

## **Partnership for better care Talking to Imelda Redmond**

Imelda is the director of policy at Marie Curie Cancer Care. She has been instrumental in setting up the partnership between Marie Curie and the Royal College of General Practitioners that has produced the End of Life Care programme for primary care led by Dr. Peter Nightingale.

### **1. Can you tell us a bit more about yourself and your role at Marie Curie?**

I have worked at Marie Curie since November 2011. I am Director of Policy and Public Affairs and I lead on strategy for the charity

### **2. What are the current priorities for Marie Curie?**

We are a major provider of hospice and nursing care to terminally ill people throughout the UK. Our priorities are to provide high quality care to more people, we always work hard to ensure that our care and support is person centred and responsive to the needs of the individual and their families. We want to ensure that the standards of end of life care are as good as they can be in whatever setting people spend their last days, we do this by commissioning research and influencing the policy and legislative framework in which care is delivered. We are also focused on raising the profile of end of life care, across the health and social care system.

### **3. What are your views on how our partnership may fit into your current priorities?**

Our Partnership with the RCGP is critical in helping us to influence the quality of care in all settings. If we are to increase the number of people who have good care at the end of their lives in their own home, people in all parts of the system must feel confident that they can play their part. GPs can play a critical role in whether people can die in their own home as this is the wish of the majority of people. GPs are also critical in ensuring that pain is well managed and that the family have the support and backup that they need

### **4. What can general practice do to contribute to better and more personalised end of life care?**

As said above that general practice is a critical part of the system. We need to know that GPs feel confident in managing the care of terminally ill people, that they are confident about having difficult conversations with families and also prescribing controlled medication in a timely way. Importantly this service has be available 24 hours 7 days a week. Research shows that Doctors, who work 'out of hours' feel less confident in prescribing the correct medication and this can lead to a huge amount of distress for the patient as well as causing distress to their families, who live with the memory of not being able to help their loved one manage pain

### **5. How do you see year 1 of the End of Life Care programme in relation to its objectives?**

I think the first year of the programme has been very successful. Most importantly we appointed two excellent people to lead the work in Dr Peter Nightingale and Dr Adam Firth. Peter and Adam have begun to build a high profile for the programme throughout the UK. They have delivered some really good workshops for commissioners, spoken at public events, been invited to meet the Minister Norman Lamb and participated in a number of social media initiatives to raise awareness of end of life issues.

**6. What would you like to achieve in the second year?**

In the second year we have identified 5 key areas of focus: improving communication –IT systems, helping commissioners understand the issues, influencing policy and legislation, helping to educate the workforce and strengthening partnerships

**7. What do you think are the long term challenges and the long term vision for the partnership?**

The restriction on us is not our shared ambition but the limitations of the resources we have to take the work forward. There is so much enthusiasm and desire to improve the lot of people at the end of their lives in the partnership, we'd love to do more

**8. Is there anything else you would like to tell our membership?**

Please get in touch with us if you would like to be kept informed about the development of the programme or would like any information about developments in end of life care

For more information on the End of Life programme, or if you would like to send a message to Imelda please contact [CIRC@rcgp.org.uk](mailto:CIRC@rcgp.org.uk)

Or contact Imelda directly at [Imelda.Redmond@mariecurie.org.uk](mailto:Imelda.Redmond@mariecurie.org.uk)

You may also visit our website for EoL care resources:

<http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/circ-clinicians.aspx>