In 2013, 52 infants and children died in OLCHC. This represents 0.5% of our inpatient population. A further 52 children who were patients of OLCHC died at home or in another hospital. The End of Life Care Committee was established to promote and guide good practice in end of life care for these children and their families. The Committee is required as best practice as outlined in the HFH Quality Standards for End of Life Care in Hospitals (2010).

End of Life Care Symbol
This sign was developed by the Hospice Friendly Hospitals Programme to be a universally recognised symbol of end of life. The symbol is inspired by ancient Irish history and is not associated with any one religion or denomination. The 3-stranded white spiral represents the interconnected cycle of life – birth, life and death. The white outer circle represents continuity, infinity and completion. Purple is the background colour as it is associated with nobility, solemnity and spirituality.

The symbol communicates to staff and visitors that a patient is dying or has died. The symbol guides people to create an atmosphere of quiet where people are respectful, avoid mobile phone use and are aware that they may meet people who are grieving. This sign should be displayed where it is visible on the ward or unit.

Copies are available in the EOLC Folders in all departments. Additional copies can be obtained from Carol Hilliard 2884 or carol.hilliard@olchc.ie

Plans for 2014
In 2014, the EOLC Committee will undertake some projects to enhance end of life care for children and families in OLCHC.

- Review of the content of the EOLC Resource Folder – it is intended to change the document to an electronic version which will be available on the Intranet. Hard copies of forms and algorithms will still be available the EOLC folder in all clinical areas.
- Self Assessment of the hospital against the Quality Standards for End of Life Care

Submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee for Health & Children
In November 2013 the EOLC Committee made a written submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee which is looking at end of life care on a national level.

The committee used the opportunity to present the unique needs of children and families at end of life and made many recommendations on how this care could be improved.

If you have any feedback or suggestions about end of life care in OLCHC, or you would like further information, please contact: Carol Hilliard
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