



Huon Regional Care



Residential Aged Care



Franklin,
Tasmania

Linkage Strategies Used:

Role Clarification



Written and Verbal Communication Pathways



Multidisciplinary Team Structures and Processes



Designated Linkage Workers



Knowledge Exchange and Upskilling



Continuous Quality Improvement



Huon Regional Care (Huon) is a not-for-profit organisation providing high-quality care for older people in the Tasmanian community. Team members work in partnership with General Practitioners, allied health workers, pharmacists and the local palliative care service to provide ageing people with the care, dignity and respect they deserve.

The ELDAC Working Together program provided staff with an opportunity to assess the care, systems, service needs and networks used for palliative care. The team identified areas for improvement including relationships with stakeholders, staff upskilling, resources to support palliative care, and connections with the local specialist care service.

“The hands-on support and guidance of the ELDAC facilitator enabled us to introduce new ways of working and a planning day helped us reflect on our challenges and identify the way forward.”

Huon had established valuable partnerships with some local services. However, there were opportunities to develop stronger relationships and further support care delivery. The ELDAC facilitator helped identify shared education opportunities, clarify roles and improve referral pathways. They also helped to formalise and enhance the existing partnership with the local Specialist Palliative Care Clinical Nurse who was keen to help develop pathways and service clarification.

Upskilling in palliative care and advance care planning was needed to help staff embrace the philosophy of palliative care. The ELDAC Working Together program supported access to training and resources to support clinical decision-making. A linkage worker role was also created to facilitate organisational changes and act as a key contact for external agencies. This Registered Nurse supports staff to implement continuous improvement initiatives including After Death Audits to assess end-of-life processes.

“Our team’s capacity to provide high-quality, end-of-life care has been enhanced by integrating palliative care education into staff orientation and in-service.”

The organisation’s transformation is further supported with a Palliative Care Committee and new policies

and procedures for palliative care and advance care planning.

Resources which outline Huon's approach to palliative care are now available for clients and staff to have the confidence to initiate conversations about end-of-life choices.

Benefits

- Improved staff engagement and enthusiasm for palliative care.
- New mutually beneficial relationships with multidisciplinary services.
- Improved communication between team members and stakeholders.
- Upskilling and education for staff.
- Enhanced relationships with other palliative care services.

The importance of a dedicated palliative care portfolio

Through the ELDAC Working Together program, a dedicated staff member was allocated to manage the Palliative Care Portfolio for our service. The scope of this role is still developing with the primary aim of strengthening our internal and external palliative care processes. Our team have also embraced the formation of a Palliative Care Committee which supports linkages with key stakeholders and palliative care networks throughout our region. The committee is a valuable resource for end-of-life care and helps lead change and develop processes while providing a supportive framework for our caring and passionate staff. The following email from a resident's granddaughter illustrates our staff's compassion while providing end-of-life care.

Angela Bradley, Executive Manager Clinical Services

**"implement *continuous*
improvement"**

Hi there,

I just want to share my deepest gratitude to the staff at your Franklin facility. My grandma was there for several years and always received wonderful care.

Whenever I went to visit, the staff would offer me tea and coffee, and were generally very kind and friendly. Sadly, my nan passed away.

I was told that when she passed, your team kindly opened the curtains as she always liked, laid a daffodil in her hands and even lined the halls as her body was escorted out. I am so deeply moved by and grateful for this final act of utter respect and kindness. It has brought me a lot of comfort and will stay with me for the rest of my life. So, thanking the Franklin Huon Care team from the bottom of my heart.

Extract from letter from resident's granddaughter