Building the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets



Aged care provides care for many older Australians at the end of their life. The CareSearch Residential Aged Care Hub (RAC Hub) was one of the first online resources that made evidence-based resources available to the staff working in residential aged care facilities. It was developed by CareSearch in collaboration with aged care stakeholders and launched in 2011 drawing on the work used to develop the Guidelines for a Palliative Approach in Residential Aged Care (APRAC Guidelines). As part of the review of the RAC Hub undertaken by CareSearch in 2018, it was agreed that a number of sections previously held in the RAC Hub should be housed in palliAGED. This included a series of well-used pages looking at common care issues and considerations at the end of life.

Why Practice Tips Sheets?

As part of the planning to bring this content into palliAGED, the possible format of material that could be used by the aged care workforce was discussed with the palliAGED Advisory Group. The Group agreed that succinct information providing tips for practice would be especially valuable. The need to ensure currency of the information was also raised. Importantly, the Group also recognised the value of creating content for careworkers. Careworkers represent the largest group of aged care staff which provide direct (hands-on) care [1,2], spending the most time with residents and clients receiving aged care services.

Developing the tip sheets

A two-step process enabled updating of the RAC Hub information based on a scan of current literature and resources.

The first step of this process led to a series of tip sheets of the most relevant care or knowledge points for the careworker scope of responsibility. The second process involved creating a parallel series of tip sheets for nurses recognising that RNs and ENs may seek support if they are new to aged care of if they take a role in training new staff or careworkers.

Two face-to-face review groups were held in December 2018. These aged care experts provided advice on the topics to be included and the content and format of the tip sheets. This process ensured that the collection was comprehensive and that the tip sheets were both relevant and practical. This work was also guided by the palliAGED Advisory Group.

Keeping with the palliAGED/CareSearch model where evidence informs practice guidance, the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets were created by first addressing topics of care provider issues, decision-making and communication, and care issues. Initially 37 topics were included. The

tip sheet collections (for careworkers and for nurses) were published in March 2019 online and in printed booklets.

Updating the tip sheets

A review of the tips sheets was undertaken in 2022 and five topics were added based on feedback received from the aged care sector. These additional topics reflect the importance of personalised and compassionate care that respects and supports the older person and their family. Another addition is guidance for careworkers, nurses, and organisations on how they can progress their learning and skill development.

What is in a palliAGED Practice Tip Sheet?

The current collection contains a total of 42 tip sheets for careworkers and for nurses. All sheets include questions for self-reflection.

On each tip sheet, information is presented in the following format:

- What it is
- Why it matters
- What I need to know
- What I can do (active care tips)

Practice guidance is at the fore with tips on what carers can do, note, and report and what nurses can do and what tools they can use.

Promotion and feedback

Marketing strategies including social media and follow-up surveys of product use have been developed to support release of the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets. Please contact palliaged@flinders.edu.au if you are willing to be involved in providing feedback.

To know more about the palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets, their development and use, we invite you to read the About palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets page and the following blogs:

- palliAGED Tip Sheets - an aged care nurse practitioner's experience (05/05/2022)
- New palliAGED topics support human relationship in palliative care (03/05/2022)
- Tackling eye and mouth care during end of life (16/10/2019)
- Palliative Care Queensland uses palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets to begin conversations (09/10/2019)
- End-of-Life Care, evidence-based tip sheets for all aged care staff (13/03/2019)
- palliAGED practice tips: easy-to-read and evidence-based palliative care resource (08/03/2019)
- palliAGED Practice Tip Sheets: responding to need (06/03/2019)

Page updated on 04 July 2022

References

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) GEN Aged Care Data. Australia's aged care workforce [Internet]. Canberra: AIHW; 2021 [updated 2021 Oct 26; cited 2022 Jul 1]
2. Australian Government Department of Health. 2020 Aged care workforce census report. Canberra: Australian Government; 2021 Sep. Melbourne: RACGP; 2019.