

# Eastern Palliative Care



Palliative care. Living well every day.

Palliative Care and Voluntary Assisted Dying

## Our Purpose

We exist so that:

Our clients live with the best quality of life, before dying in their place of choice.

Clients, their families and carers are supported according to their needs and choices.

## Our Roles

To people with a progressive, life-limiting condition, we provide a holistic, person-centred, specialist palliative care service which:



# EPC Statement on Palliative Care and Voluntary Assisted Dying

## **What Is Palliative Care?**

Palliative care recognises the special needs of a person with a terminal / life-limiting illness.

The focus of care is on improving the quality of life of clients by assisting with their symptoms and helping them to make changes that will make life easier and more comfortable.

Palliative care aims to support the person to have control of their treatment options and offers support for their carer, family and friends.

It involves trained professionals providing various types of care which may include specialist palliative care doctors, nurses, family support workers, bereavement family support workers, music, massage and occupational therapists. The delivery of care is also supported by specially trained volunteers.

Palliative care is provided in the person's own home, including residential aged and disability care facilities, depending on where the person is living and where they choose to have their care provided at the end of life.

Palliative care complements the range of medical treatments and services currently available.

## EPC Statement on Palliative Care and Voluntary Assisted Dying

### **Palliative Care:**

Affirms life and regards dying as a normal process.

Neither hastens nor postpones death.

Provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms.

Integrates the physical, psychological, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of care Offers a support system to help people live as actively as possible until death.

Offers a support system to help the family cope during the person's illness & their own bereavement.

Palliative care is provided to people of all ages who are dying.

# EPC Statement on Palliative Care and Voluntary Assisted Dying

## **Our response to Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD)**

At EPC we are deeply committed to provide you, your carers and family with high quality, person-centred care, support and accompaniment so that you live well every day.

In June 2019, VAD came into effect in Victoria. Victorians who are at the end of life, and who meet strict eligibility criteria, can request access to the VAD Program. Following a series of assessments, a person in the late stages of advanced disease can take medication prescribed by a doctor that will bring about their death at a time they choose.

EPC's commitment to your care does not include the deliberate ending of life, because it conflicts with our model of palliative care. Palliative Care neither prolongs nor hastens the dying process. EPC's role is not to influence when death will occur. We oppose, and do not participate in, Victoria's VAD Program. Therefore, our staff are not involved in either the VAD assessment processes, nor the preparation or taking of VAD medication. However, we will not discriminate in the care we provide to clients who are considering VAD or going through that process.

In no way does our position on VAD exclude anyone from EPC's program and the normal care and services we provide. We invite open discussion with you and your family about your values, goals and the nature of suffering and illness. We will provide high quality symptom management and palliative care that respects your preferences. EPC's role as a specialist community palliative care service will always be to relieve your suffering and discomfort and provide person-centred care in the natural process of dying.



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ST VINCENT'S  
HOSPITAL  
MELBOURNE

Eastern Palliative Care is a partnership between the  
Order of Malta, Outer East Palliative Care Service Inc.  
and St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Ltd



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