



# Uniting AgeWell – Home Care South Tasmania



Home Care



Tasmania

## Linkage Strategies Used:

Role Clarification



Written and Verbal Communication Pathways



Designated Linkage Workers



Knowledge Exchange and Upskilling



Continuous Quality Improvement



Uniting AgeWell's home care service delivers aged care and support to clients living in Southern Tasmania. These services are designed to offer continuity of care and peace of mind, and support people to experience a sense of wellbeing, choice and independence at every age and stage of their life. The organisation's home care clients are predominantly females living alone in rural settings.

The home care service was experiencing difficulties due to inconsistent palliative care approaches and limited access to support networks. Specific challenges included a lack of forward planning and clinical pathways, inconsistent advance care directives and limited access to General Practitioners and specialist palliative care services. After death and palliative care audits were also needed to identify opportunities for improvements, and the organisation wanted to incorporate bereavement and counselling for families into care pathways.

*“Following the ELDAC workbook pathways and building a foundation in understanding our gaps through the ELDAC tools was invaluable. It created an understanding of our gaps and a recognition of how to build a pathway and implement the actions needed to introduce real and sustainable change across the teams and into the organisation for the future.”*

The ELDAC Working Together program enabled the Home Care Team to review their current practices, partnerships and understanding of the palliative elements in their service provision. The partnership gap analysis and staff survey encouraged staff to consider a culture change by highlighting the positive outcomes of a multidisciplinary approach to palliative care.

Additional training and upskilling also helped staff gain confidence and develop a more comprehensive understanding of the palliative care process.

## Benefits

- Upskilling of staff.
- Improved anticipatory care and care planning for early interventions.
- Strengthened General Practitioner engagement and palliative care partnerships.
- Updated policies and procedures to support palliative care delivery.
- Improvements in clinical governance.



Through the support of the Working Together program provided by ELDAC we established a program that would support direct care workers and build a stronger palliative care culture and awareness within the organisation. This, in turn, would further support clients and their families.

All staff were engaged in the education process.

*"I have learned how to adequately approach the situation when working with someone in palliative care and what to expect" and "understanding how 'loss of control' can affect a person's behaviour, shows it is important for a person to be involved in planning their goals and wishes for end of life."*

Following consultation with our ELDAC facilitator we have taken a bottom-up approach to ensure we deliver palliative care differently and engage in a partnership framework. The culture of delivering services within a palliative approach has had a marked turnaround. Staff are engaged in the conversations and in the multidisciplinary nature of delivering services with a palliative approach. We have now been recognised by the wider organisation for what we have achieved in the delivery of a culture shift regarding palliation. The Victorian and Northern Tasmania Home Care Teams are exploring how to follow our lead and deliver a palliative approach in their teams.

We aim to use the ELDAC tools and build a future partnership model as we move forward. In doing so, we will be building on our learnings and providing a platform for sustainability. We have leveraged the training given to direct care workers and created a cultural change that is supported by senior management. It is an amazing outcome for the team in Southern Tasmania and for the wider organisation, to adopt a new approach and culture in delivering palliative services in a home care setting.

**Fiona Onslow-Agnew, Regional Manager**