

End-of-Life Essentials and Care of Older People in Hospital

It has been estimated that on average, a person will have four admissions to acute hospital in the last 12 months of life¹. Up to 75% of Australians will also present at least once to the emergency department in the last two years of life², with many of these presentations older Australians³. Multiple hospital admissions among people dying with dementia are also increasing⁴, with one in four admitted to hospital every year. Therefore, the likelihood of a person living with dementia being admitted to and dying in hospital is high⁵.

End-of-Life Essentials (EOLE) offers free peer-reviewed online education modules on end-of-life (EOL) care in hospitals for nurses, doctors and allied health professionals. A range of implementation tools are also available to assist a unified approach to strategies and processes which will inform EOL care. Older people will be admitted to hospital and may die there, so the EOLE education modules and resources are relevant and appropriate for any health care professional looking after an older person in hospital. This may be a general practitioner admitting an older person to a rural hospital, an allied health professional seeing an older person on a medical ward, or a nurse caring for an older person in a cardiac care unit.

Useful EOLE Education Modules

- **Dying, A Normal Part of Life** – to help identify common EOL pathways / illness trajectories
- **Recognising the End of Life** – triggers and tools to assist recognition of end of life
- **Planning End-of-Life Care** – Goals of Care – to assist in discussing and negotiating goals of care
- **Chronic Complex Illness End-of-Life Care** – having conversations with kindness and compassion
- **Emergency Department End-of-Life Care** – the possibilities of EOL care in Emergency Departments
- **The Importance of Coordinating Patient Care** – the coordination of care within/beyond your hospital
- **Patient-Centred Communication and Shared Decision-Making** – prepare for common questions
- **Responding to Concerns** – identify urgent EOL care responses

(Links are provided to the Toolkit associated with each module)



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www.endoflifeessentials.com.au

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2022) The last year of life: patterns in health service use and expenditure, AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 21 July 2022.

² New South Wales Department of Health. Guidelines for end-of life care and decision-making. Gladesville (NSW): NSW Department of Health, 2005.

³ Bone AE et al. Factors associated with older people's emergency department attendance towards the end of life: a systematic review. Eur. J. Public Health 2019; 29: 67-74.

⁴ Leniz et al. Primary care contact, continuity, identification of palliative care needs, and hospital use: a population-based cohort study in people dying with dementia. Br J Gen Pract 2022; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3399/BJGP.2021.0715>

⁵ Parker D, Lewis J, Gourlay K. 2018. Palliative care and dementia: Dementia Australia Paper Number 43. Dementia Australia.