



Bene Aged Care - The Italian Village St Agnes



Residential Aged Care



Adelaide,
South Australia

Goal

To refine and elevate the quality of palliative care.

Highlights

- Partnering with the local palliative care service has enhanced end of life care for residents
- Staff have become passionate and keen on learning about palliative care
- Support from the ELDAC Linkages facilitator increased staff confidence
- Advance care directives are now openly discussed

Bene Aged Care (also known as Bene Aged Care St Agnes) in St Agnes, nestled in the beautiful and idyllic foothills of Adelaide, is a leafy haven for 163 residents, the majority of whom have an Italian background. The holistic approach at Bene Aged Care serves to meet the individual needs of every resident, from high-care support to opportunities for simple social connectivity. Bene's 24/7 onsite nursing team also provides high dependency and specialist dementia care.

Bene's commitment to the ELDAC Linkages program stemmed from their passion to enhance their palliative care services. The central aim was to refine and elevate the quality of care, ensuring that both residents and their families received the support they needed during the most challenging times.

First and foremost, Bene sought to boost the confidence and skills of the culturally-diverse staff in providing palliative care and advance care planning. This initiative was crucial in creating a workforce adept at handling delicate end of life conversations and making informed decisions. To facilitate this, a robust training program was implemented, aimed at embedding a palliative approach across the entire service. This included specialised education sessions during the induction and orientation days for all new staff.

Understanding the intricacies of other health sector teams, particularly the Specialised Palliative Care Team, was another critical goal of their participation in the ELDAC Linkages program. By establishing a clear referral pathway, Bene has established a seamless communication between external service teams and their own, allowing for timely and efficient access to specialised palliative care. This step was pivotal in fostering a collaborative environment that could better serve the residents' needs.

"Participating in the ELDAC Linkages program has been enriching in so many ways, making a positive difference to our residents' and families' palliative care journey, and helping us to enhance the knowledge and skills of our staff with the goal of providing better care and services to the residents."

Nisha Maharjan, Residential Site Manager

To further support communication with residents and their families, Bene introduced visual printed resource materials. These resources became vital tools for staff, enhancing their knowledge and serving as reliable references for clinical care.

Additionally, they facilitated better communication, helping families and residents navigate the complexities of palliative care with greater understanding.

Participation in the ELDAC Linkages program provided Bene with the perfect opportunity to raise awareness of palliative care. Through various initiatives, Bene aimed to build a comprehensive understanding of palliative care among residents, families, and staff. Notice boards, fact sheets, and brochure stands were strategically placed in all areas to ensure everyone had access to essential information. This widespread awareness campaign, supported by the ELDAC Linkages facilitator, helped demystify palliative care and made it a more integral part of the community's consciousness.

With cultural sensitivity front of mind, and with support and structures provided through the ELDAC Linkages program, Bene reviewed and revised their existing palliative care policies. This comprehensive review included incorporating resources to support culturally diverse residents and their families. Recognising the challenges posed by language barriers and cultural differences, Bene made concerted efforts to prepare residents and their families for a smooth palliative care journey.

Partnering with the Specialist Palliative Care Team has significantly enhanced Bene's capacity to

provide better end of life care. This collaboration not only enriched the staff's knowledge but also ignited a passion for palliative care within the team. Staff members felt more confident and better prepared to support residents and their families, thanks to the facilitation support provided by the ELDAC Linkages program.

Advance care directives are now a more common topic of discussion at the facility, leading to a stronger uptake from residents and family members. The use of evidence-based resources has played a crucial role in supporting care staff and improving communication with residents and their families.

Additionally, clinical assessment tools have been introduced, providing staff with practical means to monitor and respond to residents' needs effectively. Resources were also shared with families to support their understanding of the end of life journey, fostering a more informed and compassionate environment.

Key outcomes

- Upskilled the care team to provide palliative care
- Introduced evidence-based resources to support care staff with communication with our residents

Creating a collaborative approach with the Specialist Palliative Care Team – Supporting our resident and their family at end of life.

With our resident's close family member (a daughter) living interstate, involving the specialised palliative care nurse, with their expertise was important. This was reassuring for the family, as it provided an extra layer to our care and improved our rapport and connection with the daughter, who was very distressed, facing her mother's end of life from a great distance.

The specialised palliative care nurse could guide us with any signs or symptoms that the resident was presenting. She was able to join us when we talked with the family, and provided the support and reassurance that we were there for their mother on her end of life journey, and that we could manage her care on site. The nurse practitioner (NP) was also able to provide guidance and support to the family about medication management, as well as supporting our RNs with managing end of life medications.

Working alongside the NP gave the family comfort and reassurance, and it helped us to build the family's trust in the care we were providing. The family was reassured through our communication that if needs escalated, we were all there working together to manage care in every way for their mother.

Working with the specialised palliative care team gave us confidence, knowledge, and learnings for future care provision at end of life.

As a larger team, in collaboration with external services, we were able to wrap our contributions and care around the family and their loved mother, to have a gentle supported end of life journey.

Nisha Maharjan, Residential Site Manager