

QUALITY STANDARDS

Placemat for Palliative Care

This document is a resource for health care providers and summarizes content from the [Palliative Care](#) quality standard.

Adults With a Serious Illness

Quality Statement (QS) 1: Identification and Assessment of Needs

People with a serious illness have their palliative care needs identified early through a comprehensive and holistic assessment.

As early as the time of diagnosis, perform and document a comprehensive, holistic assessment of your patients with a serious illness to determine whether they would benefit from palliative care. Assessment should be repeated regularly.

QS 2: Timely Access to Palliative Care Support

People with identified palliative care needs have access to palliative care support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Ensure that people with identified palliative care needs have access to palliative care support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, as needed.

Advance Care Planning and Goals of Care

QS 3: Advance Care Planning – Substitute Decision-Maker

People with a serious illness know who their future substitute decision-maker is. They engage in ongoing communication with their substitute decision-maker about their wishes, values, and beliefs, so that the substitute decision-maker is empowered to participate in the health care consent process if required.

Ensure that your patients know who the law considers to be their substitute decision-maker(s) and how they can appoint someone else if they wish. Encourage patients to think about their values, wishes, and beliefs, and then share those with their family and their substitute decision-maker.

QS 4: Goals-of-Care Discussions and Consent

People with identified palliative care needs or their substitute decision-makers have discussions with their interprofessional health care team about their goals of care to help inform their health care decisions. These values-based discussions focus on ensuring an accurate understanding of both the illness and the treatment options so the person or their substitute decision-maker has the information they need to give or refuse consent to treatment.

Talk with your patients about their illness, prognosis, goals of care, and treatment options to ensure that their values, beliefs, and wishes are aligned with the care provided. Assess the patient's understanding of their illness and give information to help them or their substitute decision-maker in providing informed consent.

Management of Palliative Care Needs

QS 5: Individualized, Person-Centred Care Plan

People with identified palliative care needs collaborate with their primary care provider and other health care professionals to develop an individualized, person-centred care plan that is reviewed and updated regularly.

Collaborate with patients and their care partners to create, document, and regularly update a care plan that reflects their individual values, wishes, and goals of care.

QS 6: Management of Pain and Other Symptoms

People with identified palliative care needs have their pain and other symptoms managed effectively, in a timely manner.

Assess patients for pain and other symptoms such as agitation, anxiety, respiratory changes, constipation, dehydration, delirium, depression, diarrhea, fatigue, nausea, and poor appetite. Ensure the timely delivery of high-quality management of pain and other symptoms.

QS 7: Psychosocial Aspects of Care

People with identified palliative care needs receive timely psychosocial support to address their mental, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual needs.

Assess patients' overall psychosocial well-being, and incorporate their mental, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual needs into the care plan. Ensure the timely delivery of high-quality care to address these needs.

Education and Support for People With a Serious Illness, Substitute Decision-Makers, Families, and Care Partners

QS 8: Education for People With a Serious Illness, Substitute Decision-Makers, Families, and Care Partners

People with a serious illness, their future substitute decision-maker, their family, and their care partners are offered education about palliative care and information about available resources and supports.

Provide education about palliative care to patients, their families, and their care partners, and offer information about available resources and supports.

QS 9: Care Partner Support

Families and care partners of people with identified palliative care needs are offered ongoing assessment of their needs, and are given access to resources, respite care, and grief and bereavement support, consistent with their preferences.

Offer assessment and appropriate support to the family and care partners of people with identified palliative care needs. Provide access to resources, respite care, and grief and bereavement supports and services, consistent with their preferences.

Transitions and Settings of Care

QS 10: Transitions in Care

People with identified palliative care needs experience seamless transitions in care that are coordinated effectively among settings and health care providers.

Ensure that people moving between care settings or care providers experience coordinated and

seamless transitions by involving the patient, their family, and care partners in the transition plan; facilitating timely and effective communication between providers; and identifying a member of the care team to be accountable for care coordination.

QS 11: Setting of Care and Place of Death

People with identified palliative care needs, their substitute decision-maker, their family, and their care partners have ongoing discussions with their health care professionals about their preferred setting of care and place of death.

Provide information about options for the setting of care and place of death to people with identified palliative care needs, their family, and their care partners.

Team-Based Care and Education for Health Care Providers and Volunteers

QS 12: Interprofessional Team-Based Care

People with identified palliative care needs receive integrated care from an interprofessional team, which includes volunteers.

Collaborate with other health care providers, volunteers, family members, and care partners to meet the needs of people receiving palliative care.

QS 13: Education for Health Care Providers and Volunteers

People receive palliative care from health care providers and volunteers who possess the appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality palliative care.

Engage in competency-based education, tailored to your role, to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively provide high-quality care for people with a serious illness.

Resources

- *Palliative Care* [quality standard](#) and [patient guide](#)
- The [Palliative Care Toolkit](#) from the Ontario Palliative Care Network (part of Ontario Health) includes best-practice tools to support primary care providers in the delivery of palliative care
- The Ontario Palliative Care Network [Tools to Support Earlier Identification for Palliative Care](#) supports health care providers and system-level leaders
- The Ontario Palliative Care Network [Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework](#) guides health care providers in delivering care to adults living in the community
- The Ontario Palliative Care Network [Ontario Palliative Care Competency Framework](#) describes the knowledge, personal attributes, and skills health care providers and volunteers need to deliver high-quality care
- The Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) [Palliative Care Toolkit for Indigenous Communities](#) includes resources to support Indigenous people with cancer who have palliative care needs
- Hospice Palliative Care Ontario offers [information and resources](#) to support health care providers when they engage in discussions about advance care planning and goals of care
- Region-specific support and services are available at thehealthline.ca; search the Palliative and End-of-Life Care section for your region
- Other Ontario Health [quality standards](#) address the topic of palliative care; search by the health topic “palliative care” for other quality standards that address this topic

Additional tools and resources are on [Quorum](#).

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