

The Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) Primary Palliative Care (PPC) programme addresses the provision of palliative care in the community. This newsletter provides information about primary palliative care. It also provides an update on work to date nationally and internationally in this area.

Did you know that...?

- Approximately 30,000 people die every year in Ireland.
- 42% of deaths are caused by circulatory or respiratory diseases and 30% of deaths are caused by malignant neoplasms (cancer).
- 23% of deaths in Ireland take place at home.
- 17% of deaths take place in nursing homes.
- It is estimated that 90% of care in the last year of life is provided by the GP and Primary Care Team.



What is Primary Palliative Care?

Primary Palliative care is palliative care practised by community based health care workers such as GPs, Practice Nurses, Community Nurses and Public Health Nurses. This type of care includes early identification and triggering of palliative care as part of integrated and holistic chronic disease management. It also involves collaborating with specialist palliative care services, where they exist, and strengthening underlying professional capabilities in primary care (Munday et al, 2019).

Irish Hospice Foundation & Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP):

- During October IHF collaborated with ICGP to prepare and deliver two webinars. The first webinar focused on grief and bereavement and outlined some of the steps GPs can take to address bereavement care in their practice. The second webinar focused on The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and teased out some of the implications of this legislation for GPs. The webinars are available on the ICGP website and will soon be available on the IHF website.
- With support from the IHF PPC Steering Committee, the ICGP are progressing the redevelopment of the "ICGP Certificate Course in Palliative Care". It is planned that this will be available to GPs in 2020.
- The ICGP have been represented on the IHF PPC Steering Committee since its establishment in 2010. Currently a Memorandum of Understanding is being prepared between the two organisations to support the delivery and development of primary palliative care in Ireland.

DNACPR in the Community:

In 2018 a small scale case study analysis was carried out to ascertain the situation in relation to Do Not Attempt Resuscitation orders and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation in the community. This research was published in August 2019 and is available via the Medico- Legal Journal of Ireland 25(1), 41 - 45.



Community Nurses:



- Work continues to highlight the role of Practice Nurses providing palliative and end-of-life care. Members of the IHF PPC Steering Committee have submitted an article for publication to the journal Nursing in General Practice.
- The HSE course Introduction to Practice Nursing will include a module on palliative and end-of-life care in 2020.
- Representation of community based nurses (Public Health Nurses and community RGNs) on the IHF PPC Steering Committee is currently being sought. Please contact: Deirdre.shanagher@hospicefoundation.ie if you are interested.



Advocacy:

The IHF PPC Steering Committee continues to advocate for the inclusion of palliative care and advance care planning within the new GP contract. Despite an unsuccessful application for Sláintecare funding this group will continue advocating on this issue.

Other News:

The European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC) Primary Care Reference Group has been operating since 2016. Information about this Group and access to the toolkit for the development of palliative care in the community is available [here](#). The toolkit was updated and published earlier this year at the 16th World Congress of the EAPC in Berlin.



Useful resources:

GP Out of Hours Palliative Care Handover Form. This form is used for communication between the GP and Out of Hours services. It includes fields for patient details, GP details, and clinical information.

Think Ahead My form. A document that helps people plan for their life and end of life. It includes an Advance Healthcare Directive.

Update on Advance Planning and Legislation Frequently Asked Questions. A FAQ aimed at addressing common questions about The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 for those working in healthcare.

Nurses for Night Care. A brochure that provides information about this service that enables people dying with illnesses other than cancer, to receive nursing care at night time in their own homes.

- The GP Out Of Hours Palliative Care Handover Form is aimed at enhancing communication between the GP and Out of Hours services.
- The Think Ahead form is a document that people can fill in. It helps people to plan for their life and end of life. It includes an Advance Healthcare Directive.
- The 2019 Update on Advance Planning and Legislation is a FAQ aimed at addressing common questions about The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015 for those working in healthcare.
- The updated Nurses for Night Care information brochure provides information about this service that enables people dying with illnesses other than cancer, to receive nursing care at night time in their own homes.

For more information and to join the Irish Hospice Foundation Primary Palliative Care Contact List contact: Deirdre.shanagher@hospicefoundation.ie



Primary Palliative Care Programme



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