

About us



Palliative care. Living well every day.

epcvic.org.au ☎ 1300 130 813

An Introduction to EPC

Eastern Palliative Care (EPC) is a not-for-profit home-based specialist palliative care service which offers a range of support programs. These aim to improve the quality of life of individuals suffering life-limiting or terminal illnesses and for those providing care to them.

EPC serves the local government areas of Boroondara, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse, and Yarra Ranges.

The majority of our funding comes from the Victorian Department of Health.

EPC also relies on community fundraising and donations to maintain the services and programs we provide to clients, caregivers, and families. These services are offered free of charge*.

* Some exceptions apply.

Our Purpose

Our clients live with the best quality of life, before dying in their place of choice.

Clients, their families and carers are supported according to their needs and choices.

Our resources are managed wisely and sustainably to provide value for the community.

Our Roles

To people with a progressive, life-limiting condition, we provide a holistic, person-centred, specialist palliative care service which:



Our Values

The EPC Code of Ethics articulates the basic principles upon which EPC operates and informs our values.



Compassion

Empathy for others in their end of life experience by listening, accepting, and actively responding to their needs



Dignity

Upholding the unique personality, situation and choices of people, valuing their lives in the face of death, and respecting their rights



Excellence

Delivering evidence based quality care, underpinned by ethical practice, research and leadership



Empowerment

Building trust with people, that puts them at the centre of decision making and enables control and choices

What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care recognises the special needs of a person who has a life-limiting illness.

The focus of care is on improving the quality of life of clients by assisting with their symptoms and helping them to make changes that will make their lives easier and more comfortable.

Palliative care aims to make the client feel in control of their treatment options and offers support for their carer, family and friends.

Palliative care complements the range of medical treatments and services currently available.

Your journey with EPC

EPC recognises that, as a person with a life-limiting or terminal illness, you may choose any of the following:

- To be cared for in the comfort of your own home.
- To live as normally as possible.
- To receive assistance from palliative care nurses to manage symptoms.
- To have your local doctor involved as part of the care team.
- To have the support of your family or elected carers.

- To have your own Advanced Care Plan to communicate your wishes if you are unable.
- To be supported through the decisions and personal adjustments which inevitably accompany serious illness - emotional, social, financial, psychological and spiritual.

EPC can help to meet your needs.

EPC services include the following*:

- Specialist Palliative Care Nursing.
- After hours nursing support.
- Overnight respite support.
- Specialist palliative care medical consultancy and liaison with GPs.
- Palliative Support Clinicians.
- Trained Palliative Care Volunteers.
- Grief and bereavement counselling/support groups.
- Consultancy services to residential aged care and disability facilities.
- Information on community resources.

* Some exceptions apply.

Client Rights & Responsibilities

What can you expect from EPC?

Care, compassion, respect and to be treated with dignity at all times.

Safe and high quality care.

To be informed about services, treatments, and any costs in a clear and open way.

The right to be included in decisions and choices about your care, with assistance and freedom to make informed choices including:

- Clear and understandable information.
- Requesting your consent to provide care.
- Allowing the right to cease any aspect of care without prejudice.
- Sensitive care regardless of gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, disability, ethnic background, age, sexual orientation, or economic status.
- Respect for your ethnic, cultural and religious practices.
- Access to interpreters in the language of your choice.
- Confidentiality of your information.

- Freedom to express concerns about your care, and have information about complaints procedures.

Client Concerns

You can:

- Tell a staff member at your visit.
- Complete a feedback form.
- Provide feedback via the EPC website.
- Call us on 1800 130 813.

If you are not satisfied with our response, you may wish to consider raising your concern to the Health Complaints Commissioner via their website, phone call or post.

🌐 hcc.vic.gov.au/make-complaint

📞 1300 582 113

✉ **Health Complaints Commissioner**

Level 26, 570 Bourke Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000

At times, a student may accompany a visiting staff member for teaching purposes. Your verbal consent will be requested at this time.

What EPC expects from you?

- Information regarding your health to the best of your knowledge and ability.
- To inform staff if you are not happy with the service.
- To question any aspect of care that you do not understand.
- That the behaviour of clients, carers, relatives, and friends is reasonable and respectful towards our staff and volunteers.
- Respect, care, and timely return of any special equipment on loan.
- To provide a safe environment for staff and volunteers visiting your home. This includes ensuring that pets are controlled during our visits.
- To take responsibility for providing, storing and disposing of prescribed medication.
- To advise us of your cultural needs or issues, including the need for an interpreter.
- To inform EPC staff if there are cameras or monitoring/recording equipment in place.

EPC staff may request equipment be ordered to assist with their safe provision of care. If essential equipment (e.g., a hospital bed) is not agreed to this may result in limited provision of services.

Occupational Health & Safety

Your home is the workplace for our clinicians and volunteers. In order to provide the best and most effective service, EPC requests that you assist us in providing a safe workplace for our staff and volunteers (hereafter all referred to as *staff*) while they are in your home.

This assistance will mean that in areas where our staff will be working, the following applies.

- The area is clear and provides easy access to enable the staff to carry out their duties.
- There is no smoking while the staff are present.
- There is an area for staff to wash their hands with a clean towel provided. Hand hygiene is the single most effective practice for minimising infection transmission.
- If requested, you remove any animals from the area.
- Aggression or violence towards staff is never ok. Should staff believe the environment to be unsafe, service adjustments may be implemented.

- The exits from the home are not locked while the staff are in attendance.
- Appropriate equipment is available for staff to provide your care. EPC has a strong commitment to the principles of 'No Lift' and does not permit its staff to lift or transfer clients without the use of appropriate equipment.

Fire and Flood Safety

EPC has developed guidelines to ensure the safety of our staff. This may mean that on days of high fire danger, on days of total fire ban, or if localised flooding is occurring, visits may be rescheduled or occur via telehealth. If your visit is affected by the fire rating of the day or localised flooding, you will be advised as soon as possible.

Child Safety

The palliative care services provided to children are delivered to the same high standards as all other clients. EPC has additional measures in place to ensure a child-safe culture is embedded and practised within the organisation. All staff have a current Police Check and a Working with Children Check.

Privacy Declaration

What information does EPC collect?

- EPC collects details from the referral source.
- Upon assessment, personal details such as your name, address, next of kin and contact details are compiled.
- Health information during your time on the program.

How will information be used?

- Information collected is for the purposes of providing you with the best possible care and treatment.
- It may be used for planning, quality improvement and research purposes. In these instances, personal details will be removed so that you cannot be identified.

How is your information used outside of EPC?

- In order to best meet your needs, we share your information with other health providers such as your GP or other specialists or services such as hospitals. Please **refer to your Consent Form** for details.

- EPC must supply a summary of information on all clients to the government department that funds our service. Information concerning your identity is also required to be sent to the Department of Veterans' Affairs to confirm your eligibility to receive benefits, if relevant.
- EPC may be ordered to produce your records to a Court after legal proceedings have been instituted or if your capacity to make a will is being questioned.
- EPC staff are required to report any suspected cases of abuse, neglect or other substantial risks to relevant authorities.

How is information protected within EPC?

- Your client record is stored electronically in our Client Information Management System where it is updated regularly by EPC staff. Your record is encrypted for privacy and access is restricted to particular staff members who sign individual confidentiality agreements.
- EPC also provides you with a folder which is kept at your home in order to facilitate communications regarding your condition, treatment, and medication. It is your and your carer's responsibility to protect the privacy of the information contained in this folder while it is located in your home.

How can you access your information?

- You may write to the Chief Executive Officer at EPC seeking access to your records via the email contactus@epcvic.org.au.

The Teams

EPC has a number of specialist teams located across eastern Melbourne. The teams work closely with the client, carers, family and GPs to develop an individualised care plan.

The teams include a number of trained nursing, medical and allied health professionals who may be involved in your care at different times. To ensure the care given is planned and delivered to meet your needs, the teams meet regularly to review and discuss the individual care plans of clients.

There are many different ways that care will be delivered such as video telehealth, telephone calls, face to face visits, or in person in our office.



Nursing & Medical Care

Nursing Care

Specialist palliative care nurses provide planned visits Monday to Friday (8.30am-10.00pm) with weekend visits scheduled as required.

A 24-hour on-call telephone support service is available during office hours and through Triage via a pager service for after hours calls. If indicated, a visit may follow the phone call.

Nursing care is aimed at relieving symptoms and promoting comfort to enhance quality of life.

We work on a team nursing model which means you may have a different nurse for each visit.

Medical Care

Primary medical care is provided by the client's GP. EPC has specialist palliative care physicians to provide consultancy, support, and advice to GPs and the Care Team.

GPs can refer to EPC for specialist advice, or request direct consultation and a home visit if necessary.

Allied Health Team

Palliative Support Clinicians

Palliative Support Clinicians are qualified social workers, psychologists or counsellors who have experience working with people facing life limiting illnesses.

Support is available to the client, family and people providing care. Support continues for family and those who provided care into bereavement.

Palliative support is person-centred and concerned with the spiritual, physical, emotional, and social aspects of a person's well being.



Volunteers

EPC volunteers are a group of dedicated people who make a difference to our clients and their families every single day. Volunteers have many roles within our organisation.

Services include the following:

- Offering companionship and care giver respite.
- To engage in community activities.
- Supporting clients to record their life story through the Biography Service.
- Working with carers to support their needs in the palliative care phase.
- Supporting the bereavement groups.
- Assisting with client's dogs by taking them for regular walks through our Palliative Paws Program.

There are also a number of other services. Please visit our website for more information.

EPC volunteers abide by a code of conduct, ethics and standards consistent with those required by Volunteering Australia.

Volunteers must complete EPC's extensive Volunteer Training Program.

Confidentiality is practiced at all times.

Bereavement Support

Bereavement support services are provided by qualified and experienced social workers, psychologists and counsellors and supported by trained volunteers.

Bereavement support services include the following:

- Grief and bereavement counselling.
- Bereavement support groups.
- Bereavement information sessions.
- Referral to external counselling services if required.
- Access to our bereavement resource library.
- Volunteer companions provide specific support to bereaved carers.

Access to Bereavement Support

Those who provided care and families of clients in EPC's program have access to the Bereavement Program for up to 13 months following the death of the client.

How to donate to EPC



1. **Online** via our website **epcvic.org.au**, click Donate ❤️ or download a donation form to send via mail.



2. **Call** on **1300 130 813**

There are many ways you can support EPC

1. Make a **donation**.
2. Add a **bequest** for EPC in your will.
3. **Volunteer** your time or service.
4. Create your own **fundraising** page at givenow.com.au

Stay connected with EPC

Subscribe via our website for news, events, fundraising activities and to receive our quarterly e-newsletter.

You can also like us on Facebook **@epcaus**, follow us on Instagram **@epcaus**, connect with us on LinkedIn **EPC (Eastern Palliative Care)** or subscribe to our YouTube channel **EPC (Eastern Palliative Care)**.



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Eastern Palliative Care Ltd acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government