

End of life care for adults: service delivery

Information for the public

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Services that provide care for adults near the end of life

All adults should have access to good care when they are nearing the end of their life. Providing good care benefits both them and the people who are important to them. To support people to live well until they die, services that provide end of life care need to work together in a way that means people live in comfort and dignity and die as they wish. We want this guideline to improve end of life care for people and those important to them by making sure:

- care plans include all aspects of a person's wellbeing and health and social care needs
- care is discussed and reviewed regularly and treatments stopped if they are no longer helping
- staff in different teams talk to each other and everyone has the right information
- care teams are trained and organised to act quickly when someone's health or needs change
- staff are trained and know how to talk to people sensitively about their care and support needs
- staff take time to explain and discuss people's care with them and the people important to them
- systems are in place to make sure everyone is offered the opportunity for advance care planning about what they do and don't want to happen
- families and carers know about the services available so they don't miss out on support that could help them.

Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your care team should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should also:

- check that you are happy with your care plan and that it continues to reflect your needs and wishes, and make sure you have a current copy of it
- make sure you know who is in your care team and who to contact with questions or problems
- explain what to do and who to call for urgent advice, and how to get medicines outside usual GP opening hours (out-of-hours services) if needed.

If you can't understand the information you are given, tell your care team.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

Where can I find out more?

The [NHS website](#) has more information about end of life care.

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [Compassion in Dying](#), 0800 999 2434
- [Dementia UK](#), 0800 888 6678
- [End of Life Doula UK](#), 01137 339 100
- [Hospice UK](#), 0207 520 8200
- [Macmillan cancer support](#), 0808 808 0000
- [Marie Curie](#), 0800 090 2309
- [MENCAP](#), 0808 808 1111
- [Sue Ryder](#), 0808 164 4572

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have used services for people approaching the end of their life. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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