



Windermere Aged Care Facility

 Residential Aged Care

 Summer Hill,
New South Wales

Goal

To provide a culturally focused palliative care approach.

Highlights

- Broke down cultural barriers when discussing advance care planning end of life
- Avoided unnecessary hospital transfers at end of life by referring the resident to local palliative care service and initiating Palliative Care Conference.
- Initiated Case Conferences to improve family understanding of the signs and symptoms of end of life
- Developed strong links with a specialist palliative care team
- Increased staff confidence to manage more complex situations

Windermere Aged Care Facility has provided care for older Australians for over 30 years. As the first and only Korean-specific aged care facility in Australia, Windermere is committed to addressing the unique needs of the Korean community.

To enhance their services, Windermere decided to participate in the ELDAC Linkages program in order to provide a culturally focused palliative care service, with an emphasis on developing translated resources and strengthened connections with external service providers. An important impetus to joining the program was to equip the staff with the knowledge and confidence needed to identify early signs of deterioration and deliver personalised end of life care.

Additionally, Windermere hoped to overcome cultural barriers and facilitate open discussions about death with both family members and residents.

Cultural sensitivity is paramount in the approach of Windermere. In many Korean families, topics such as advance care planning and death are seldom discussed until the very end of life. This often results in delays in returning advance care plans during the admission process, requiring staff to spend considerable time explaining these plans. Moreover, there is a prevalent misconception within the community that palliative care is synonymous with end of life care. This has led to hesitancy among staff when discussing these topics with family members.

“I would like to say that it was privilege to participate in the program and have a chance in improving the knowledge in palliative care by receiving valuable support and having access to the great range of resources.”

Through the participation in the ELDAC Linkages program, Windermere has successfully reduced cultural barriers surrounding advance care planning and end of life discussions. By providing comprehensive education to their staff, they have improved their ability to recognise signs of deterioration, enabling timely palliative care case conferences and the initiation of end of life pathways. This has resulted in a decrease in unnecessary hospital transfers by referring residents to palliative care services promptly using their new defined access pathways.

To provide support to family members, Windermere developed translated Korean resources to enhance their understanding of palliative care.

Additionally, they involve Korean-speaking staff in palliative care services to ensure that families fully comprehend the process and expectations during these challenging times.

Key outcomes

- Improved staff knowledge in recognising the signs of deterioration
- Provided family members with translated Korean resources to improve their knowledge in palliative care
- Provided staff members with foundational palliative care and cultural upskilling
- Developed an RN Clinical Toolbox with specific resources related to deterioration end of life, clinical aspects, dying stage, and bereavement
- Improved systems for palliative care education by developing a structured plan to an education plan including induction and ongoing education

“The ELDAC Linkages program provided the facility with the opportunity to identify various culturally specific resources which increased staff knowledge in Palliative Care leading to improvement in our service provision.”

“There is increased confidence now in our staff to manage these more complex situations.”

“Our Korean specific facility has grown through participating in the ELDAC Linkages Program – we have broken down our cultural barriers when discussing advance care planning and managing end of life symptoms within our cultural context.”

Building staff confidence

During the program, we developed strong links with the Residential Aged Care Facility Outreach Service in our local health district, where Specialist Palliative Care Korean speaking nursing staff are available.

The Korean speaking Specialist Palliative Care Nurse was so valuable in supporting us in our improvements, particularly in assessing the resident’s condition. They also provided support and expertise in liaising with the family members to develop the care needs of residents’ approaching the end of life. By having the staff on board when commencing the end of life care, the family members could be reassured by external health professionals (Korean Specialist Palliative Care Nurse) that there are other options for care rather than hospital, reassuring them that caring for them in the facility gives continuity and familiarity.

During the program, we’ve enhanced the process in detecting the resident’s deterioration by implementing SPICt (Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool) to assist RNs/Care Manager with arranging Palliative Care Conference in a timely manner to get everyone prepared well in advance.

Our facility was also able to provide increased targeted education in palliative care to all levels of staff. Our staff reported that they had all been able to improve their knowledge and gained more confidence in talking about palliative care and end of life care with family members. It’s also noted that staff have improved their knowledge and skills in detecting signs of deteriorating so that the Care Manager could arrange the palliative care conference in timely manner. By having the end of life pathway well prepared, RNs were able to provide the end of life care which meets the individual’s unique needs with the confidence and a greater understanding of specific cultural needs and approaches.

