ALLIED HEALTH AND PALLIATIVE CARE

CareSearch has created specialty palliative care ‘hubs’ of information and resources for nurses, GPs, those in Residential Aged Care, and allied health professionals. These hubs not only provide a direct entry point to relevant palliative care content for these groups, they recognise the contribution of these groups and settings to providing comprehensive palliative care in Australia.

Many different disciplines and professional groups contribute to palliative care individually and as part of multidisciplinary care teams. Allied health is an important part of palliative care provision in Australia. Allied health professionals contribute to a range of palliative care responsibilities, including:

- optimising patients’ functioning despite their deterioration;
- providing support to patients, carers and families in relation to their emotional, spiritual and social needs, enabling them to participate in life;
- facilitating the achievement of end-of-life goals;
- assisting patients to stay out of hospitals for longer periods; and
- helping people to recognise that many of the symptoms they experience can be managed.

The allied health professionals most commonly involved in the multidisciplinary care teams are occupational therapists, speech pathologists, dietitians, social workers, psychologists and physiotherapists. For some allied health professionals, palliative care is a small but ongoing part of their practice. Others may have an intermittent involvement depending on the needs of their individual patients. For others, palliative care is their primary area of professional responsibility.

The Allied Health Hub provides a consolidated source of palliative care knowledge and practice issues for allied health workers providing care to people with palliative care needs. The Hub recognises the role and contribution of allied health in palliative care and provides the opportunity to support special interest groups in palliative care.

The Hub is free to use and available now at www.caresearch.com.au.