

PARAMEDICS PROVIDING PALLIATIVE CARE AT HOME PROJECT

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The 'Paramedics Providing Palliative Care at Home Project' is a collaborative initiative between CCNS, EHS, DHW, Dalhousie University, Health PEI and Island EMS. It is funded, in part, by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.

About the Project

A new palliative Clinical Practice Guideline has been developed which will allow paramedics to assist with palliative emergency/crisis care across Nova Scotia. The service will be available to all residents of NS regardless of how remote or rural their community. Sometimes when other health and home care providers are not available, paramedics are called for assistance. This project will enhance the care provided by paramedics and be an additional support to existing resources for palliative patients and their caregivers.

Special Patient Program

Paramedic practice is guided by clinical protocols and guidelines developed and reviewed by the Office of the Provincial Medical Director (EHS). However, a patient may have needs which fall outside of normal protocols/guidelines and thus require

an individualized approach such as the ability to manage symptoms at home, without requiring transport to hospital. To facilitate this, the Special Patient Program (SPP) was developed to promote strategies to improve comfort and quality of life for special patients.

Work is currently underway to expand the SPP to include palliative patients. A new electronic database will be developed which will allow paramedics on-scene to have and follow the patient's SPP Care Plan. Having the SPP information available at the time of a 9-1-1 palliative emergency/crisis call will enable paramedics to provide care in line with the wishes of the patient.

The new enrolment form has been created and will be available on the EHS website. Forms are to be completed by health care providers in consultation with the patient/family. Completed forms may be submitted by Palliative Programs, Continuing Care Coordinators and Family Physicians. We request that the forms be

submitted to EHS electronically via the secure file transfer service SEND.NSHEALTH.CA, which is available to all DHA employees (or fax for non-DHA providers). It is anticipated that enrolment for palliative patients may begin in May 2015.

Paramedic Education

Development of the new *LEAP for Paramedics* is almost complete and will be reviewed by local palliative and emergency care experts in Nova Scotia. Once completed, select paramedic educators will be trained to facilitate around 100 educational sessions across the province to close to 1,200 paramedics. The education sessions will begin in April 2015.

Work is underway to have a palliative content expert (physician or nurse) available for a short period at the training session to answer questions and to provide the "real world" perspective of caring for palliative patients.

For additional information, or any questions regarding this project, please contact:

Michelle Harrison

Project Manager – Paramedics Providing Palliative Care at Home Project

Email: michelle.harrison@cdha.nshealth.ca

Tel: (902) 473-3351 (Office) or (902) 717-2641 (mobile)

