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Our reviews are undertaken as part of RQIA's Three Year Review Programme 2015-2018. Read more about the areas we are reviewing by visiting our website or by clicking on this image.



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Palliative and End of Life Care



Review of the Implementation of the Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy, January 2016

As part of RQIA's Three Year Review Programme 2012-15, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety commissioned RQIA to undertake a review of the implementation of Living Matters Dying Matters, Northern Ireland's palliative and end of life care in Northern Ireland.

RQIA has reviewed the progress made in taking forward the action plan for the implementation of Living Matters Dying Matters. RQIA concluded that very significant progress was made during the period 2010 to 2015 towards implementing the recommendations of the strategy.

Many initiatives have been developed to raise awareness of palliative and end of life care. But there remains a significant lack of understanding about these services amongst service users and staff. There is a continuing need for a coordinated approach to raising public awareness about palliative and end of life care.

This review makes a total of eight recommendations for improvement, including the need for a new action plan for the next three years, building on the work already achieved in Living Matters Dying Matters.

Methodology

- RQIA considered information from self-assessment questionnaires. These were sent to health and social care (HSC) trusts, the HSC Board and hospices to assess progress of the implementation of the recommendations included in Living Matters Dying Matters, March 2010.
- RQIA's review team met with senior management from the HSC trusts, HSC Board, Public Health Agency, and hospices to discuss progress of the implementation of Living Matters Dying Matters.
- The team met with members of the Transforming Your Palliative and End of Life Care (TYPEOLC) programme, developed to support the implementation of the recommendations in Living Matters Dying Matters, as well as with general practitioner Macmillan facilitators who are part of HSC trust community specialist palliative care teams.
- A stakeholder summit event was held in June 2015 to inform stakeholders of the main findings from the review.
- Finally, a full report of the findings of the review team and recommendations was published in January 2016 on RQIA's website, www.rqia.org.uk.

Recommendations

RQIA's review team made **eight recommendations for improvement in palliative and end of life care**.

Key recommendations include:

- DHSSPS, in partnership with stakeholders should develop a new Living Matters Dying Matters action plan for a three-year period (2016 to 2019), building on the work that has been completed since the strategy was published in 2010. The action plan should include defined timescales, organisational responsibilities and monitoring arrangements.
- Raising public and professional awareness of palliative and end of life care should be a core component of the new action plan.
- The HSC Board should develop a service specification for out-of-hours provision for palliative and end of life care, in both hospital and community settings, to ensure standardisation of the availability of services across Northern Ireland.