Palliative Care Education Snap Sessions
Darling Downs – South Burnett
Cairns & Hinterland – Atherton Tableland
South West HHS

First session: Tuesday 28th June 2016
Last session: Tuesday 30th August 2016
14.30 – 14.50 hours each week

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A Palliative Approach to Care
Tuesday 28th June 2016
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End of life discussion is important

- Ageing population
- People living longer with more conditions, such as:
  - frailty
  - chronic disease
  - long term disability
  - dementia

- One-half of all expected deaths are from causes other than cancer

people dying from all life-limiting conditions experience similar symptoms at end of life.....
physical, psychological, social, emotional, spiritual

but

in chronic disease and/or disability
the clinical course from diagnosis to death is generally more prolonged

Terminology

- Palliative Approach
- Palliative Care
- End of Life Care

Palliative Approach to Care

“... an approach that improves quality of life of patients and their families facing problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychological and spiritual...”

http://www.who.int/cancer/palliative/definition/en/
**Palliative approach to care is when...**

- The goal of care is **comfort** not cure
- Discussions around death and dying should be occurring
- Is not just end of life care
- Active treatment may be appropriate to reduce symptoms and distress alongside comfort care
- Specialist palliative care teams can provide advice and support as required for complex issues

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**Defining End of Life (Terminal) Care...**

End of life focuses on the final days or weeks of life

Goals are sharply focused on:

- the **person**’s physical, emotional and spiritual comfort
- the **family**’s needs including bereavement care
- a **Palliative Approach** is the essence of good terminal or end of life care

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**Delivering Palliative Care**

Initiation of palliative care (the surprise question)

- Recognising need in someone who has other life-long medical problems/ care needs
- late recognition is common

"Would I be surprised if this person died in the near future?"

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**About a palliative approach in older people**

- Multiple co-morbidities are common and the person may have advanced incurable conditions requiring a palliative approach to care
- Palliative care provides a range of active treatments to aggressively manage symptoms at end of life
- Treatment of pain and relief of suffering – physical, psychosocial, social & spiritual care is as intensive as in acute care

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**Elements of a palliative approach to care**

- Holistic approach with a focus on comfort and quality of life
- Provides support to assist the person to live as fully as possible until death
- Is a team approach to care
- Sensitive to a person’s culture