

# Community Specialist Palliative Care Team

A guide for patients and carers



The aim of palliative care is to achieve the best quality of life for patients with life-limiting illnesses and to support their families and carers. The specialist palliative care team become involved if your needs are more complex.

The team aims to complement the care and treatment provided by other healthcare professionals, such as GPs, community nurses and social care professionals. The community-based team, which works across most of Norfolk, is part of Norfolk Community Health and Care Specialist Palliative Care Service.

### **The Community Specialist Palliative Care Team**

This is a team of healthcare professionals who have expertise in providing palliative care, working with patients, families and carers as well as helping other professionals to develop their expertise. The team includes:

- Specialist palliative care nurses
- Specialist palliative care doctors
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational therapists

### **When you are referred**

Referrals to the service must be made by a health or social care professional, such as your GP, hospital team or community nurse.

Each referral will be assessed by one of our specialist triage nurses, who will contact you or (with your permission) a nominated carer or family member, to conduct an initial telephone assessment. This assessment is designed to identify and understand your individual needs, with the aim of ensuring that you receive the best possible person-centred care.

Following assessment, it may be determined that the Community Specialist Palliative Care Service is not the most appropriate service for your needs. In this case, it may be necessary to refer you to another service to ensure you receive the most suitable care. This would be discussed with your healthcare professional, and you will be contacted to arrange next steps.

To ensure best practice, all patients admitted to the service are discussed regularly at multidisciplinary team meetings. We also offer copies of any letters written following your first assessment.

## The support provided

Depending on your individual needs, follow-up support will be provided through a mixture of:

- Telephone or video appointments
- Outpatient clinic appointments
- Home visits for those not well enough to travel

## Support offered includes

- Advice on managing pain and other distressing symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting and breathlessness
- Complex emotional, psychological and social support
- Advance care planning, which is an opportunity to discuss and consider your future care preferences.
- Opportunity to talk about the effect your illness is having on you and those close to you
- Information about other services and help that may be available to support decision making

The team does not provide personal care but will offer information and advice to you and your primary healthcare team and will liaise closely with others involved with your care.

## Specialist Palliative Care Telephone Advice Service

The Norfolk Community Health and Care Specialist Palliative Care Team provide a telephone service for anyone requiring palliative care advice or support. This service operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can be used by patients as well as carers, friends or family members. You do not need a referral to the Community Specialist Palliative Care team to access the telephone advice service.

To contact the service please dial **0330 158 8011** and **select option 2 (advice for patients, family and carers)**.

Please note this is a telephone support service for non-emergency calls only. If you feel that your call is a medical emergency, please dial 999.

The telephone advice line is not a visiting service, but if a nurse determines that face-to-face support is required, a referral can be made to an appropriate service with your consent.

## Contact details

You can contact the service by telephone on **0330 158 8011 (select option 3: general enquires)** or by writing to either:

- The Priscilla Bacon Centre for Specialist Palliative Care Services, Colman Hospital, Unthank Road, Norwich NR2 2PJ
- The West Norfolk Community Specialist Palliative Care Team, The Norfolk Hospice, Tapping House, Wheatfields, Hillington, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6BH

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If you would like this publication in large print, Braille, alternative format or in a different language, please contact us on **0800 088 4449** and we will do our best to help.



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## Feedback

You can receive help with queries about our services, or provide feedback about them, by contacting the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service:**

**Telephone:** 0800 088 4449 (Mon - Fri, 9am-5pm)

**Email:** [pals@nchc.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@nchc.nhs.uk)

You can also tell us how likely you are to recommend our service to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment. Hearing your views helps our staff understand what they are doing well, and where improvements can be made.

Ask a member of staff for a Friends and Family form or visit:

[www.nchc.nhs.uk/patient-experience](http://www.nchc.nhs.uk/patient-experience)