

# About us



Palliative care. Living well every day.

🌐 [epc.asn.au](http://epc.asn.au) ☎ 1300 130 813

# An Introduction to EPC

Eastern Palliative Care (EPC) is a not-for-profit home-based palliative care service which offers a full range of support programs with the aim of improving the quality of life of individuals, those providing care, and families of those suffering life-limiting or terminal illnesses. Clients are referred by treating doctors, local hospitals, treating specialists, allied health professionals, by self, or by family members and friends.

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

EPC serves the Local Government areas of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.

The majority of our funding comes from the Department of Health & Human Services. EPC also relies on community fundraising and donations to maintain the services and programs we provide to clients, caregivers, and families. These services are offered free of charge\*.

\* Some exceptions apply.



## OUR VISION

Together in Service,  
Compassionate in Care,  
Leadership in Action



## OUR MISSION

EPC is privileged to care for and accompany the dying person and their caregivers in the final phase of life, upholding their dignity and respecting their spiritual, physical, emotional, cultural and social needs. Our care continues in the bereavement services that we offer families and those who provided care.



## OUR VALUES

**Compassion** includes sympathy for others in their suffering, listening, accepting and actively responding to their needs.

**Dignity** upholding the unique personality, situation and choices of others, valuing their lives in the face of death, and respecting their rights.

**Excellence** striving to do our best for those in our care and to give leadership through quality care, ethical practice, research and innovation.

**Partnering** vesting control in the client while joining with others to give continuous care.

# What is Palliative Care?

**Palliative care** recognises the special needs of a person who has a 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 their life easier and more comfortable.

Palliative care aims to make the client feel in 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 often 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.

## Your journey with EPC

EPC recognises that, as a person with a life-limiting or terminal illness, you may choose any of the following:

- To be cared for in the comfort of your own home for as long as possible.
- To live as normally as possible.
- To receive assistance from palliative care nurses to manage symptoms.
- To be in the continuing care of your own doctor.
- To have the support of your family and/or people providing care.
- To have your own Advanced Care Plan.
- To be supported through the decisions and personal adjustments which inevitably accompany serious illness - emotional, social, financial, psychological and spiritual.

**EPC can help to meet all of these needs.**

# Services available from EPC

Care is provided in your own home, including aged and disability care facilities, and is a free service\*

## Services include the following

- Specialist Palliative Care Nursing
- After hours support
- Co-operative care with GPs, Bolton Clarke (formerly RDNS), St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Ltd, Eastern Health and other service providers
- Allied Health Team
  - Family Support
  - Massage Therapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Music Therapy
- Trained palliative care volunteers
  - Client Biography service
  - Transport service
  - Home Support volunteers
  - Bereavement companions
- Specialist palliative care medical consultancy and liaison with GPs
- External education for residential and health care facilities
- Consultancy services to residential and health care facilities
- Community education
- Grief and bereavement counselling/support groups, including the following
  - Bereavement Information Session
  - Walking Through Grief Group
  - Therapeutic Grief Group
- Information on community resources



\* Some exceptions apply.



# Clients Rights & Responsibilities

## What can you expect from EPC?

Care, compassion, respect and to be treated with dignity at all times.

Safe and high quality care.

To be informed about services, treatments and any costs in a clear and open way.

The right to be included in decisions and choices about care and assistance and freedom to make informed choices about care, including:

- Clear and understandable information.
- Request for your consent to provide care.
- The right to cease any aspect of care without prejudice.
- Sensitive care regardless of gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, disability, ethnic background, age, sexual orientation or economic status.
- Respect for your ethnic, cultural and religious practices.

- Access to interpreters in the language of your choice.
- Confidentiality of your information.
- Freedom to express concerns about your care, and information about complaints procedures.

At times, a student may accompany a visiting staff member for teaching purposes. Your verbal consent will be requested at this time.



## What EPC expects from you?

Information regarding your health to the best of your knowledge and ability.

- To inform staff if you are not happy with the service.
- To question any aspect of care that you do not understand.
- The behaviour of clients, carers, relatives and friends is reasonable and respectful towards our staff and volunteers.

- Respect, care, and timely return of any special equipment on loan.
- To provide a safe environment for staff and volunteers visiting your home. This includes ensuring that pets are controlled during our visits.
- To take responsibility for providing, storing and disposing of prescribed medication.
- To advise us of your particular cultural needs or issues, including the need for an interpreter.
- To respect the health of staff and refrain from smoking during our visits.

**Equipment may be requested by EPC staff to assist with care provision. If essential equipment (eg. hospital bed) is not provided, this may result in limited provision of services.**

# Occupational Health & Safety

Your Home is our Workplace. In order to provide the best and most effective service, EPC requests that you assist us in providing a safe workplace for our staff and volunteers (hereafter all referred to as *staff*) while they are in your home.

**This assistance will mean that in areas where our staff will be working, the following applies.**

- The area is clear and provides easy access to enable the staff to carry out their duties.
- There is no smoking while the staff are present.
- There is an area for staff to wash their hands with a clean towel provided. Hand hygiene is the single most effective practice for minimising infection transmission.
- If requested, you remove any animals from the area.
- There is no violence or aggression towards the staff or in their vicinity.
- The exits from the home are not locked while the staff are in attendance.

- Appropriate equipment is available for staff to provide your care. EPC has a strong commitment to the principles of 'No Lift' and does not permit its staff to lift or transfer clients without the use of appropriate equipment.

## Fire Safety

In line with the recommendations following the 2009 bushfires, EPC has developed guidelines to ensure the safety of our staff. This may mean that on days of high fire danger and on days of total fire ban, visits may be rescheduled. If your visit is affected by the fire rating of the day, you will be advised as soon as possible. A copy of the **EPC Bush Fire Safety policy is available by calling 1300 130 813.**

# Privacy Declaration

## What information does EPC collect?

- EPC collects details from the referral source.
- Upon assessment, personal details such as your name, address, next of kin and contact details are compiled.
- Health information during your time on the program.

## How will information be used?

- Information collected is for the purposes of providing you with the best possible care and treatment.
- It may be used for planning, quality improvement and research purposes. In these instances, personal details will be removed so that you cannot be identified.

## How is your information used outside of EPC?

- EPC must supply a summary of information on all clients to the government department that funds our service. Information concerning your identity is also required to be sent to the Department of Veterans' Affairs to confirm your eligibility to receive benefits. EPC may be ordered to produce your records to a Court after legal proceedings have been instituted or if your capacity to make a will is being questioned.

- In order to best meet your needs, we share your information with other health providers such as your GP or other specialists or services such as hospitals. Please **refer to your Consent Form** for details.

## How is information protected within EPC?

- Your client record is stored electronically in our Client Information Management System where it is updated regularly by EPC staff. Your record is encrypted for privacy and access is restricted to particular staff members who sign individual confidentiality agreements.
- EPC also provides you with a folder which is kept at your home in order to facilitate communications regarding your condition, treatment and medication. It is your (and your carer's) responsibility to protect the privacy of the information contained in this folder while it is located in your home. This folder remains the property of EPC and is to be returned to us.

## How can you access your information?

- You may telephone the Chief Executive Officer at EPC seeking access to your records via the toll-free number listed in this brochure.

## Child Safety

**EPC takes child safety seriously.**

Palliative Care services provided to children are delivered to the same high standards as all other clients. EPC has additional measures in place to ensure a child safe culture is embedded and practiced within the organisation. All staff have a current Police Check and all clinical staff have a Working with Children Check.



## Client Concerns

**EPC** welcomes the opportunity to resolve your concerns directly. If you are not satisfied with our response, you may wish to consider raising your concern to the **Health Complaints Commissioner**.

**Health Complaints Commissioner**  
26th Floor, 570 Bourke Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000

**Telephone** 1300 582 113



## The Teams

EPC has four teams (Inner, Central, Outer and Region-wide) located within the Eastern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. The teams work closely with the client, people providing care, family and GP to develop an individualised care plan.

**The following services may be used to meet your care needs.**

- Nursing care
- Telephone support service
- Medical support and consultancy
- Social, psychological and spiritual support
- Massage, Music & Occupational Therapy
- Trained volunteers
- Grief and bereavement support
- After hours support

The team meets regularly to review the individual care plans of clients and to ensure the care given is planned and delivered to meet the needs of clients and those providing care.



# Nursing & Medical Care

## Nursing Care

Specialist palliative care nurses provide planned visits Monday to Friday (8.30am-10.00pm) with weekend visits scheduled as required.

A 24 hour on-call telephone support service is available during office hours and through Triage at Caritas Christi Hospice for after hours calls. If indicated, a visit may follow the phone support call.

Nursing care is aimed at relieving symptoms and promoting comfort to enhance quality of life.

Nurses work with other team members to respond to the needs of clients and those providing care through assessment, planning, education and clinical care.

We work on a team nursing model.

## Medical Care

Primary medical care is provided by the client's GP. EPC has specialist palliative care physicians and a nurse practitioner to provide consultancy, support and advice to GPs and the Care Team.

GPs can refer to EPC for specialist advice or request direct consultation and a home visit if necessary.

## Partnerships

Working with other service providers is often required to achieve the level of care and support needed by clients.

EPC works in partnership with a range of service providers, including the following.

- St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Ltd
  - Caritas Christi Hospice
- Eastern Health
- Bolton Clarke (formerly The Royal District Nursing Service)
- Yarra Ranges District Nursing
- Austin and other public & private hospitals
- Local Government
- Community Support Agencies
- A range of private hospitals

# Allied Health Team

Family Support Workers are qualified Social Workers, Psychologists and Pastoral Care Workers who have experience working with people facing life-limiting illnesses.

Support is available to the client, family and people providing care. Support continues for family and those who provided care into bereavement.

## What do Family Support Workers offer?

- Opportunities for the client to discuss what matters to them.
- Support for those providing care, including advocating on their behalf.
- Information on how to gain access to other services and supports.
- Counselling support for the client and those providing care.
- Bereavement support, provided by a specialist Bereavement Family Support Worker (as required).

Family support is person-centred and concerned with the spiritual, physical, emotional and social aspects of a person's well being.

Spiritual care supports people as they explore issues through life until death. This can relate to attitude, beliefs, values or formal religious structures.

Physical care can assist with practical issues that make day to day living easier in the client's home.

Emotional care focuses on feelings that can occur as a result of illness. Counselling and emotional support can help to explore these feelings and help understand them.

Social care assists the client to maintain important links with their community and family.

## Who has access to these services?

All clients, families and those providing care on EPC's program, have access to Family Support Services.



# Allied Health Team Continued

## Massage Therapy

The primary purpose of massage is always to increase comfort, wellbeing and quality of life. Massage opens different possibilities to clients in varying stages of their care as everyone benefits from some form of touch. The effects of massage are physiological and psychological in nature.

The physiological effects include the following.

- Reduction of muscle soreness due to prolonged bed rest.
- Decreased oedema and lymphoedema.
- More efficient respiratory activity.
- Reduction in pain.

**The psychological effects include:**

- Increased wellbeing.
- Reduction in stress, depression and anxiety.

## Music Therapy

Music Therapy uses music to actively support people to enhance their wellbeing. Music therapists incorporate a range of music making methods, and general support. Music Therapy may assist with the following.

- Relaxation and other techniques for pain management and anxiety.
- Alternative ways of expressing and working with grief and loss issues.
- Engagement in identity-affirming musical experiences.
- Family sessions of music making and sharing.
- End of life support.
- Legacy creation through song writing.
- Memory reflection and life review.
- Bereavement support for children and family members.

## Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapists help to optimise the individual's function, promote dignity, and support participation in essential daily activities. Interventions are developed in consultation with clients and their carers.

- Promotes adaptation and coping by reframing occupational goals and expectations.
- Assists with management of symptoms such as fatigue, breathlessness and pain.
- Task redesign and equipment prescription.
- Expert assessment of the person's ability to manage safely within their own home.
- Targeted interventions, such as education and environmental modifications to address identified goals.
- Provides expert liaison within the care team to promote best outcomes.
- Provides support, education and training to carers to reduce risk of injury, anxiety and stress.

## How to access a therapist

All clients on EPC programs have an Occupational, Massage or Music Therapist available to them. Please speak to an EPC staff member to make a request.





# Volunteers



## Volunteers have many roles within EPC

- Volunteers provide support in the home offering companionship, caregiver respite and some practical assistance such as transport for medical appointments.
- Volunteers assist clients to get out into the community to engage in activities that the client wants to access.
- Volunteer Biographers support clients to record their life story through the Biography Service.
- Volunteers work with carers in supporting their needs in the palliative care phase.
- Volunteers support the Bereavement Groups.
- Volunteer Companions provide specific support to bereaved carers.

- Community Volunteers speak with community groups.
- Volunteers assist with client's dogs and cats.
- Administration Volunteers support the office staff.
- Committee of Management members assist and govern our service.

EPC and volunteers abide by a code of conduct, ethics and standards consistent with those required by Volunteering Australia.

Volunteers must complete EPC's nine week Volunteer Training Program.

Confidentiality is practiced at all times.

# Bereavement Support

Bereavement support services are provided by qualified and experienced social workers, psychologists and pastoral care workers, and supported by trained volunteers.

## Bereavement support services include the following.

- Grief and bereavement counselling.
- Bereavement support groups.
- Bereavement information sessions.
- Referral to external counselling services if required.
- Access to our Bereavement Resource Library.
- Volunteer bereavement companions can provide assistance with specific tasks.
- Massage and Music Therapy are also offered as part of our bereavement support.

Those who provided care and families of clients on EPC's program have access to the Bereavement Program for up to 13 months following the death of the client.





# How to donate to EPC

Your generous support helps maintain the free delivery\* of our services and programs to clients, carers, families and the community.



**1. Online** via our website [epc.asn.au](http://epc.asn.au), click Donate ❤️ or download a donation form to send via mail.



**2. Call** on 1300 130 813



**3. Mail** us a donation to PO Box 2110, Rangeview, VIC, 3132

There are many ways you can support EPC

1. Make a **donation**.
2. Add a **bequest** for EPC in your will.
3. Request **memorial service donations** in lieu of flowers
4. **Volunteer** your time or service.
5. Create your own **fundraising** page at [givenow.com.au](http://givenow.com.au)

All donations  
\$2.00 and over  
are tax-  
deductible

Why not consider a memorial gift in lieu of flowers?

By choosing memorial giving, you are honouring the memory of a special person to help others in need.

Family and friends can donate in their memory via donation envelopes at the service, or at [epc.asn.au](http://epc.asn.au).

Please ask your funeral director to **contact us on 1300 130 813** and request our '**In Memoriam**' donation envelopes for a funeral service.

\* Some exceptions apply.



# Stay connected with EPC



**Subscribe via our website** for news, events, fundraising activities and to receive our quarterly e-newsletter.

You can also like us on Facebook **@epcaus**, follow us on Twitter **@epcaus**, connect with us on LinkedIn **EPC (Eastern Palliative Care)** or subscribe to our YouTube channel **EPC (Eastern Palliative Care)**.



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ST VINCENT'S  
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