



Decision Assist
Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning
for Aged Care

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Ms Annie Parks*

Decision Assist is funded by the Australian Government www.decisionassist.org.au

What is Decision Assist?



Funded by the Australian Government and specifically designed for the aged care sector, including staff and GPs working in both residential and home care services to:

- provide Specialist Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning advice
- improve linkages between Aged Care Services and Palliative Care Services

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What is Decision Assist?



and to:

- enhance palliative care skills and advance care planning expertise
- improve the quality of care for aged care recipients, prevent unnecessary hospital admissions and shorten hospital stays.

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Why do we need it?



- 1 in 7 Australians is over 65 years
- Aged care reforms:
 - increased number of home care packages
 - people entering aged care facilities later and with a shorter length of stay

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Who is leading it?

The Project is managed by a consortium of national health and aged care organisations:



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Get Phone Advice When You Need it

1300 668 908

Advance Care Planning Phone Service
0800-2000 7 days a week

Palliative Care Phone Service
24 hours a day 7 days a week



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Get the latest clinical information

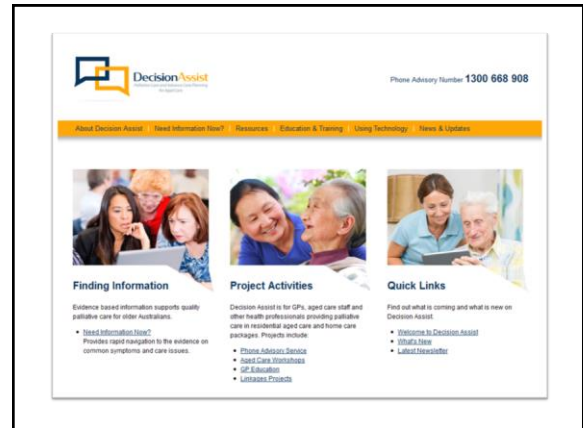


Decision Assist website:

- National consistent clinical guidance
- Clinical guidance on common symptoms
- Help with groups who may have specific needs

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Palliative Care Linkages Project



Aims to enable enhancements of linkages between service providers involved in the delivery of palliative care services to older Australians

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What does the evidence tell us?



- Five organisational strategies that promote interorganisational linkages are identified:
 - Multidisciplinary team structures
 - Written and verbal communication pathways inc. formalised agreements
 - A designated linkage person
 - Role clarification
 - Knowledge exchange and upskilling

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What does the evidence tell us about outcomes?



- Multidisciplinary team structures
 - improved communication
 - increased confidence in partner organisations
 - improved symptom control

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What does the evidence tell us about outcomes?



- Written and verbal communication pathways
 - formalised agreements eg: MOU
 - improved communication between services eg: GPs, specialists, Nurse Practitioners and aged care providers, families and carers

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What does the evidence tell us about outcomes?



- A designated linkage person
 - Improved access to services
 - Improved quality of care
 - Improved cooperation between services
 - Improved continuity of care

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Linkages & Networks



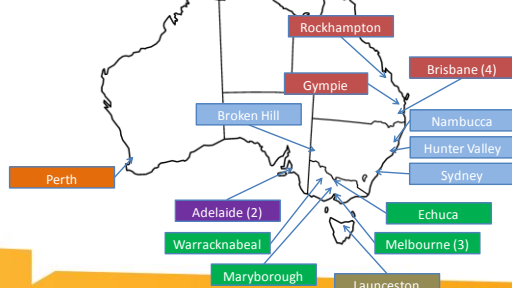
Twenty projects to enable enhancements of linkages between service providers involved in the delivery of palliative care services to older Australians

Facilitators will support local linkages and networks

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Where are the projects?



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Project partners



Partnering organisations

Residential aged care facilities (with impact on many more)	32
Home care organisations	10
Specialist palliative care services	15
Hospices	4
Ambulance service	1
GPs	1
Medicare Locals	2
Local government	1

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Linkage - Target Groups



Number of projects allocated per Target Group

Rural and Regional	12 projects (2 are state-wide)
Culturally & Linguistically Diverse	2 projects
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander	2 projects
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex*	1 project
* Included as a target group within a project	
Homeless population	1 project

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Focus of Linkage projects



Identified strategies

Formalised agreements	5
Role descriptions	3
Communications pathways	16
Multidisciplinary care	7
Linkage workers	10
Skills and knowledge exchange	9

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Funded Linkage Projects



Footprints Project

- To enhance linkages between community, residential and palliative care
- Link Nurse – NP Palliative Care
- In partnership with Bally Cara and Palm Lodge RACFs
- Karuna
- St Vincent's Community Care Team

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Funded Linkage Projects



PresCare - Launceston

- Palliative Care Champions
- Link nurses
- In partnership with Community Care North, Primary Health, THO – North DHHS Palliative Care North Tasmania

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How to get involved



- Tell your work colleagues about it
- Sign up for a newsletter - Augment and Project Updates
- Visit the Decision Assist website
- Enroll for a training workshop
- Tell your GP(s) about the workshops and about the phone line
- Make use of the phone line if you need advice



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For further information:

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Telephone Advisory Service:

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