



## Palliative Care: Resource Guide for Practitioners

### BC Health System Services

---

▶ **End-of-Life Care and Palliative Care:** [www2.gov.bc.ca](http://www2.gov.bc.ca)

These services include: care coordination and consultation, pain and symptom management, community nursing services, community rehabilitation services, home support, respite for the caregiver and residential hospice care.

▶ **BC Palliative Care Benefits Program:** [www2.gov.bc.ca](http://www2.gov.bc.ca)

BC Palliative Care Benefits cover certain drugs, medical supplies, and equipment that are used in palliative care. These benefits are available to individuals (of any age) who have reached the end stage of a life-threatening disease or illness and who wish to receive palliative care at home.

- BC Pharmacare Special Authorities Branch: ☎ **1-877-657-1188 Fax: 250-405-3587**

▶ **Home and Community Care Services:**

These services are designed to complement and supplement, but not replace, patient efforts to care for themselves with the assistance of family, friends and community. Home and community care services provided through the health authorities can assist on a short-term or long-term basis depending upon patient needs. See your local health authority website for more information.

### Referral and Consultation Resources

---

▶ **BC Cancer Agency Pain and Symptom Management Clinics:** [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

Offers pain and symptoms management clinics at each of its six regional cancer centres to help cancer patients improve pain control and cope with other physical problems related to cancer. No referral is required to access these services.

▶ **BC Provincial Palliative Care Consultation Line** ☎ **(Toll free, 24/7) 1-877-711-5757**

For those who do not have access to a local palliative care service, for advice or support, call 1-877-711-5757. In ongoing partnership with the Doctors of BC, the toll-free Provincial Palliative Care Consultation Phone Line is staffed by Vancouver Home Hospice Palliative Care physicians 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to assist physicians and nurse practitioners with advice about symptom management, psychosocial issues, or difficult end-of-life decision making.

▶ **Health Authority Hospice Palliative Care Programs**

Consultation is available through the Health Authority Hospice Palliative care programs for physicians and professional care providers. See your health authority website for more information.

### BC Inter-professional Symptom Management Guidelines

---

▶ **BC Centre for Palliative Care:** [www.bc-cpc.ca/cpc/symptom-management-guidelines](http://www.bc-cpc.ca/cpc/symptom-management-guidelines)

These best practice guidelines result from a collaboration between the BC Centre for Palliative Care, Fraser Health, First Nations Health Authority, Interior Health, Island Health, Providence Health, Vancouver Coastal, and Northern Health. Symptoms include:

- |            |                     |               |                          |                        |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| - Pain     | - Severe bleeding   | - Dysphagia   | - Respiratory congestion | - Hiccoughs            |
| - Fatigue  | - Constipation      | - Anorexia    | - Dyspnea                | - Twitching / seizures |
| - Pruritus | - Nausea & vomiting | - Dehydration | - Cough                  | - Delirium             |

## Palliative Care Resources and Support

---

▶ **Family Practice Oncology Network:** [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

Information to supplement this guideline, includes expanded sections on pain, dyspnea, nausea and vomiting (including Medical Management of Malignant Bowel Obstruction), and constipation. Additional information includes Patient Daily Opioid Dosing Record, Methadone License Application Form, Bowel Performance Scale, BC Cancer Agency Bowel Protocol, Patient Bowel Protocol Handout and Compounded Formulations for the Symptomatic Management of Mucositis.

▶ **Fraser Health Hospice Palliative Care Symptom Guidelines:** [www.fraserhealth.ca](http://www.fraserhealth.ca)

Evidence based guidelines designed for health care professionals in Fraser Health to improve health care outcomes in hospice palliative/end-of-life care.

▶ **General Practice Services Committee (GPSC):** [www.gpsc.bc.ca](http://www.gpsc.bc.ca)

- **Palliative Care Initiative:** This initiative supports the work of family doctors making the various decisions and plans that need to be determined to ensure the best possible quality of life for dying patients and their families. This incentive compensates the family doctor for undertaking and documenting a care plan, and clinical follow-up management of the patient.
- **Practice Support Program (PSP):** Offers focused, accredited training sessions for BC physicians to help them improve practice efficiency and to support enhanced delivery of patient care. The PSP have developed an [End of Life Care Module](#) with training materials. The End of Life Algorithm includes information on services and forms to support the coordination and delivery of community-based palliative care.

▶ **The Gold Standard Framework (UK):** [www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk](http://www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk)

A UK systematic, evidence-based approach to optimizing care for all patients approaching the end of life, delivered by generalist frontline care providers. Includes training programs and resources that help to support all people approaching their last year or years of life in any setting.

## Advance Care Planning Resources

---

▶ **HealthLink BC:** [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/health-feature/advance-care-planning](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/health-feature/advance-care-planning)

- **My Voice: Expressing My Wishes for Future Health Care Treatment**  
The BC government has developed an advance care planning guide as a resource to learn about advance care planning and to make your own advance care plan.
- **No Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Form (No CPR Form):** A legal option to order that no CPR be provided by health care providers and first responders.
- **Medical Order for Scope of Treatment (MOST):** A form that sets out the level of treatment a patient wishes to receive. See your health authority website for more information.
- **Expected/Planned Home Death:** In BC, individuals have the right to choose to die at home. The website provides guidance on how to have an expected/planned natural home death.

## Additional Resources

---

▶ **Canadian Virtual Hospice:** [www.VirtualHospice.ca](http://www.VirtualHospice.ca)

The Canadian Virtual Hospice provides support and personalized information about palliative and end-of-life care to patients, family members, health care providers, researchers and educators.

▶ **Physician Health Program BC:** [www.PhysicianHealth.com](http://www.PhysicianHealth.com)  (Toll free, 24/7) 1-800-663-6729

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Offers confidential support and referrals to BC physicians, residents, medical students and their families dealing with personal and/or professional problems, including mental health issues, substance use disorders, and relationship stress.

▶ **BC Cancer Agency List of Palliative Care Websites:** [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)

List of useful websites compiled and evaluated by BC Cancer Agency librarians.