

# Integrated and efficient: combining resources to provide expert end of life care



Patients were seen by our hospital teams **2,620** times, an increase of **216%**.<sup>1</sup>

*“Northumbria has invested significantly and creatively in palliative care to create the largest integrated palliative care service in the country. The focus of this partnership is to increase our capacity and quality of service by delivering more responsive services, as well as new roles that work alongside our existing teams in the community, hospitals and our palliative care units.”*

Dr Eleanor Grogan, Head of Service for Palliative Care,  
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Our innovative, jointly-funded Marie Curie @ Northumbria service partnership ensures people with palliative care needs have co-ordinated, responsive and patient-centred specialised care and support in hospitals and the community.

### **What need does the partnership address?**

The Trust recognised the need to increase its capacity in end of life care, integrate acute hospital and community nursing teams and reach more patients across Northumberland and North Tyneside. Through this partnership, nursing teams work seamlessly and efficiently to support patients on the wards and at home.

### **Benefits to the NHS Trust**

- Enables the Trust to provide high-quality palliative care to more patients
- Helps prevent avoidable hospital admissions
- Reduces duration of hospital stays and delay in discharges
- Frees up specialist palliative care staff to focus on complex cases
- Provides training and support for hospital and community nursing staff to deliver good end of life care
- Innovative electronic system alerts staff of patients on End of Life register when they arrive in hospital to allow them to be seen more quickly.

### **Benefits to patients and families**

- More patients are able to die in the place of their choice
- Enhanced end of life clinical and emotional support in hospital and the community
- Support for patients to be discharged more quickly from hospital to their home
- Provides greater continuity of care by offering expert nursing for discharged patients at home
- Responsive nursing care, usually within an hour, to help patients remain at home.

**873** patients received care from our hospital teams, an increase of **99%**.<sup>2</sup>

### How does the partnership work?

Our service partnership allows nursing teams based in three acute hospitals and the community to work as one, through the sharing of knowledge, information and expertise. This ensures a flexible, coherent and efficient service that meets the needs of patients and families.

**The hospital-based palliative care liaison element** of this partnership, made up of Marie Curie Nurses and NHS nurses, provides expert clinical care and emotional support for patients in their last days and hours of life, and their families. The nurses also arrange for patients to be discharged home without delay, often accompanying them to provide a face-to-face handover to the community nursing teams, easing the transition from hospital to home and ensuring a good communication flow.

**The community-based rapid response element** provides specialised care and support within an hour of call from a team of NHS clinical nurse specialists, Marie Curie Nurses and Marie Curie Healthcare Assistants, supported by an on-call palliative care consultant. By offering expert care at short notice, our partnership is helping patients and their families to manage at home, preventing avoidable hospital admissions.

To ensure excellent end of life care is a priority at the NHS Trust, the new role of **modern matron in palliative and end of life care** was created for this partnership. The modern matron brings leadership and expertise to all elements of the partnership, supporting its strategic development and continuous improvement.

**96%** of patients were seen by our hospital teams within four hours of referral.<sup>3</sup>

### How does the partnership add value?

By sharing knowledge and expertise with NHS staff, our partnership has increased the capacity for delivering high-quality end of life care within the Trust.

Fully integrated with the Trust's systems, we've developed a seamless process for referring, treating and discharging patients. Streamlined handovers between the hospital and community elements ensure patients receive the right care and support when they are discharged home.

---

*"The Northumbria hospital liaison teams embed values of care and compassion alongside a remarkable level of clinical knowledge and skill. Through this unique partnership, the teams can flex to meet the needs of patients and provide the highest quality of care."*

---

Dr Katie Frew, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

**85%** of patients supported by our rapid response nursing team died in the place of their choice.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Figures comparing service data from 2016 and 2014 (before the partnership).

<sup>4</sup> In 2016/17, and where their preferred place of death was known.

---

### More information

[mariecurie.org.uk/commissioning](http://mariecurie.org.uk/commissioning)

 @MarieCurieEOLC

---

Marie Curie is the UK's leading charity caring for people living with any terminal illness, and their families. We offer expert care through our home nursing and hospice services, as well as information and support for patients, their loved ones and the professionals who care for them.