

Improving access to palliative care for your patients

New approaches, new options

The Central LHIN, along with our care partners are working to improve the quality of palliative care, and access to palliative services, for people living in the communities of the Central LHIN region. There are four options to ensure palliative patients and their families have the care and support they need throughout their illness:

24/7 Palliative Care Crisis Line – 1-844-HERE4ME (1-844-437-3463)

This crisis line connects patients and their families directly to a registered nurse for urgent issues relating to palliative pain and symptom management, their emotional and physical well-being and questions about their medical equipment. The service is managed by SYKES (providers of Telehealth Ontario). Callers need not be receiving LHIN Home and Community Care services to use the crisis line; however SYKES' nurses will have access to the health records of active LHIN patients.

Benefits for your patients and their families

- Gives patients and families a place to turn as the end of life approaches
- Expert clinical advice helps with pain and symptom management, alleviating suffering
- Helps avoid exhausting, unnecessary visits to the emergency department at a difficult time

How to refer your patients

Health care providers are encouraged to talk to appropriate patients about the crisis line. The Central LHIN has also created Palliative Care: Essential Services for You and Your Family, a brochure that helps explain the services to patients and families. Hard copies are available by contacting the Central LHIN at central@lhins.on.ca.

Centralized access to palliative programs

The Central LHIN now has a dedicated palliative care coordinator, to support palliative patients and their families who do not yet need other LHIN services. This regulated health professional has in-depth knowledge and expertise in palliative care and support and available resources. Over time, the care coordinator will help patients and families to make informed decisions and guide discussions around relevant issues such as medical test results, coping strategies, pain and symptom management, and advanced care planning. The care coordinator will also assess patients for transition to LHIN Home and Community Care services if required.

Benefits

- Helps palliative patients earlier in their experience, reducing stress and anxiety
- Actively engages patients and families in care planning decisions
- Supports timely access to additional services, as needed

How to refer your patients

Primary care providers can refer patients who would benefit from this support by completing the [Palliative Patient Registry Referral Form](#). Or visit healthcareathome.ca/central and click on [I'm a Physician](#) to access the form and other information on connecting your patients with LHIN Home and Community Care services.

Streamlined, equitable access to hospice beds

The Central LHIN is responsible for managing the application, waitlist and admission process for patients who require a bed in one of the region's residential hospices, which offer compassionate and quality professional care, so people who are dying can spend their final days in a home-like setting.

Benefits

- Equitable access to residential hospice beds
- Evidence-based guidelines support admission decisions
- Referral & admission process is simpler for patients, physicians and palliative care providers

How to refer your patients

The Central LHIN is making it easy for physicians and other regulated health professionals to help their patients with a life-limiting illness to access these enhanced palliative services in the Central LHIN region. Simply follow these few easy steps:

- **Primary care or other regulated health professionals:**
 - Complete the [Palliative Care Common Referral Form](#) (posted at www.healthcareathome.ca/central under "Physicians")
 - Fax referral to Central LHIN at 416-222-6517 or 905-952-2404
- **Central LHIN hospitals:**
 - Complete RM&R referral and complete/attach the [Palliative Care Common Referral Form](#) (posted at www.healthcareathome.ca/central under "Physicians")
 - Send both documents using the regular RM&R process

You can also call **1-888-470-2222, press 8 for French. For Home and Community Care services, press 1, then choose option 4** to speak to a member of the Central LHIN team at any time.

Enhanced online palliative resources

This new online resource is available for anyone who needs to research the palliative care and services available in the Central LHIN region and beyond.

Benefits

- Comprehensive database of palliative care resources and support, and provider listings
- Dedicated areas for patients, families, caregivers, health professionals and volunteers
- Integrated with 40,000 community service and support listings across Ontario

How to refer your patients

To tap into this network of resources, simply access www.centralhealthline.ca – using any computer or mobile device – and click on the "Hospice Palliative Care Resources" button at the bottom of the page.