



## Comparing effectiveness of palliative care for elderly people in long-term care facilities in Europe (PACE)EFPC: EUROPEAN FORUM FOR PRIMARY CARE

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## News

### EFPC: EUROPEAN FORUM FOR PRIMARY CARE

## Comparing effectiveness of palliative care for elderly people in long-term care facilities in Europe (PACE)

The European Forum for Primary Care is part of a new European research programme, developing and testing ways to improve palliative care for older people in nursing homes. The project, Comparing effectiveness of palliative care for elderly people in long-term care facilities in Europe (PACE), started on 1 February 2014 and is coordinated by the End-of-life care research group Free University Brussels (VUB). The 6,6 million Euro, five-year study, funded by the European Commission Framework 7 programme, brings together leading academic researchers from six European countries.

Palliative care aims to improve quality of life and symptom management for people with advanced and chronic conditions, not just those with cancer. Each country takes on responsibility for different elements of the large and complex study. Researchers in Belgium will take the lead, working with researchers and clinicians from Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, UK and Poland. In the first year of the project, the UK team will capture the current ways that palliative care is provided for older people living in nursing homes across 28 European countries. The mapping exercise will examine practices, processes and services and effectively establish a study benchmark.

The main project will include a three-year trial of a previously developed UK palliative care model. Research (including economic, staff and process elements) will determine if the new way to deliver care actually makes a difference. An educational resource pack will be developed to ensure the new model is culturally appropriate and suitable for adoption in participating countries and then support delivery of the tailored training packages for each country. The teaching resource will use a 'train the trainer' style delivery method to cascade improvements quickly and effectively throughout the participating European countries. Trainers from across Europe will attend a week-long training course at Lancaster University's International observatory on end of life care (IOELC) and will be supported by the Observatory throughout the implementation period.

The final part of the research would determine what was effective and then ensure those findings were fed into policy development at a European Commission level to improve palliative care for older people in nursing homes.

The EFPC will be part of the impact team within the project structure, with the task to disseminate the activities and findings. But already from the project start, initiatives will be developed to engage primary care professionals in the project, as they are important stakeholders if it comes to palliative care provision in long-term care facilities. The EFPC will create a working group for providing useful input into the project, and at a later stage for the dissemination of the results. At the EFPC yearly events, seminars will be organized using the teaching materials developed in the project.

'This hugely important area of care for older people is such a big issue in Europe with people living longer,' Lancaster University's Observatory Director Professor Sheila Payne said. 'Nursing homes are likely to be a place where some older people will spend time and a place where many people die. This research programme seeks to ensure they die in the best and most dignified way they can. It's really important and really challenging.'



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