

Palliative Pain and Symptom Management Consultation Program Northeastern Ontario



What is the difference between a Palliative Approach to Care and Palliative Care Specialist?

	Palliative Care Specialist (ex: MD, Nurse, Social Work etc)	Palliative Care Approach
Definition	A health care specialty that focuses on the assessment and management of patients with life limiting/life threatening illnesses	A broad approach to care for patients with serious or life limiting illness aimed at improving quality of life delivered by a multidisciplinary team. This approach is best considered when someone has been newly diagnosed with a serious life-limiting, life-threatening or incurable illness
Who provides it	Specialist health care providers (ex: palliative medicine physicians; palliative certified nurses) with recognized specialist competencies) who have formal training in symptom control, complex decision making and end-of life care	Team based approach including doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, personal support workers, spiritual care providers, rec therapists, dieticians, respiratory therapists, etc. Provided by ALL health care providers in every setting
Focus	Clinical expertise in symptom management, ethical decision making and complex communication	Holistic support-physical, psychological, social, and spiritual care for both patient and family
Training and Recognition	Clinical Training usually occurs in hospitals, hospice residences and tertiary centers requiring additional certification and credentialing by regulatory body or professional association	Can be delivered in ANY setting by ANY member of the health care team- hospital, hospice, outpatient, clinic, home (Long Term Care Home, Retirement Home, Congregate setting)
Goal	To manage complex cases requiring specialized knowledge and experience	To ensure comprehensive care and comfort, regardless of who provides it.

- The Palliative Approach to Care can be given in parallel with any curative or disease modifying treatments
- A Palliative Care Specialist may be involved in your care for point in time; they may share care with your CORE team (ie: family doctor, Nurse Practitioner; or in unique circumstances they may be your primary doctor or nurse practitioner if there are complex symptoms or social determinants of health that call for it.