

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New book provides the latest information on establishing palliative care organisation and delivery worldwide

MADRID, SPAIN: A new book on: 'Building Integrated Palliative Care Programmes and Services' has been published by former members of the Technical Advisory Group supporting the World Health Organization Palliative Care Initiative. The book was launched at the 15th World Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care and provides the latest information on palliative care organisation and delivery, with expert contributors drawing on examples from around the world.

Lack of access to palliative care and pain relief is a global public health crisis. Every year 40 million people, their families and carers need palliative care, yet only about 3 million are able to access the care they need. The majority of these are adults over 60 but 6% are children.

The WHO defines palliative care as: 'An approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing problems associated with life threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial, and spiritual'.

In 2014, the World Health Assembly (the governing body of WHO) passed the resolution: Strengthening of palliative care as a component of comprehensive care throughout the life course, calling on all governments to ensure that palliative care is integrated into their national healthcare systems.

This book is a guide to designing, implementing, and evaluating palliative care programmes and services, moving a focus on integrating palliative care into mainstream healthcare systems. It includes the latest definitional, organisational, and clinical aspects of palliative care, and is a great resource for countries wanting to begin or to build palliative care.

Dr Stephen R. Connor, Executive Director of the Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance and co-editor of the book, said: "Palliative care is too often organised outside mainstream healthcare. If we are to meet the enormous challenges of delivering care to the 40 million worldwide who need it annually we need to imbed palliative care into existing primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare, especially in low and middle income countries where nearly 80% of the need for palliative care exists."

Dr Xavier Gómez-Batiste, MD PhD, Director WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Palliative Care Programmes (WHOCC-ICO), Catalan Institute of Oncology and co-editor of the book, said: "This manual not only describes the essentials of palliative care, but also the innovative strategies and actions to design and implement comprehensive programs and services integrated into health systems."

The authors recommend that the book is used by policy makers and practitioners to improve palliative care service delivery for people accessing care and their families.

The book: **'Building Integrated Palliative Care Programmes and Services'** can be downloaded from the Resources section of the WHPCA website: <http://www.thewhpca.org/resources/category/building-integrated-palliative-care-programs-and-services>

About the Technical Advisory Group supporting the World Health Organization Palliative Care Initiative

An ad hoc technical advisory group (TAG) for palliative care was formed and worked with the WHO staff from 2014-16 on plans for implementation with the mission to provide advice to WHO Secretariat for the implementation of the resolution on Strengthening of palliative care as a component of comprehensive care throughout the life course, adopted by the World Health Assembly, in May 2014 (WHA 67.19), the functions of identification of priority issues to be addressed for the implementation of the WHA Resolution, the definition of strategic directions and work plan including activities to be implemented in the main areas defined by the WHA Resolution, such as technical guidelines, monitoring and evaluation, capacity strengthening, global partnerships, the tool development including indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of quality palliative care programs and training tools and to knowledge sharing and analysis of palliative care models.

About The Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance (WHPCA)

The WHPCA was established by the international palliative care community in 2008 as a global action network to be a strong voice for hospice and palliative care in the international arena. Registered as a UK Charity, and in official relations as an NGO with the World Health Organization, WHPCA has now become an international alliance of 245 national and regional hospice and palliative care and affiliate organisations representing 86 countries. Our global Board of Directors and members around the world are all dedicated to the belief that no one with life-limiting conditions, such as cancer, HIV, or organ failure should live and die with unnecessary pain and distress.

About The "QUALY" Observatory – WHO Collaborating Centre for Public Health Palliative Care Programmes (WHOCC-ICO)

The QUALY Observatory is the Catalan Institute of Oncology's (ICO) program to promote the quality of palliative care. It was designed as a Collaborating Centre for Public Health Palliative Care Programs in 2008. This designation made the ICO an international centre of reference for the development of palliative care treatments from the perspective of public health, aimed at providing support to countries in the process of developing palliative care programs, identifying success models, aiding the WHO in defining its programs, generating evidence and disseminating knowledge in this field.

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