Wide range of interventions on offer at palliative care day services (PCDS): evidence from a detailed mapping exercise

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**Background**

In the UK, palliative care day services (PCDS) have been developed to support people with life-limiting illness who live in their own home. Despite the growth of PCDS over the past thirty years, ambiguity concerning their organisation and content persists.

**Aim**

We aimed to address this ambiguity by mapping services at three sites in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

**Methods**

A systematic review of:

- policy and operational documents provided evidence on the organisation of care
- the records of a 25% random sample of new patients attending in 2015 provided evidence on the content of care.

**Results**

Based on a mixed medical and social model of care, the three services are characterised by:

- wide ranging patient care and support, spanning physical, psychological, emotional and social domains
- caring for both patients and their family carers
- proactive care, based on regular assessment and follow-up
- being able to respond to many of the identified needs ‘in house’
- where such response is unavailable, ensuring onward referral and follow-up
- extensive liaison with other health and social care providers.

**Conclusion**

Findings demonstrate a breadth and depth to provision as day services act as a community-based ‘focus’ of highly responsive, coordinated, multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral care.

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**Staff**

- Staff Nurse
- Doctor
- Nurse Consultant
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Complementary Therapist
- Social Worker
- Chaplain

**Clinical**

- e.g. Constipation
- Review of medication
- Breathlessness
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Pain
- Erratic behaviour
- Weight loss
- Incontinence
- Fatigue
- Mobility

**Physical**

- e.g. Falls prevention
- Vitamin injections
- Blood profiling
- Blood pressure monitoring
- Wound dressing
- Chiropody
- Acupuncture
- Massage

**Emotional/Spiritual**

- e.g. Counselling
- Relaxation techniques
- Reflexology
- Reminiscence therapy
- Art therapy
- Prayer

**Social/Personal**

- e.g. Showering
- Securing benefits
- Securing equipment
- Facilitating difficult conversations
- Advice & information
- Making a will

**Patients**

- 82 patients received approx. 1685 episodes of care
- Belfast = 36
- West Midlands = 24
- Edinburgh = 22

**Advance Care Planning**

- Referrals
  - Approx. 90 to a wide range of health & social care providers

- Liaison
  - Approx. 680 instances with a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers

- Referrals
  - Approx. 1635 episodes of care

- Referrals
  - Approx. 220 instances with statutory providers
  - Approx. 220 instances with non-statutory providers

- Referrals
  - Approx. 90 to a wide range of health & social care providers

**Liaison**

- Approx. 680 instances with a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers