

CareSearch is a website that has been developed to help patients and their families find quality information about palliative care. Pages can be downloaded or printed to read later. You can find these pages at [www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au) in the Patient-Family section.

**Further information:**

CareSearch is an online resource funded by the Department of Health and Ageing to help patients and their families find helpful information about palliative care. There are over 600 pages in the website and over 100 have been written specifically for patients, family members and others in the community. These pages include links to other quality web resources and provide information on state and national services and organisations.

It is free to use and available now at  
[www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au)



When someone is seriously ill, there are many decisions to be made and new situations to deal with. Talking about some of these things can be hard.

## DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

However good we are at communicating, it can be hard to talk about certain things. Some people find it difficult to discuss feelings and emotions while others may not want to talk about finances, wills or care decisions.

This can be more difficult if not everyone in the family agrees with the decisions that are being made.

Sometimes, it seems easier to avoid talking about death and dying or things that are worrying and upsetting. However, it can be a relief when someone starts a conversation about these things.

During any illness it is important to talk with health professionals. Talking openly can lead to a better understanding of any needs and concerns.

## FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Families are not all the same. Sometimes family circumstances can make communication more difficult. Family members may not always live close to each other. Divorce and remarriage may have changed how the family interacts.

If relationships have been difficult in the past, or if there are current stresses, these problems can be made worse. Family members can have different views. There may be long standing differences. All of this can cause conflict, perhaps as it always has done.

Occasionally people will want to reconnect with family members, former partners or friends at this time. This can bring its own difficulties but also often great rewards and peace of mind.

## TALKING WITH CHILDREN

Talking to children and young people about serious illness and about dying and death is difficult. It may seem easier not to burden them. Unfortunately children and teenagers need to face what is happening. They may become more anxious if they feel secrets are being kept from them.

Children and young people need the opportunity to ask questions and talk about what is happening.

Although there are many issues for family to talk about when someone is seriously ill, there are resources on the CareSearch website that can help.

