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2014 European Declaration on Palliative Care

Evidence-based policy recommendations by two EU funded projects

"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 treatment of other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual" [World Health Organization].

Palliative care is required from **early in the disease** course, can be delivered alongside potentially curative treatment, and continues to include **end-of-life or terminal care**.

Calling upon policy and decision makers at regional, national and international level to:

1. Recognise that the delivery of and access to high quality palliative care is a **public health priority** which requires a **public health approach**.
2. Develop or redraft **national and international health care policies**, such as policies on healthy ageing, long-term care and dementia, **to include palliative care as an essential component**.
3. Develop or redraft **palliative care-specific policies** to include referral criteria that allow patients and their family timely access to palliative care consistent with their level of need, regardless of diagnosis, age, prognosis, estimated life expectancy or care setting.
4. Develop or redraft policies to include mechanisms to ensure **access to specialist multidisciplinary palliative care services** or teams in all health care settings.
5. Promote a **paradigm shift in health and social care** towards basic palliative care skills for all health care professionals, to empower them to deliver **patient-centred family-focused** care for all people with a life-limiting illness, **based on personalised or tailored care plans**, with attention to all needs of the patient and his or her family.
6. Support **inter-professional and multi-disciplinary collaboration** as a cornerstone of high-quality **care and education** in palliative care.
7. Invest in **curriculum development and education** in palliative care across all disciplines of health and social care at undergraduate and post-graduate level, and **establish palliative care as a specialty**.
8. Promote public awareness through **community level approaches**: education of the **public** and training of **family carers and volunteers**.
9. Increase **funding opportunities** for national and international **research** in palliative care.
10. Establish continuous mechanisms to **monitor and improve the quality of and access to** palliative care.

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