

## Palliative Care Case Conferences

A palliative care case conference is a meeting held between the resident (if able to attend), their family and/or their substitute decision maker, and members of the care team including the doctor. The aim of the case conference is to discuss issues and raise concerns about the resident's condition, to review the resident's advance care plan, and to agree on clear goals for the resident's future care. There is no right or wrong time for a case conference but it will often be arranged when the resident moves into the aged care home or because they have a significant change in function or health.

### Key messages

- Palliative care case conferences identify clear goals for the resident's future care so that everyone is 'on the same page'.
- Good communication between the aged care team and the resident/family/substitute decision maker is essential to ensure the best outcomes for the resident.
- Careworkers can play a key role in case conferences because they often notice changes in the resident's well-being before other staff members.

### What can you do?

- Look out for changes in a resident's mood, ability to function, swallow, walk, breathe etc.
- Listen when residents mention issues related to their health conditions and report back to the nursing staff.
- If invited, attend the case conference and share your observations about the resident.
- If you are not asked to attend the case conference, write down any issues you feel should be talked about and give them to the nursing staff.

### Why it works

- Palliative care case conferences support the best possible end of life care for the resident because everyone is 'on the same page'.
- Can reduce unwanted and unneeded medical treatments and transfers to hospital.
- Provides peace of mind to the resident and family about what will happen when the resident's health gets worse.
- Reduces last-minute, emotional discussions when the resident/family is less able to clearly think through issues.



### Related pages

[Introduction to a Palliative Approach](#) - clicking here will open a printable version of a flipchart that introduces palliative care case conferences (see pages 19-28).

[All on the Same Page](#) - clicking here will take you to a video (14 minutes) that uses a fictional scenario to demonstrate key issues to consider in undertaking effective palliative care case conferences.

[Being Part of the Care Process](#) - clicking here will take you to a video presentation (13 minutes) that highlights the role of the careworker in palliative care case conferences.

[Self-Directed Learning Package \(Careworker\)](#) - clicking here will open a printable version of the package that discusses palliative care case conferences and how the careworker can contribute (see pages 131-3).

[Self-Directed Learning Package for Careworkers](#) - clicking here will take you to an online version of the package.

### Relevant links

CareSearch - [www.caresearch.com.au](http://www.caresearch.com.au)  
Residential Aged Care Palliative Approach Toolkit - [www.caresearch.com.au/PAToolkit](http://www.caresearch.com.au/PAToolkit)

