



# Allied Health Toolkit

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Dietitians Australia – Residential Aged Care Interest Group

# Overview

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- Who is ELDAC and what is the ELDAC Care Model?
- The Allied Health Toolkit
  - Nutrition resources
- Overview of all Toolkits
- Next steps for the Allied Health Toolkit
- Associated project work

# ELDAC Care Model

- The ELDAC Care Model can help you determine:
- whether a person is approaching the end of their life
- how to plan and deliver care for a person
- how a person's care needs might change over time
- what resources would be useful for you in providing care
- whether you have education or learning needs.

Each of the ELDAC toolkits has information and resources relating to the elements of the ELDAC Care Model.



# Allied Health Toolkit

- The 'Work Together' section of the ELDAC Care Model is a guide to help aged care staff and health professionals **Work Together** to meet the needs of older Australians coming to the end of their life.

## Allied Health Toolkit

Provides an evidence-based resource to support palliative care practice of allied health professionals when caring for a person at the end of their life.



### Why this Toolkit?

Understand the role of allied health in delivering end-of-life care in aged care.



### Allied Health Team

Find discipline specific tools and resources to support best practice in end-of-life care.



### Practising in Aged Care

Find resources on referrals, funding and rebates, and self-care.



# Allied Health Team - Dietitian

Tools and Resources For Families Further Learning

## Assessment Tools

[Mini Nutritional Assessment \(MNA\)](#)  
[Oral Health Assessment Tool](#)  
[Patients Association Nutrition Checklist \(UK\)](#)

## Resources

### Dietitians Australia

[Dietitians Australia \(DA\)](#) is the national body for Dietitians working in Australia, fostered based practice and advocacy for a healthy and accessible food system. Membership of practitioners with resources and interest groups to foster best practice.

### Hospice UK

[Nutrition in palliative care](#) is a series of webinars and resources delivered by Hospice UK, covering eating and drinking across the palliative care continuum. The series includes the following:

1. Overview, definitions of nutrition & case study
2. Nutritional screening & examples
3. The physical and psychosocial impact of cachexia
4. Treatment of poor appetite and weight loss.

### Advocating for the Improvement of Food and Mealtime Experience in Aged Care

[The Lantern Project](#) and [The Maggie Beer Foundation](#) are organisations that both work to improve the quality of food and mealtime experience for all older adults in residential aged care, and provide opportunities to engage in consultation and projects to improve quality of life for older people.

### Food, nutrition and dining: resources for workers

Aged care providers, aged care staff, advocacy services, other health and medical professionals can access the ACQSC Food, nutrition & dining hotline on 1800 844 044 with enquiries and questions about nutrition, and dining Mon – Fri 9.00 am to 5.00 pm AEDT. The [website](#) also has a number of resources on four priority areas; [dining](#), [choice](#), [swallowing](#) and [oral health](#). These are designed to support and empower people to deliver best practice.

Tools and Resources For Families Further Learning

## Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission Support Unit and hotline to help aged care providers deliver more nutritious meals to people in aged care. The Food, Nutrition and Dining Hotline is available 24/7. More information on accessing the hotline is found in the resource [Do you have questions about food and dining in aged care?](#)

The website [Food, nutrition & dining: resources for workers](#) such as the [Food and dining preference survey](#) to support enjoyable dining experience.

## Nutrition Education Materials Online (NEMO)

The Queensland Nutrition Education Materials Online (NEMO) pamphlet on [Nutrition in Palliative Care](#) is available.

## myTube - myMND

[myTube \(UK\)](#) is a site for people with Motor Neuron Disease (MND) to share studies on the pros and cons and the impact of MND.

## The Agency for Clinical Innovation

The NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation has a number of resources for [Nutrition and palliative care](#).

## PINNT A Support Group for people receiving artificial nutrition

[PINNT](#) is a friendship and support group for patients receiving artificial nutrition.

Tools and Resources For Families Further Learning

## Food, nutrition and dining: resources for worker

The Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission has established a Food, Nutrition and Dining Advisory Support Unit, and a series of webinars are available to support providers to deliver high-quality, safe and enjoyable food and dining experiences.

- Webinar 1 – [The dining experience and consumer choice](#)
- Webinar 2 – [A case study in food, dining and nutrition at residential aged care provider Whiddon](#)
- Webinar 3 – [Swallowing, texture-modified diets and nutrition](#)
- Webinar 4 – [Oral and dental health and its impact on eating and nutrition](#)
- Webinar 5 - [Supporting people with dementia to eat and drink well - recording and presentation.](#)

## Podcasts

- Dietitian Connection [Bridging nutritional gaps in aged care](#)
- Ending Life Well. A podcast series for carers. [Episode 2: Small and Tasty - Tempting Someone To Eat The Swallow your Pride](#)
- The Swallow Your Pride Podcast (US). [Episode 172 : End of Life Feeding Decisions: Integrating Nutrition and Swallowing Perspectives – Lyndsay Parker and Morgan Mendenhall](#)



# Practising in Aged Care

## > Allied Health

- > Why an Allied Health Toolkit
- > Allied Health Team
- > **Practising in Aged Care**
  - > End-of-life Communication
  - > Person-Centred Care
  - > Self-Care
  - > Telehealth
  - > Referral Pathways
  - > Funding and Rebates
  - > Supporting older adults with disability funding
- > Guidance and Research

## Referral Pathways

As people age, they may require additional medical care to manage chronic conditions or maintain their overall health. This can include the services of allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and dietitians. These services can be costly, but many older adults still residing at home (including in a retirement living facility), may be eligible for funding or reimbursement to help cover the costs.

Supporting older adults in their home

Supporting older adults in residential aged care

Regardless of the setting, it is important for allied health professionals to collaborate with [healthcare team](#). Collaborating with other healthcare providers who also work with aged generate referrals from other sources. Building relationships with other professionals can integrated approach to patient care, leading to better outcomes for patients.

The [Palliative Care Needs Round Checklist \(399kb pdf\)](#) may assist the healthcare team to needs and guide practice. The checklist has been created for residential aged care, but can be used in other care settings.

Example [Referral Form for chronic disease allied health services under Medicare..](#)

📄 Resources

*Services Australia Health Professional Education Resources*

[Education resources](#) to help you understand our health and aged care programs and services and do business with Medicare.

Medicare

Medicare - Allied Health Case Conferencing

From **1 November 2021**, the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) made items available for eligible allied health practitioners participating in multidisciplinary [Allied Health Case Conferencing](#) with medical practitioners.

The new items apply to individuals under the care of an eligible allied health practitioner for:

- Chronic disease management under the care of a General Practitioner (GP) in either community or residential aged care settings.

The new items are intended to increase uptake of multidisciplinary case conferences, improve care coordination and support the outcomes that matter most to patients and their families. The Medicare Benefits Schedule website has a number of [fact sheets \(293kb pdf\)](#) outlining eligibility, and the relevant item codes. The case conferencing items can be accessed in-person, via videoconference or telephone, using the same item number.

# Guidance and Research

## Nutrition and Dietetics

Evidence-based guidelines for dietitians in palliative care provide recommendations for the assessment and management of nutritional needs and symptoms in patients receiving palliative care. [Dietitians Australia](#) is the leading voice in nutrition and dietetics in Australia, while there are no specific guidelines for dietitians working in palliative care, other reference documents are available which can inform practice in the management of symptoms and supporting quality of life outcomes.

### Australia / New Zealand

- Dietitians Australia. [Role Statement for Accredited Practising Dietitians practising in the area of Oncology](#) [8]
- NSW Central Coast Local Health District (CCLHD). [Best Practice Food and Nutrition Manual for Aged Care \(16MB pdf\)](#). Includes texture modified food/finger food guidance, Page 15 reference to palliative care.

### International documents that may be used to inform practice

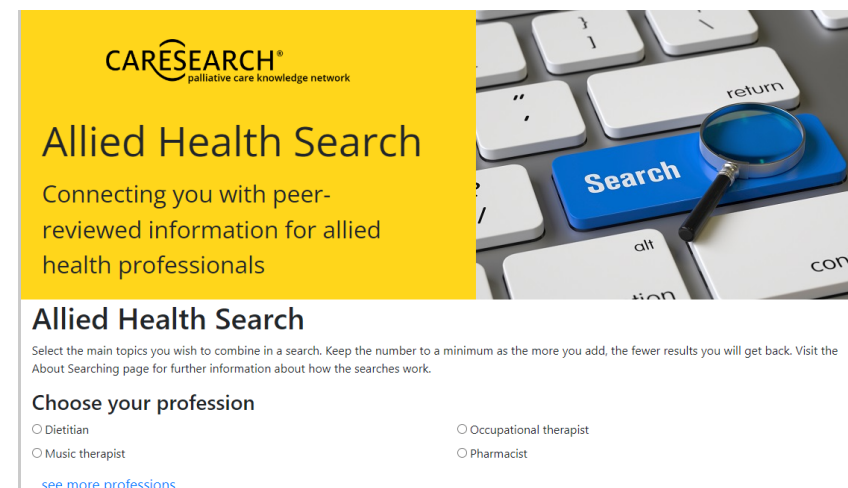
#### European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN)

- [ESPEN practical guideline: Clinical Nutrition in cancer \(3.2MB pdf\)](#)
- [ESPEN guidelines on nutrition in dementia](#)
- [ESPEN guideline on ethical aspects of artificial nutrition and hydration \(419kb pdf\)](#)
- Royal College of Physicians UK, 2021. [Supporting people with eating and drinking difficulties is a guide to practical care and clinical assistance](#). Its particular focus is on the complexities that can arise around nutrition and hydration towards the end of life.
- Position of the American Dietetic Association, 2002. [Ethical and legal issues in nutrition, hydration, and feeding](#).
- Dietitians of Canada, 2019. [Best Practices for Nutrition, Food Service and Dining in Long Term Care Homes \(4.5MB pdf\)](#)
- British Geriatrics Society. [End of Life Care in Frailty: Nutrition](#).

## Guidance and Research

Provides a place for you to easily find best-practice guidelines and evidence to support palliative care of older adults, either at home or in residential aged care. Links are provided below to help navigate you to discipline specific pages, and search for current evidence and practice ready evidence for palliative care and aged care.

### [Link](#) to allied health search tool – refine by discipline



**CARESEARCH®**  
palliative care knowledge network

## Allied Health Search

Connecting you with peer-reviewed information for allied health professionals

### Allied Health Search

Select the main topics you wish to combine in a search. Keep the number to a minimum as the more you add, the fewer results you will get back. Visit the [About Searching](#) page for further information about how the searches work.

**Choose your profession**

☐ Dietitian
 ☐ Occupational therapist
 ☐ Music therapist
 ☐ Pharmacist

[see more professions ...](#)

# ELDAC Toolkits – Primary Care

- Significant focus on topics of interest to general practitioner as well as other clinicians

## Clinical Action

In this section, we will be looking at key learnings and actions for delivery of palliative care and advance care planning in primary care. You will find clinical tools and educational resources for clinicians, as well as information for patients and their families within each clinical domain.

 **Download Factsheet**  
(477kb pdf)

 **Advance Care Planning**

 **Assess Palliative Care Needs**

 **Work Together**

 **Manage Dying**

 **Palliative Care in Diverse Populations**

 **Recognise End of Life**

 **Provide Palliative Care**

 **Respond to Deterioration**

 **Bereavement**

## HealthPathways

In this section, we will be looking at HealthPathways information regarding referral paths and best practice management of conditions.

 **Download Factsheet**  
(481kb pdf)

HealthPathways is a web-based information portal, designed to be used at the point of care, primarily for general practitioners and other clinicians. In some regions access to HealthPathways may also be available to hospital specialists, nurses, allied health and other health professionals.

HealthPathways provides clinicians with a single website to access clinical and referral pathways, and resources. Each pathway is evidence-informed, but also reflects local reality, and aims to preserve clinical autonomy and patient choice. Pathways are created by local health professionals including general practitioners.


See [Find my HealthPathways](#) for the local HealthPathways site available in your region. Access to each HealthPathways site is restricted to that HealthPathways region's catchment.

The [HealthPathways Community](#) enables HealthPathways teams across Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom to share knowledge, processes, pathways, and infrastructure.

 **Primary Health Network (PHN) Map Locator**

 **Find my HealthPathways**

 **HealthPathways in Palliative Care and Advance Care Planning**

 **HealthPathways Engagement and Development**

 **HealthPathways Resources**

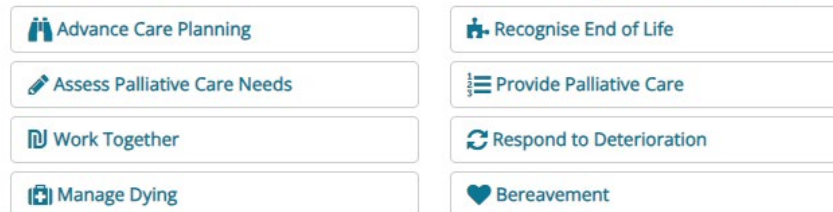


# ELDAC Toolkits – Residential Aged Care and Home Care

- Focus around delivering palliative and end of life care in a residential or home-based aged care context
  - Clinical assessment – recognising end of life
  - Advance care planning
  - After death audits

## Clinical Care

This section of the Residential Aged Care (RAC) Toolkit delivers information on how to provide palliative care and advance care planning for people living in residential aged care and for their families.



## Toolkit Educational Videos



The Residential Aged Care Toolkit educational videos will assist you to:

- Recognise End of Life
- Assess Palliative Care Needs
- Work Together
- Manage Dying

 Educational Videos

## Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool (SPICT™)

The Supportive and Palliative Care Indicators Tool (SPICT™) (188kb pdf) is often used in addition to the surprise question. The SPICT™ has two sections called General Indicators and Clinical Indicators. To identify that someone may need end of life care, at least one of the six general indicators and one of the clinical indicators would have positive response.

The SPICT™ includes specific clinical indicators for dementia/frailty:

- Unable to dress, walk or eat without help.
- Eating and drinking less; difficulty with swallowing.
- Urinary and faecal incontinence
- Not able to communicate by speaking; little social interaction
- Frequent falls; fractured femur.
- Recurrent febrile episodes or infections; aspiration pneumonia.

Visit the [SPICT™ website](#) for [user guidelines](#) and further information.

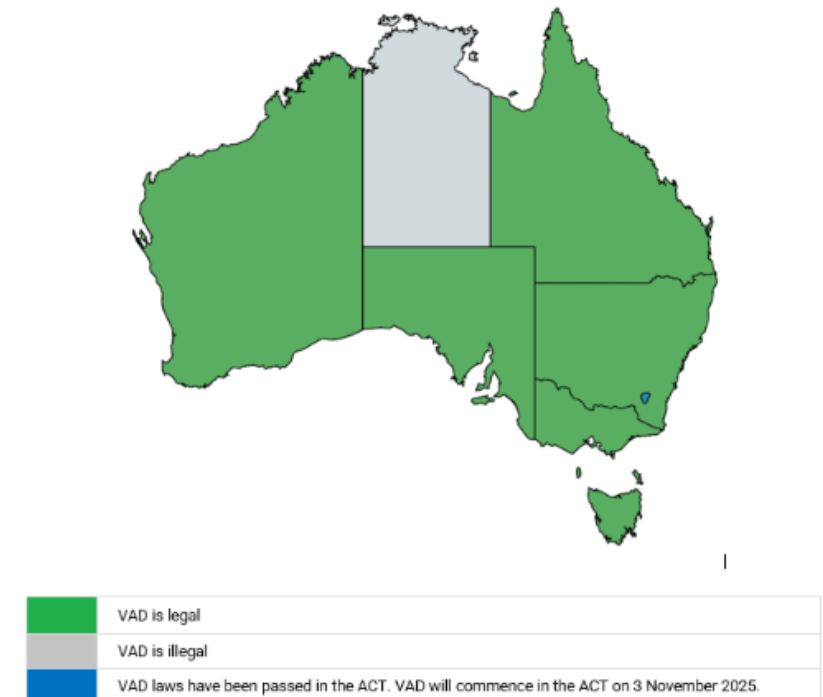
Remember end of life care may also be required for a person that has an acute deterioration. There is more information about this in the [Respond to Deterioration](#) section of the Dementia Toolkit.

# ELDAC Toolkits - End of Life Law

- Toolkit receives a lot of visits across a variety of topics
- Voluntary Assisted Dying – “hot topic” just now and important to understand the law implications of this for allied health
- E.g. in Victoria and South Australia - can’t start the conversation but should be able to provide information if a person requests it whereas in Tasmania, NSW and ACT a health professional can initiate discussion but must also discuss this with the medical practitioner (and other legal requirements as per state legislation)



Current legal status of VAD in Australia



Correct as of August 2024

# ELDAC Toolkits – Linkages

## Linkages Toolkit

Helping you to establish or improve linkages between aged, primary and palliative care services to provide the best possible palliative care and advance care planning for older persons in your care.









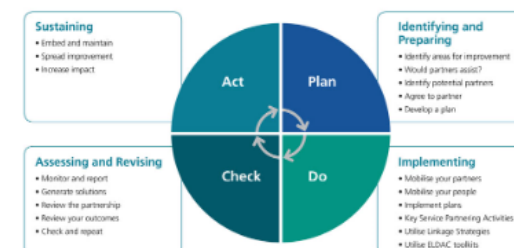
The Linkages Toolkit (formerly known as the Working Together Toolkit) has been developed to both support the [Linkages Program](#) and to guide improvement activities.

## Why a toolkit on Linkages?



## Linkages Toolkit Resources

Resource	Size
 >> Plan-Do-Check-Act model	40kb
 >> Action Plan Template	467kb
 >> Activity Report Template	474kb
 >> Annual or Final Report Template	440kb
 >> Case Study Template	441kb
 >> Communication Checklist	102kb



# ELDAC Toolkits – Dementia

- Overview of Dementia
- Emphasis on Advance Care Planning and Substitute Decision Making
- Links to key sites e.g. Dementia Support Australia
- Links to education and learning



New: The Advance Project® Dementia Specific Training and Resources



Our new free training and resources make initiating end-of-life conversations and assessing palliative care needs of people living with dementia easier, to enable better care

# ELDAC Toolkits – Managing Risk

## Managing Risk Toolkit

Provides information and guidance for aged care providers on effective governance and risk management to support quality aged care.



What is the  
Managing Risk  
Toolkit



Nutrition and  
Hydration



Medication  
Management



Transfers

- Downloadable fact sheet for residents and families on supporting nutrition and hydration as appetite declines
- Informed choice for eating and drinking – dignity of risk
- References dietitian referral and various strategies to support eating and drinking



# Managing Risk – Food, Nutrition and Dining

## Hotline resources

- Resources providing overview around ‘choice’
  - Mention around ‘dignity of risk’
  - Dining environment and mealtime modifications

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/supporting-choice-about-food-and-drink-fact-sheet.pdf>



# Allied Health Toolkit – Next Steps

- Toolkits will be undergoing a navigation redesign
  - Applied focus
- Inclusion of more interactive resources e.g.
  - Case studies
  - Checklists
  - Updating with freely available resources to support practice
- Designed with new Aged Care Clinical Standards in mind
  - Currently mapping all toolkits to the draft standards



# Allied Health Toolkit – Associated Projects

## Associated activities (not commissioned by ELDAC):

- Evidence to support Allied Health Best Practice in Palliative and Aged Care - Scoping Review *Under review currently*
- Reactions to revised aged care funding model – Peak Body and Allied Health Stakeholder interviews *Manuscript in development*
- Exploring how allied health clinicians and tertiary educators discuss or deliver palliative care in aged care context - Interviews
  - *Nutrition and Dietetics Honours Project – July – Dec 2024*
  - *Currently recruiting clinicians and educators for interviews*
  - *QR code – please scan if you are interested in participating...*



# Allied Health Toolkit – Associated Projects

- Ongoing – seeking Blog articles featuring new initiatives or topics of interest for allied health <https://www.eldac.com.au/Newsroom/Blogs>

## 4 key insights for allied health in aged care

Friday, 12 July 2024 / Categories: ELDAC Toolkits, Home Care, Residential Aged Care, Allied Health

1680



A blog by Dr Olivia Farrer, Teaching Program Director and Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics, Flinders University, and ELDAC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

In early 2024, the Flinders ELDAC team conducted a series of stakeholder interviews to explore the role of allied professionals within aged care settings. These interviews aimed to understand the interactions between allied health care providers, the potential impacts of funding changes, and how an allied health toolkit might support current practices.

The study involved eight organisations and four allied health professions, providing a comprehensive overview of the current landscape.

Here are the four key themes that emerged from these discussions and their implications for the future of allied aged care.

## Providing oral care at the end of life

Monday, 14 August 2023 / Categories: ELDAC Toolkits, Home Care, Residential Aged Care, Allied Health

1255



A guest blog post by Dr Liisa Laakso, Principal Research Fellow, Allied Health and Hon Associate Professor, Mater, University of Queensland

A range of factors can contribute to comfort (or discomfort) and quality of the end-of-life experience. Dry mouth is one of those.

**Dry mouth (xerostomia)** can occur for a range of reasons including medicines, mouth breathing and oxygen therapy. At end of life, when oral intake lessens it can increase risk of dehydration, and the production of saliva decreases, giving rise to other issues such as mouth sores and oral thrush. This can cause distress, thus adequate assessment, regular review and management of hydration is important including discussion with the individual if able, or significant others when not possible. An individualized, 'best interests' decision can then be made based on factors such as the person's level of consciousness, their previously stated wishes, and more specialized factors such as dysphagia (difficulty swallowing) and status of the swallowing reflex to avoid aspiration (inhaling food or fluid into the lungs). Speech Pathologist assessment is strongly recommended in such cases.

## The ELDAC Allied Health Toolkit: Building workforce capacity for quality end-of-life care

Friday, 28 April 2023 / Categories: ELDAC Toolkits, Allied Health

795



A blog by Dr Olivia Farrer, Teaching Program Director and Lecturer in Nutrition and Dietetics, Flinders University, and ELDAC Postdoctoral Research Fellow

The ELDAC Allied Health Toolkit is freely available through the ELDAC website. The toolkit is aimed at supporting Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) who play a crucial role in supporting the quality of life of residents and clients in aged care, particularly those who live with chronic health conditions and comorbidities. These professionals work alongside other healthcare providers, such as doctors and nurses, to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to care.

However, the provision and management of care can be complex in aged care settings, especially for those at the end of their life. Palliative care becomes a critical component of care, and AHPs are essential in providing the necessary support to patients and their families. Palliative care isn't currently taught consistently in allied health curriculum, resulting in AHPs' low confidence in supporting people who are at the end of life.

The toolkit is an evidence-based resource designed to support AHPs, including Dietitians, Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Social Workers, and Speech Pathologists, in providing quality palliative care to their patients. It provides practical resources and information that can be easily integrated into their daily practice and is divided into three main sections; the Allied Health Team, Practising in Aged Care, and Guidance and Research.

The Allied Health Team

# Stay Connected with ELDAC

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