

## **Covid 19 and Palliative Care for Elgin Primary Care Providers**

Dear Colleagues,

We are certainly facing challenging times with this Covid 19 pandemic. Appropriately, much of the discussion has been around hospital based care including ICU beds and ventilators. However, there will be a significant portion of our patient population who, because of frailty, multiple comorbidities, advanced malignancy, resource limitations or personal preference, may require care for Covid 19 at home. It is therefore important that all of us in the Primary Care sector are comfortable with a palliative care approach for such patients. This will also be important to reduce the strain on our hospital resources and colleagues.

No doubt we are all feeling a degree of information overload regarding Covid 19. Below is a condensed list of resources regarding palliative care and Covid 19 for your reference. The Elgin Palliative Care Outreach Team is always available to provide advice and support. However, because of our limited resources, we will not be able to assume care of your patients and ask that you remain MRP.

Do not hesitate to contact me or Cameron Benoit, Manager Elgin PCOT for further information or questions.

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This guide is divided into 5 sections with links and relevant documents are attached:

1. Goals of Care Conversations

These conversations are always important for patients facing life limiting illness. However, given the rapidity of Covid 19 progression, it is essential that these conversations be initiated with at-risk patients at every opportunity including prior to the onset of illness. There are some excellent guidelines and resources available, some of which have been adapted for the Covid 19 situation.

Guide for Clinicians COVID-19 Goals of Care Discussion:

<https://www.ariadnelabs.org/coronavirus/clinical-resources/covid-conversations/>

VitalTalk Covid Ready Communication Playbook:

<https://www.vitaltalk.org/guides/covid-19-communication-skills/>

Ontario Palliative Care Network - Approaches to Goals of Care Discussions

<https://www.ontariopalliativecarenetwork.ca/sites/opcn/files/ApproachesToGoalsOfCare.pdf>

## 2. Symptom Management

Symptom management is primarily around respiratory symptoms and sedation. Pallium Canada is offering free access to several LEAP (palliative care training) modules until the end of June in response to this pandemic. This is excellent training which will be beneficial after this pandemic is over to assist patients with end-of-life care.

<https://www.pallium.ca/course/covid-19-response-free-online-modules/>

A quick one-pager has been developed to give the highlights of symptom management from BC Centre for Palliative Care:

<https://bccfp.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-End-of-Life-Symptom-Management-1-Mar-30.pdf>

SWLHIN Symptom Response Kit order form and guidelines.

[http://healthcareathome.ca/southwest/en/partner/Documents/Symptom%20Response%20Kit%20\(SRK\)%20Prescription%20Form\\_Jan2020.pdf](http://healthcareathome.ca/southwest/en/partner/Documents/Symptom%20Response%20Kit%20(SRK)%20Prescription%20Form_Jan2020.pdf)

[http://healthcareathome.ca/southwest/en/partner/Documents/Symptom%20Response%20Kit%20\(SRK\)%20Guideline.pdf](http://healthcareathome.ca/southwest/en/partner/Documents/Symptom%20Response%20Kit%20(SRK)%20Guideline.pdf)

Continuous Palliative Sedation Therapy (McMaster)

<https://fhs.mcmaster.ca/palliativecare/documents/McMasterPalliativeSedationProtocolCOVID31March2020.pdf>

## 3. Supports

Referral to SWLHIN Home and Community Care can assist you with nursing and PSW supports, Plan of Treatment for CPR and EDITH Protocol (Expected Death in the Home).

<http://healthcareathome.ca/southwest/en/partner/Documents/Referral%20South%20West%20LHIN%201-1-16%20FORM%20V2.pdf>

Referral and contact information for Oxford Elgin Palliative Care Outreach Team (PCOT) is attached as a separate document.

#### 4. Additional Resources.

Supporting a Palliative Approach to care During Covid-19 from HPC Consultation Services, Waterloo Wellington: <http://hpcconnection.ca/resources/covid-19/>

Canadian Virtual Hospice: <http://www.virtualhospice.ca/covid19/#healthcare>

McMaster Palliative Care Resources: <https://fhs.mcmaster.ca/palliativecare/COVID19Resources.html>

#### 5. Forms.

DNR-C Forms and Death Certificates can be ordered on-line using the Forms Order Request:

<http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/MinistryDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&ENV=WWE&NO=014-0350-93>

Completion of Certificate of Death relating to Covid 19 - see email and attachments from Dr. Kellie Scott dated Sat 28 March 2020 – attached.

Update on providing Death Certificate to funeral homes – see attachment.