PALLIATIVE CARE SUPPORT FOR THE HOMELESS: THE RIGHT WAY, AT THE RIGHT TIME, IN THE RIGHT PLACE

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Background The CQC report ‘A different ending: addressing inequalities in end of life care’ highlighted that homeless people are not accessing palliative care and homeless staff are not equipped to deal with high levels of health and care needs. With a grant from the Albert Hunt Trust we developed training – without it – that we can take to homeless organisations to equip staff to recognise signs that someone is in the palliative phase of their life, to know what to do, who to contact and how to access help.

Aims
- To increase access to hospice expertise.
- To increase understanding about palliative care by delivering a 1½ hour session to hostel staff, keyworkers, drug and alcohol teams, housing staff, food bank staff and volunteers.
- To provide practical support with our Health and Well-being Hub (the Hub) – a drop-in service staffed by a nurse – to the same venue as the training a month later.

Methods We consulted with other hospices, a homeless GP practice, and homeless charities. We piloted the training with a homeless team and then took bookings from homeless organisations across our locality. Over a six-month period we will record the number of referrals/contacts from homeless organisations compared to baseline figures staff we train/job role/organisation people accessing the Hub. We will evaluate: the training from feedback and case studies the Hub support from feedback and a record of any onward referrals/signposting.

Conclusion We hope to make a change for the better. Participants felt enabled to recognise deterioration earlier, offer opportunities to discuss with patients/clients their thoughts and views about their future needs and care wishes. The course enabled us to build better joint working relationships, and increased engagement with the hospice services.