
Death as a social event - Building a Compassionate Community in West Moreton

Initiative Type

Redesign

Status

Close

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Summary

The West Moreton Care at End of Life Collaborative was established in 2018 to improve outcomes and experiences for all people approaching end of life in the West Moreton community.

Tailored strategies to build capacity, aligned to the West Moreton community's needs, were developed through consultation with the community.

Key dates

Jul 2018

Jun 2021

Implementation sites

West Moreton Hospital and Health Service

Partnerships

The West Moreton Collaborative membership - St Andrews Private Hospital, Ipswich Hospice Care, Ipswich City Council, Blue Care, Ipswich Hospital, University of Southern Queensland, Icon Cancer Care, Palliative Care Queensland, Queensland Ambulance Service

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Aim

The short-term aim of this initiative is to respond to the communities' request for access to information, support and community conversation about death and dying.

The long-term aim for this initiative is to build community capacity to better support and care for its own when they are approaching end of life. 'Death is a social event with a medical component, not a medical event with a social component.'

Benefits

- building a compassionate community is a long-term project. The short-term benefits seen from this project are
- beginning and continuing conversations with the community about care at end of life
- development of a compassionate community agenda and action plan
- community repository of end of life resources on a website that can be easily accessed by community members.
- increased knowledge and capacity of health care and community workers about communication at end of life

Background

One of the core aims of the collaborative is to address the level community capacity in the West Moreton region, to better prepare them to support and care for people approaching end of life.

Solutions Implemented

The West Moreton Care at the End of Life Collaborative employed the five principles of stakeholder engagement (which includes consumers and community), as defined by the Department of Health Canberra: 2015, Stakeholder Engagement Framework, Australian Government.

Community consultation forums were held in the West Moreton region. A compassionate communities conversation forum was also held for members of the West Moreton region. The community told us:

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- The West Moreton community is primed to be activated to care for people approaching the end of life. The community's willingness to help and support others is evidenced through the abundance of community support assets and organisations.
 - Whilst the willingness and structures are available in the West Moreton community, connecting the support available to those that would benefit from them is lacking. The community identified the need for a 'single source of truth' of information that is tailored specifically to the local area.

In response, the collaborative obtained community funding to map community assets (local services, support, and community services) for care at the end of life in West Moreton region and the development of the 'West Moreton Care Connect Website'.

<https://www.westmoretoncareconnect.com.au/>

The website provides a list of local community support services and local palliative care providers. It also has a page for health professionals providing links to education resources as well as a page for our First Nations people. This project was awarded the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce Community Involvement Award in 2020.

Evaluation and Results

Consumers have been involved in the evaluation of the West Moreton Care at End of Life Collaborative Care Connect website, providing feedback regarding its ease of access, usefulness and quality of material. Feedback is implemented during the yearly website update where online resources are reviewed and updated.

Courageous Conversations workshops have been attended by 160 people since October 2020. Pre- and post workshop surveys were undertaken with demonstrated improvement in confidence about communication at end of life.

Feedback comments highlighted that attendees had a greater understanding of the difference between Palliative Care and End of Life Care after the workshop.

Lessons Learnt

Listening to the voice of the community and consumers is an important way to build capacity for the consumer, community, and health to provide integrated care at end of life.