



An A – Z of CareSearch

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Introduction

Many health professionals are involved in providing palliative care. Some work in specialist palliative care services while others such as general practitioners or community nurses care for these patients and families as part of their ongoing health roles. They can face challenges in identifying and using an expanding information base. Sometimes, even finding relevant evidence can be difficult.

Access

Access is at the heart of finding needed information quickly and efficiently. Web based resources enable access from any location.

Breathing

Breathing is one of the symptoms addressed in the Clinical Practice pages. It covers topics such as dyspnoea, cough and haemoptysis. Pages provide an overview of the state of the evidence and implications for practice as well as having a related PubMed topic search.

Conferences

Lifelong learning is the process of acquiring and maintaining knowledge or skills throughout your life. Conferences are one way of learning. CareSearch provides information on conferences as well as university courses, short courses and online modules.

Diversity

Population health identifies groups that may have differential access to resources and services, or who may have specific needs. CareSearch provides information on specific populations within palliative care such as people with dementia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, paediatrics and young carers.

Evidence

Palliative care is a rapidly evolving, multidisciplinary field of practice. The types of evidence and knowledge produced within palliative care are accordingly varied and encompass many different types of research methodologies. An evidence-based approach is one which turns to the evidence to answer clinical and service-related questions, and uses the best available evidence to do so.

Friends and Family

Palliative care will affect all of us at some stage in our lives. By providing information and resources for those affected by the need for palliative care we can build an understanding of its role not only for patients but for their families and friends.

General Practice

Providing palliative care is one of the many roles that a General Practitioner fulfils. For most GPs this is a small but challenging part of their practice. Having access to resources that can help them benefits not only the GP and their patients but the community in general.

Health Information You Can Trust

Materials included within the CareSearch website are checked to see that it is:

- Relevant to the project,
- Written by an appropriately qualified and experienced person, and
- Of suitable quality.

Internet

The Web is part of the Internet which allows computers around the world to exchange data. It is hard to know how large the Web is. One estimate suggests that it has over 11.5 billion pages. There are likely to be over 100,000 health websites.

Journals

Many journals publish articles relevant to palliative and supportive care. It is important to note that not all palliative literature is published in specialist palliative care journals and that not all journals are indexed on PubMed. CareSearch provides information on palliative care journals and holds abstracts on non-indexed journals.

Knowledge Translation

Knowledge translation is a new area of research interest and practice. Its purpose is to make sure that the findings of research are incorporated by health systems and processes to improve health outcomes. It is about moving evidence into use by understanding the contexts of change and the barriers and facilitators to the use of research findings.

Links

CareSearch exploits the capacity of the Internet by enabling users to move to other pages in the website and to other quality resources on the Internet through hyperlinks.

Multidisciplinary Care

Professional Groups pages have information for the multidisciplinary team, acknowledging the role of different disciplines in palliative care.

National Palliative Care Program

The National Palliative Care Program is funded by the Australian Government to improve access to, and quality of, palliative care services in Australia. Details and reports of many of the initiatives can be found on CareSearch

One-Stop Shop

CareSearch is a gateway to palliative care resources. It is designed to support health professionals involved in providing palliative care, those needing palliative care, and their families and friends.

Patients and Carers

When you are told you have a life-limiting illness, things change. Patient and carer pages have information on many issues that patients and carers will face. They support the care and advice provided by health professionals to their clients.

Quality

The Finding Evidence Section helps health professionals learn how to assess the quality of research.

Research

Research underpins evidence-based practice.

- CareSearch has:
- Research Data Management System,
 - Conducting research in palliative care pages,
 - Research Studies Register, and
 - Information on Grants and Granting Agencies.

Symptoms

Clinical practice pages summarise the state of the evidence derived from systematic reviews of the clinical topics. The pages cover physical symptoms as well as psychological, spiritual and social care issues. They are intended to be dynamic being modified as the evidence base evolves.

Topic Searches

CareSearch has developed a validated content filter to retrieve palliative care literature from the Medline database. This filter is used as the basis for the PubMed topic searches within CareSearch to provide quick and easy access to palliative care literature on a particular clinical topic.



Up-to-date

CareSearch has developed a series of automated systems to retrieve new literature as it is published. All content pages are formally reviewed every two years to ensure their currency.

Volunteers

Palliative care volunteers work alongside health professionals. Specific pages assist them in their role.

W,X,Y,Z: What's New

Use CareSearch pages to find out What's new:

- on CareSearch,
- in the palliative care community, and
- in the literature.

You can also find out what's new by registering for the monthly newsletter, @CARESEARCH.

Conclusion

CareSearch is an online resource that can help clinicians find relevant evidence about palliative care and trustworthy resources. Available now at

www.caresearch.com.au

For further details on the project email jennifer.tieman@flinders.edu.au

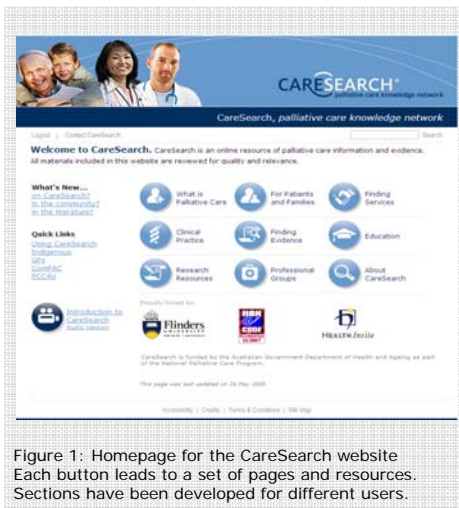


Figure 1: Homepage for the CareSearch website
Each button leads to a set of pages and resources.
Sections have been developed for different users.

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2. CareSearch is managed by the Department of Palliative and Supportive Services, Flinders University.

