



PALLIATIVE CARE IN CANADA

Equitable access to palliative care regardless of the setting of care

Receiving care and dying in the place of choice are measures of good quality care. Knowing and what is and where helps individuals at the end of life and their caregivers make informed decisions and be better prepared.



Palliative Care in the Home

- **75%** of Canadians prefer to die in their home—but only **15%** receive publicly funded palliative home care
- Individuals who receive a palliative approach to care are **2.5 times more likely** to die at home
- Individuals receiving home-based palliative care receive around-the-clock support from their **children (44%)** their **spouse (43%)**
- **1/3** of caregivers, family members and friends, providing palliative home care experience **distress**

“ We needed the information about what to expect, what our choices could be, what was available sooner than later, earlier rather than half way through or at the end. ”

Palliative Care in Residential Hospices

- **Only available** in PEI (1), QC (30), ON (40 with 72 sites), MB (2), SK (2), BC (68), AB*
- Admission is limited to individuals with a life expectancy of **3 months or less**
- Around-the-clock, compassionate and holistic care provides **relief for caregivers**

*AB reported 243 hospice beds in the community

“ There was no care team. We rarely had the same nurse in hospital nor in the community. We were always dealing with strangers. ”

Palliative Care in Long-Term Care Facilities

- While many individuals live their final 2 years in long-term care residences, **21% die in hospital** due to lack of appropriate palliative services
- Only **1 in 5** residents with less than 6 months to live have a record of receiving palliative care
- Residents receiving a palliative approach to care were **more likely to die in their residence** and to have their end-of-life wishes respected

“ I think more information needs to be provided around what end of life can look like, what are the options for care, what supports are available. How can people make informed choices without a full picture? ”

Palliative Care in Hospitals

- **42%** of Canadians die in acute care hospitals
- Patients and their families associate hospital deaths with **more distress**
- **Only 1 in 4** of terminal patients who are hospitalized receive palliative care
- **47%** of individuals with palliative needs **die in a hospital while waiting** to be discharged to a more appropriate setting (e.g., residential hospices or home)

“ Many of us in rural and urban centres are not offered care and certainly not end-of-life planning. Our loved ones die in hospital often without any referral to palliative care. ”

Learn more
information about
Operational Excellence
in Home-Based
Palliative Care

1. Health Canada. 2018. Framework on Palliative Care in Canada. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/health-care-system/reports-publications/palliative-care/framework-palliative-care-canada/framework-palliative-care-canada.pdf>
2. Canadian Institute for Health Information. 2018. Access to Palliative Care in Canada. Available at: <https://www.cihi.ca/sites/default/files/document/access-palliative-care-2018-en-web.pdf>

A Caregiver (also referred to as carer or family caregiver) is a person who takes on an unpaid caring role for someone who needs help because of a physical or cognitive condition, an injury or a chronic life-limiting illness.