

# CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub

Facilitating an exchange of knowledge,  
experience, and expertise



BY Pallium Canada

## BACKGROUND

Since 2019, the CHCA has worked with our members and stakeholders to build operational excellence in home-based palliative care by identifying gaps and innovations to improve the quality, efficiency and accessibility. Through our work we have engaged patients, caregivers, health care providers and policymakers in identifying leading practices and scaling and spreading operational innovations in home-based palliative care.

Our next step in advancing excellence in home-based palliative care is to leverage the success of the Project ECHO model to address major barriers to high quality palliative care in the home setting. This will be achieved through the creation of a CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub for home and community care. Working in partnership with Pallium Canada, as part of the National Palliative Care ECHO Project, the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub will:

- Enhance frontline providers' knowledge and skills so they can deliver high-quality palliative care.
- Improve patient/caregiver satisfaction with home-based palliative care by introducing ways to support them through their course of illness.
- Address operational gaps in home-based palliative care and promote innovative models across the country.

### What is the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub?

The CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub is a knowledge, experience, and expertise exchange where participants, contributors and the Hub facilitators come together to share workable answers and adaptable evidence-informed practices to address gaps and challenges in home-based palliative care.

The CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub is designed to improve the ability of local health care teams to provide the care that patients need. Developed from the Project ECHO philosophy of *moving knowledge rather than people in order to increase access to best-practices and reduce geographical health disparities*<sup>1</sup> the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub will connect community providers to specialists in palliative care, the experience of others and a wealth of knowledge and resources in home-based palliative care.

The CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub will profile successful approaches to shared challenges and pressures in home-based palliative care that resonate with the unique needs of local providers. Through participation in the CHCA Palliative ECHO Hub, health care providers will enhance their competency and learn through real life experiences to incorporate evidence-informed practices in home-based palliative care. Frontline providers and program managers are encouraged to join.

### CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub is not...

The CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub is not a think-tank or solution generator. It is not designed to find answers for individual organizations with time sensitive, immediate problems needing to be fixed.

1 The Palliative Care ECHO Project Guide

## Why a Palliative Care ECHO Hub?

The major barriers to high quality palliative care in the home setting is lack of palliative care training, gaps in knowledge and skills, limited access to palliative care specialists, and the palliative care shortage. This challenge can be overcome using Project ECHO. Leveraging the experience of thousands of health care experts across the world, the Project ECHO module effectively uses widely available videoconferencing technology to diffuse clinical knowledge and best practices to frontline clinicians no matter where they practice or what their background. The Project ECHO learning/sharing model works as a tool for leveraging palliative care specialist level expertise by providing support, encouragement, and a safe place to learn and improve.

Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) has been recognized globally as a leading approach to improving patient care outcomes. There are ECHO partners in 40 countries, operating more than 860 ECHO networks, which have trained more than 140,000 professionals to date. Project ECHO was developed in 2003 at the University of New Mexico and is designed to create virtual communities of learners who are then able to provide better care to patients in their communities.

The CHCA will use the Palliative Care ECHO approach to engage many home and community care providers across the country, to access palliative care specialists and invite family caregivers and patients into conversations on palliative care at home. Together we can scale access to high-quality palliative care to many more seriously ill patients and their caregivers.

## What topics will the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub address present and how will sessions be delivered?

The CHCA will identify priorities/areas of focus within home-based palliative care that are of concern to providers, patients and caregivers. A theme will guide the development of sub-topics which will form a series of learning sessions. The inaugural theme is Pain and Symptom Management in Home-based Palliative Care. This learning series will consist of five separate web-presented sessions. The four content specific topics will be aligned with a case scenario or challenge, a subject matter expert and facilitated discussion of the topic. The five session topics are: our sub-topics are:

- Palliative Care ECHO Project – Introduction and Approach (September 2021\*)
- Pain and Symptom Management at Home: Interdisciplinary communication and decision making (October 2021\*)
- Pain and Symptom Management at Home: Managing emergencies in home-based palliative care (November 2021\*)
- Pain and Symptom Management at Home: Difficult Conversations (Caregivers and Patients) (December / January 2021\*)
- Pain and Symptom Management at Home: Difficult Conversations (Approaches for Service Providers) (February 2022\*)

*\* Dates are subject to change*

## How does the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub work?

A learning session will be based on case scenarios and actual encounters in home-based palliative care contributed by participants of the Hub. Learning sessions are live cast to registered participants and will be recorded for viewing after the live cast date. Sessions will be broadly publicized to the CHCA membership. Each one-hour long session (held via ZOOM web-conferencing), will include:

- A 20-minute teaching presentation on the topic area
- Presentation of a case study followed by discussion with the expert team (hub) with recommendations and input from other participants

Each session's learning content is reinforced by several resources available on the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub web page. These include:

- A self-directed micro-training module featuring a key competency and/or action supporting the session (for the topic sessions only)
- Links to tools to reinforce practical application and implementation
- Resources to enable further learning and understanding of the theme
- Access to the recorded session through an on-demand video library

Announcements and invitations to join the sessions will be sent to all CHCA member organizations. There is no limit to the number of participants joining a session. All sessions are free of charge. Access to the CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub web page will be granted to all members upon completion of a simple information form available on the site.

## What is the National Palliative Care ECHO Project?

The Palliative Care ECHO Project is a 5-year national initiative that supports the creation of communities of practice, supporting continuous professional development among health care providers across Canada who care for patients with life-limiting illness. Led by Pallium Canada and partners from across Canada, the Project will deliver a continuous learning journey for health care providers to build local capacity to provide a palliative care approach to patients and their families.

The Palliative Care ECHO Project is supported by a financial contribution from Health Canada.

## Who is the Canadian Home Care Association?

The Canadian Home Care Association (CHCA) is a national not-for-profit association dedicated to ensuring the availability of accessible, responsive home care to enable people to safely stay in their homes with dignity, independence, and quality of life. Our vision is an integrated health and social care system that provides seamless patient- and family-centred care that is accessible, accountable, evidence-informed, integrated, and sustainable.

Members of the CHCA include representatives from government (federal, provincial, and territorial), administration organizations, service providers, researchers, educators, and others with an interest in home care. Incorporated in 1990, the association is governed by a seventeen-member board of directors that represents each province and territory, and service provider organizations. A recognized authority in home and community care, the CHCA facilitates partnerships, advances innovation, informs policy and leads initiatives that address pan-Canadian priorities in the home care sector. Recognizing the importance role caregivers have in home and community care, the CHCA established Carers Canada to increase recognition and advocacy for caregivers. In partnership with regional and national organizations Carers Canada works to build awareness and recognition of the role of caregivers and the challenges they face.

## Want to learn more?

Contact Jennifer Campagnolo, *CHCA Palliative Care ECHO Hub Lead* [jcampagnolo@cdnhomecare.ca](mailto:jcampagnolo@cdnhomecare.ca)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit the CHCA website [www.cdnhomecare.ca](http://www.cdnhomecare.ca)

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