



# Baptist Care Bethshan Gardens Aged Care Home



Residential Aged Care



Wyee,  
New South Wales

## Goal

To improve palliative care through early recognition of resident deterioration and develop a comprehensive system for advance care planning.

## Highlights

- Staff initiating regular advance care planning conversations with residents and families
- Established a self-care room for staff to provides a safe space and resources for staff
- Dedicated specific 'red folders' containing resident advance care planning documentation to facilitate easy access

Designed with a people-first approach, Bethshan Gardens is located in Wyee, set in a semi-rural area on the central coast of New South Wales. Bethshan is surrounded by plenty of outdoor space and gardens, offering a welcoming, secure and a safe environment for our residents.

Bethshan Gardens welcomed the opportunity to participate in the ELDAC Linkages program where several opportunities for improvement were identified, including communication pathway development, knowledge exchange, and teambuilding.

Prior to joining the ELDAC Linkages program, Bethshan Gardens had highlighted advance care planning as an area for improvement as it is central to providing a palliative approach. BaptistCare has policies and processes in place to support advance care planning, however Bethshan Gardens felt they could improve their systems, processes, staff skills and knowledge. The BaptistCare advance care record is provided for all residents from admission and annually (as a minimum) to ensure they have the opportunity to undertake a meaningful record of their wishes if and when the person is unable to speak for themselves; thereby ensuring that they receive the palliative care they wish (including medical treatment, emotional and spiritual support).

"We recognise deterioration much earlier, are using the palliative care assessment and have the skills and knowledge to detect changes. The program supported by the BaptistCare palliative care consultants has improved our use of the resources and assessments."

*Registered Nurse*

Following the implementation of the ELDAC Linkages program, several significant changes have been enacted. Firstly, all residents are now provided with meaningful and appropriate information regarding advance care planning from the moment of admission. Additionally, a comprehensive system has been established to record, communicate, manage, monitor, and transfer relevant documents. Furthermore, all registered nurses have undergone education and training to ensure their competency in conducting advance care planning conversations, using both ELDAC resources and the BaptistCare Policies and Procedures.

To facilitate easy access to end of life wishes, dedicated red folders now contain required documentation, securely stored within each unit.

Moreover, the presence of this documentation is indicated by red dots on the spines of residents' clinical folders. Advance care planning conversations are now regularly held during care conferences and palliative care conferences, supplementing other necessary communications.

Additionally, all relevant stakeholders, including General Practitioners, palliative care Clinical Nurse Consultants, Specialist Palliative Care Teams, allied health professionals, and other team members, are kept informed as appropriate. Finally, a comprehensive pre- and post-implementation data collection and monitoring process has been instituted to track the effectiveness and impact of these initiatives.

A palliative care education workshop aimed at developing palliative skills and knowledge involved a palliative care specialist coming to the Bethshan Gardens and providing customised learning.

To address needs identified while participating in the ELDAC Linkages program, palliative care consultants from the BaptistCare Care Development Unit provided training in a palliative approach, including recognising deterioration and delivery of comfort care at the end of life. During the ELDAC Linkages program, implementing a palliative approach including more communication around advance care planning among the registered nurses (both existing long-term employees and new and emerging registered nurses), has increased awareness of resident choice and agency.

The BaptistCare Care Development Unit palliative care consultants support numerous homes, including those participating in the ELDAC Linkages program. This has given them insights into the benefits of the ELDAC Linkages program, the early identification of deterioration, and therefore the early referral to this team in a timely manner, rather than referral at later stages of resident's deterioration. The case review rounds are now leading to better detection of resident changes and assessment in a timelier fashion. Even chaplains are recognising and reporting deterioration leading to a multidisciplinary approach.

The establishing of a self-care room, an initiative from participating in the ELDAC Linkages program, now provides a safe space for staff, it is a comfortable bright room with resources on self-care posted on the notice board.

The outcome of the ELDAC Linkages program involved the formation and implementation of the Bethshan palliative care committee. Supported by the BaptistCare palliative care consultants and lead

"I feel I can better support my residents in the memory care unit right across their journey and at end of life, I have confidence to bring comfort through my skills in leisure and lifestyle."

*Lifestyle team member*

by a senior registered nurse, the purpose of the Bethshan Palliative Care Committee is to provide a means for interested and motivated employees to engage, advise and provide feedback in relation to end of life and supportive care activities, which affect residents, families, staff, and volunteer wellbeing. All activities of this committee are related to the palliative approach and supportive end of life care and services with the purpose of promoting continuous improvement.

The group serves several key functions, including providing a supportive networking structure for palliative care, facilitating communication on initiatives to enhance palliative care outcomes, developing plans for initiatives such as managing palliative care resources and reviewing after death audits, promoting continuous improvement in the organisation's palliative approach through resources like those provided by ELDAC on self-care and aged care standards, and offering a platform for sharing information and knowledge through internal and external speakers.

## Key outcomes

- Improved identification by staff of resident palliative care needs
- Improved staff confidence with holding advance care planning discussions with residents and families
- Formation of a palliative care committee to engage, advise and provide feedback in relation to end of life and supportive care activities resulting in beneficial outcomes for both residents and staff
- Review of all resident advance care plans which are now easily accessible to staff when needed

"One palliative care committee team member (from hospitality) has been so inspired that she is now enrolling in a certificate of Ageing Support."

*Registered Nurse Educator*