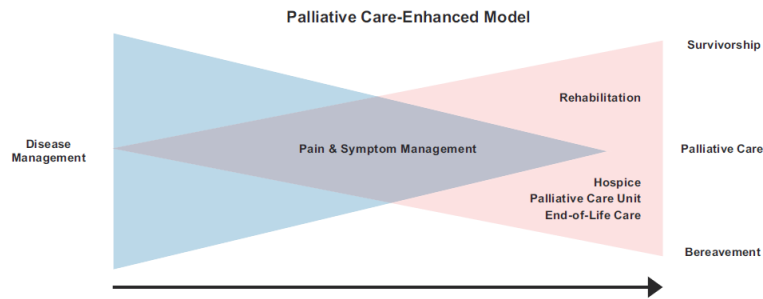




Northern Health Palliative Care

A Palliative Approach to Care

Palliative care is a patient-centered approach aimed at improving the quality of life for individuals facing serious, life-limiting illnesses such as cancer and end-stage heart, lung, kidney disease. Rather than being limited to end-of-life care, a palliative approach to care integrates symptom management, psychosocial support, and advanced care planning (ACP) early in the disease trajectory, alongside curative or life-prolonging treatments.



Adapted from "The Bow Tie Model of 21st Century Palliative Care" by P. Hawley, 2014, *Journal of Pain and Symptom Management*, 47(1), p. e2

Benefits of an Early Palliative Approach to Care

Research has demonstrated that implementing a palliative approach early in an illness trajectory leads to:

- **Improved quality of life** with better symptom control.
- **Less anxiety and depression** by providing emotional and psychological benefits.
- **Longer survival** contrary to the misconception that palliative care hastens decline.
- **Better patient and family satisfaction** through informed decision-making and coordinated care.

Steps in applying the Palliative Care Approach in your practice

<p>1. Identify</p>	<p>Early identification of patients who would benefit from a palliative care approach is essential. This can be done by utilizing screening tools such as Palliative Performance Scale (PPS) to assess functional decline, Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool (SPICT) for recognizing deteriorating health, and The Surprise Question "Would you be surprised if this patient dies within a year?".</p>
<p>2. Assess</p>	<p>Comprehensive ongoing assessment includes physical symptoms, emotional well-being, functional status, understanding of illness, and goals of care conversation with patient and family. Assess caregiver burden, emotional distress, and support needs.</p>
<p>3. Plan</p>	<p>Create a patient-centered care plan based on patient's goals of care, values and preferences. Integrate symptom management, ACP, and coordination with caregivers and community services in the care plan. Goals of care conversations ensure that medical decisions align with the patient's wishes.</p>
<p>4. Manage</p>	<p>Implement care plan and regularly re-assess to address patient's changing needs and goals of care as this may change over time, especially at times of transition (e.g., disease progression). Refer to NH Palliative Care Consultation Team as needed for complex symptom management or psychosocial concerns.</p>

References:

Pallium Canada, June 2021 LEAP Core Module 2 Taking Ownership with Palliative Care
 Hawley P (2014) *The bow tie model of 21st century palliative care*. *J Pain Symptom Management* 47(1):e2–e5.
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