

CSHCS Palliative Care

CSHCS Definition of Palliative Care (based on the World Health Organization (WHO) definition)

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the challenges associated with life-limiting illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification, assessment, and treatment of pain and other problems -- physical, psychosocial and spiritual.

Palliative care:

- provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;
- intends neither to hasten or postpone death;
- integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;
- offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;
- offers a support system to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement;
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;
- will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of the illness;
- is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications.