National Clinical Programme for Palliative Care

Eligibility Criteria for Access to & Discharge from Specialist Palliative Care Services

1. Eligibility criteria for access to Specialist Palliative Care (SPC) services

Patients with both:

- An advanced, progressive, life-limiting condition
  
- Current or anticipated complexities relating to symptom control, end of life care-planning or other physical, psychosocial or spiritual needs that cannot reasonably be managed by the current care provider(s)

*It is recognised that there are “grey areas” and individual referrals may be discussed with the local SPC team so as to assess their appropriateness*

*SPC teams are always available to advise or support other professionals in their delivery of palliative care.*

2. Criteria for discharge from SPC services

- There is a change in disease status such that the patient no longer has any specialist palliative care needs e.g.
  - Following response to treatment
  - Disease evident as only slowly progressive
  - Investigations reveal less advanced disease than previously thought

- There is symptomatic improvement such that the patient no longer has SPC needs.

- Rehabilitation goals have been achieved

- Following initial SPC assessment, it is determined that the patient does not have SPC needs and that ongoing needs are more appropriately met by other health care agencies.

- The patient, following informed discussion, requests discharge from SPC.

- The patient or family persistently prevent effective SPC input e.g. restricting access for assessment.

*The SPC team should always be available to re-engage as appropriate or to offer support to other involved Health Care Professionals.*

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