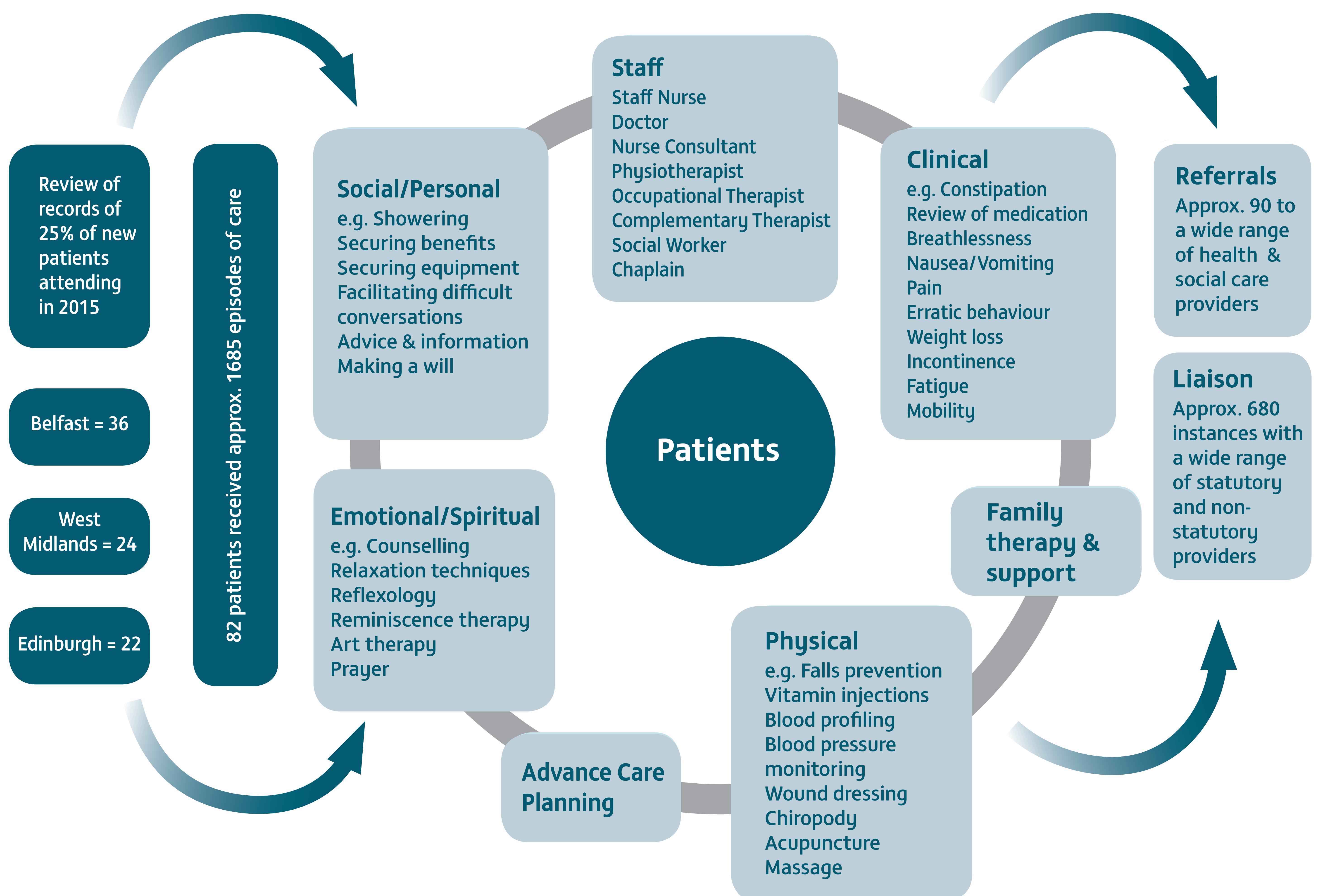


Wide range of interventions on offer at palliative care day services (PCDS): evidence from a detailed mapping exercise

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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 'locus' of highly responsive, coordinated, multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral care.