NSW Ambulance
Palliative & End of Life Coordinator
Colleen Carter

Presented by: Claire Walker
Coordinator Primary & Community Care
The Opportunity

Unique to NSW Ambulance Service is a new role specialising in Palliative and End of Life Care

In 2017 NSW Ambulance received seed funding from the NSW Ministry of Health to assist in developing strategies to manage palliative and end of life care

The Coordinator Palliative and End of Life Care is an experienced palliative care nursing CNC

Secondment until January 2019

Member of Palliative Care NSW Management Committee
The Emergency Department is not always the right place
What is a Authorised Palliative Care Plan?

Provides the option for the patient, and/or enduring guardian and their clinician to discuss and document the wishes of the patient.

An endorsed Authorised Palliative Care Plan pre-authorises and supports the paramedic to respond to the individual patient needs beyond the NSW Ambulance protocols.
Driver Diagram

**The Problem:**
NSW Ambulance Authorised Palliative Care Plans (ACPP), do they facilitate care that is in line with the documented patient’s wishes?

**SMART Aim:**
Within 1 year 100% of patients in SWLHD Liverpool Sector who have an APCP who require the services of NSWWA Paramedics are treated in accordance with their APCP.

**Team Members:**
Team Leader:
Coordinator Palliative & End of Life Care
Executive Sponsors:
• Graeme Malone
• Michelle Shiel
• Ken Hampson
Advisory Group:
• Janeane Harum
• Aaron Casey/Carin Lewis
• Dr Jennifer Wiltschke
• Charmaine O’Conor
• Kerrie Womsley
• Naomi Ellis
• Anne Harley

**Primary Drivers**

- Improving Paramedics' awareness & confidence in responding to APCPs
  - **Process Measure:**
    - 100%
    - By when: Jan 2019

- Improving Specialist Services and GPs knowledge of APCPs
  - **Process Measure:**
    - How much: 100%
    - By Jan 2019

- Improving the communication between SWLHD Liverpool, palliative care, GPs and NSW
  - **Process Measure:**
    - How much: 100%
    - By: Jan 2019

**Secondary Drivers**

- To improve paramedics’ understanding and awareness of APCPs
- To improve paramedics’ knowledge of Palliative Care interventions
- To increase awareness & knowledge of APCP processes & their role
- To increase understanding of the paramedics’ role in unplanned calls to Triple Zero (000) for PC patients
- To ensure APCPs are documented appropriately
- To improve the number of APCPs from Specialist Services and GPs in SWLHD Liverpool LGA
- To improve feedback mechanism from paramedics to GP for implementing & updating APCPs
- To improve the use of IT to enable paramedic to access ARCP prior to arrival.

**Change Ideas**

- Palliative Care education for paramedics who man the Clinical Risk Advice Line
- PEPA education for the Regional Paramedic Educators
- Centralised process to ensure access to PC advice & support
- Improve paramedic awareness of role of Coordinator PEO-L Care and contact process
- Increase Paramedic access to external education resources and training
- Review P.1. Authorised Care Plan
- Improve Paramedic ability to support patients by reviewing & updating relevant protocols
- Identify Paramedic Palliative Care Champions
- Provision of Electronic devices to enable paramedics access to APCCP information prior to arrival
- Conduct focus group to ascertain their understanding of APCCPs
- Update Fact Sheets and make them available
- Present at PHN CPD events & other opportunities to improve knowledge & awareness of APCPS
- NSW to regularly attend LHD End of life Committee Meetings
- Explore opportunities to develop & implement APCCP process between LHD & NSW

**Priority Change Ideas**

- Impact: High
  - Implementation: Easy
  - Plan Do Study

- Impact: High
  - Implementation: Easy
  - Plan Do Study

- Impact: Low
  - Implementation: Hard
  - Plan Do Study

- Impact: High
  - Implementation: Hard
  - Plan Do Study

- Impact: High
  - Implementation: Hard
  - Plan Do Study

- Impact: Low
  - Implementation: Easy
  - Plan Do Study
The Role

Empower paramedics
Build relationships, Internal & External
Develop education programmes
Participate in the protocol reviews
Raise the profile of NSW ambulance’s role in this domain
The Message From Paramedics

“We want to do what is right for the patient”
So how do we support the paramedics to do this?

PEPA (Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach) facilitated training for Paramedic Educators

Palliative and End of Life Care Education for paramedics

Informed and knowing the wishes of the patient through Authorised Palliative Care Plans (Adult & Paediatric)

Resources - physical, psychological and emotional to support our paramedics when working in this environment

Availability of Clinical Advice Support
Paramedic Education Themes

Philosophy of Palliative Care

Palliative assessment and intervention

Managing Common Symptoms in Palliative Care

Psychosocial & Spiritual Care for People with Life Limiting Illness

Clarifying Advance Care Planning & Advance Care Directives

Communication
The underpinning goals of the paramedic in providing care to the palliative or dying patient is to:

- Provide a Safety Net for unplanned health issues
- Maximise comfort for the patient
- Maintain dignity for the patient and be an advocate for their wishes
- Ensure adequate analgesia – by relieving pain and discomfort
- Controlling other symptoms with the aim to enhance the quality of life for the patient by helping to alleviate fear and anxiety for both the patient and the family as may be associated with death and dying
“I cared for my husband, we thought we could do it! We needed help in the middle of the night, we then realised how helpful the Authorised Care Plan was. It was the glue that held it together for us”

(a nursing professor)
Palliative Care is “everyone’s business”

We are still on the journey but getting there!