

# PALLIATIVE CARE

Jan Nichols

Executive Manager

Te Korowai Atawhai

St Joseph's Mercy Hospice

Auckland/Senior Lecturer

University of Auckland

# DEFINITION

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*Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual.*

WHO (2002)

*The fundamental responsibility of the health profession to ease the suffering of patients cannot be fulfilled unless palliative care has priority status within public health and disease control programmes; it is not an optional extra*

WHO 2002

# THE NEW ZEALAND PALLIATIVE CARE STRATEGY 2001

## THE VISION

*All people who are dying and their family/whanau who could benefit from palliative care have timely access to quality palliative care services that are culturally appropriate and are provided in a coordinated way*

# PRINCIPLES

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- The focus of care is the person who is dying and their family/whanau
- All people should be informed of entitlement and have needs based access
- Palliative care is planned around people's unique needs
- Quality of life is paramount
- Palliative care requires a multidisciplinary approach
- Co-ordination and collaboration is essential

**NZ Palliative Care Strategy, 2001**

# PALLIATIVE CARE AND CANCER CONTROL IN NEW ZEALAND

- One of 7 aspects of Cancer Control covered by NZ Cancer Control Strategy and Action Plan
- Cancer accounted for 29% of all deaths in 1998 (NZHIS 2002)
- Hospice Referrals 2002/3
  - Total 8,591
  - Cancer 6,532 (Hospice NZ 2004)

# PALLIATIVE CARE AND CANCER CONTROL IN NEW ZEALAND

- Multiple professionals and organisations involved
- Models of care and funding based on government/ngo/ community partnership
- Some way to go to fully enact the NZ Palliative Care Strategy

# THE ISSUES

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- Access
- Coordination and Integration
- Workforce



# SOLUTIONS

- Giving the strategy priority
- Improved access especially for those with inequitable access
- Defined leadership
- Service standards (eg generalist and specialist, capital and human requirements)
- Updated and expanded funding models
- Improved monitoring
- Workforce development

