family members.

Conclusions: Strategy planning for delivery of high-quality palliative care in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic represents an important area of need for our healthcare systems. We share our experiences developing such a strategy to help other institutions conduct and adapt such strategies more quickly.

If you are unable to access the full text of these articles you can request them by emailing the library at library@sthk.nhs.uk

If you are not already a library member you will need to complete an online Library registration form: <http://www.knowledge-nw.nhs.uk/Pages/Join-The-Library.aspx>

For current awareness on COVID-19 and any other topic, see our *Knowledge Pages* at <http://www.knowledge-nw.nhs.uk/knowledge/Pages/RSSPage.aspx>

<http://www.knowledge-nw.nhs.uk>