



Queen Victoria Care



Residential Aged Care



Lindisfarne, Tasmania

Goal

Establish more robust palliative care systems and develop a holistic roadmap for palliative care for all areas of staff.

Highlights

- Identified and addressed gaps in palliative approach
- Improved the quality of resident care when approaching end of life
- Created more awareness in palliative care within the QVC community
- Embedded an improved system for palliative care delivery

Nestled in the heart of Lindisfarne on Hobart's Eastern Shore, Queen Victoria Care (QVC) has offered aged care for over 130 years. It has a community of 136 beds in residential aged care.

With a mission to be a centre of excellence for an ageing-well community, providing respectful, compassionate, individual care, QVC was eager to participate in the ELDAC Linkages program to provide the best end of life care to each resident.

Enrolment in the ELDAC Linkages program afforded this service an opportunity to reflect on their strengths and needs. First and foremost, they acknowledged that providing quality palliative care was central to their purpose. Prior to commencement of the ELDAC Linkages program, the QVC team were aware that there was a need for a more consistent approach in recognising and responding to signs of deterioration across the clinical care team. This set them on a course of exploring an overall model and flow of care that ensured a quality approach. Committed to their charter to provide the best possible care to residents, the QVC team took every opportunity offered by the ELDAC Linkages program to enhance the confidence, knowledge and systems so that each staff member, no matter their role, has a place in palliative care provision.

"There is a sense from our team that everyone is involved, and everyone is appreciated - we have had transformation in our culture top down."

Jacqui Marden, CEO Queen Victoria Care

The ELDAC Linkages program facilitated the establishment of a dedicated palliative care steering group to guide all initiatives, including the seamless integration of systematic clinical approaches and evidence-based tools into practice. Collaboration across disciplines became central to palliative care, with regular case conferences ensuring comprehensive care planning. Staff upskilling became a priority, with palliative and end of life care integrated into orientation and education calendars.

QVC published a palliative care information booklet for families that provides support information comfort for families to reduce fears and concerns. The goal was to explain the 'QVC way' to support a resident and their family and friends through their end stage of life.

Exploration into how a resident and family experienced the end stage of life led the team to focus on their environment, equipment, and setting in the last days of life. The enhancements implemented provide a clear visual message to both staff and families of this renewed focus of care and support.

Community education events on palliative care and advance care planning were initiated at QVC for families with great community and family interest, resulting in increased resident uptake of advance care directives. A culture of awareness and understanding among all staff emerged throughout the ELDAC Linkages program.

The invaluable support, encouragement, and knowledge provided by the ELDAC Linkages facilitator propelled QVC's palliative care journey forward. Strong QVC leadership and support from management in turn supported the key steering group to achieve their strong outcomes and best possible palliative care experience for residents.

The ELDAC Linkages program has enabled positive changes, fostering an environment where compassion and excellence thrive. QVC's approach to palliative care is now structured and holistic, addressing gaps and elevating care quality towards the end of life.

Key outcomes

- Developed an improved model for palliative care delivery
- Developed a structured clinical approach to a deteriorating resident
- Introduced evidence-based clinical tools and assessments
- Developed a palliative care multidisciplinary team approach
- Improved case conferencing with residents and families
- Upskilled all areas of staff, building confidence and knowledge
- Included palliative and end of life care in orientation and education calendars
- Built a culture of awareness and understanding of the palliative approach across all areas of staff

"We have re-found our heart centre and are now developing and improving the skills, knowledge and confidence of all our staff in their palliative approach."

CEO

Staff perspectives

At QVC a palliative approach isn't just about death and dying, we want to celebrate life. We believe that 'dying in place' should be available to all our residents, should they wish. We actively support our residents to remain at QVC for their palliative journey, helping them to remain in their home, surrounded by their loved ones and the familiar faces of staff who know and care for them.

Our goal is to ensure respect, dignity and comfort for our residents and support for their families and loved ones. It is an honour and a privilege to be involved in a person's death and should be treated as such. We want to achieve this by upskilling and exchanging knowledge for our palliative approach and develop stronger linkages to support a holistic approach to care planning and delivery. Our participation in the ELDAC Linkages program, with its guidance, support and resources has been a catalyst for this change.

Whilst our palliative care process and delivery is still evolving, our palliative care team has identified specific areas of development and training that our staff would like to help improve their palliative care delivery. Staff and families are commenting on the change in our palliative approach and care delivery, the below quotes from a family embody the positive changes we are making.

"We are extremely grateful for the care Dad received during his time at QVC. We would like to acknowledge the incredible compassion, professionalism and depth of rapport many people were able to afford Dad. We found each and every one of the people involved with Dad to be amazing human beings who did everything they could to make his last years as best as they could be. This amazing depth of caring was also extended to us during Dad's last days when we stayed in his room. We were constantly humbled by the compassion and love extended to us by every person including chefs, nurses, carers and cleaning staff. The addition of the lovely linens on Dad's bed, the diffuser, lamp, beautiful tea trolley and butterflies on the door all added significantly to our feelings of being cared for in such a warm way."

Family member, QVC (name withheld due to privacy)