

A UK END-OF-LIFE CARE INITIATIVE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

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The NHS North West Greater Manchester end-of-life care initiative aims to improve the quality of end-of-life care received by older people with dementia, by delivering education and training to care staff. Four care homes and one NHS mental health ward in Greater Manchester UK, were chosen and studied to be part of the initiative and implementation of the Gold Standards Framework (GSF) and the Liverpool Care Pathway for the Dying Patient (LCP), as models of care by a research team from Liverpool John Moores University and Edge Hill University. Questions surrounded whether the Gold Standards Framework and the Liverpool Care Pathway for the Dying Patient were relevant for people with advanced dementia nearing the end of life. The project conclusions were that GSF/LCP tools enable staff to assess, monitor and implement appropriate care to meet the needs of the dying resident, (important when recognising the disease trajectory of dementia); that end-of-life care tools promote good communication between the multidisciplinary team and relatives; that psychosocial and spiritual domains are important concerns of care staff and relatives; that there is potential for reducing unscheduled hospital admissions to acute settings; that Advanced Care Planning requires high level communication skills and that open and honest discussions are essential. In essence the benefits of implementing the GSF and LCP in long-term care settings appear to include improved communication between care and medical staff, better symptom management and support for family members and carers.