



Patient & Family Guide
2015

Welcome to the Palliative Care Clinic



www.nshealth.ca

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- You will get a pre-booked appointment.
- You may call the palliative care nurse at 902 _____ from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday. If no one answers, please leave a message and the nurse will return your call as soon as possible.
- After hours, and on holidays and weekends, please call your family practice, VON or the nursing agency involved in your care.
- You may also call 811, the Nova Scotia Telecare Service. This service will connect you to Registered Nurses who are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to talk about general health issues and questions.
- Under some circumstances, a patient who has a hard time getting to a clinic visit can be seen in the home by palliative care staff.
- If for any reason you can't keep your appointment, please notify your palliative care nurse.

Please bring the following to your visit:

- Provincial Health Card
- List of all medications & dosages, including herbal and over-the-counter
- List of questions and a pen and paper

You may meet with these members of the health care team during your visit:

- Palliative care nurse
- Palliative care doctor
- Resident doctors (doctors who are training for a specialty)

We will work with all members of your health care team such as your family practitioner, specialist doctors and nurses, Veterans Affairs, VON and other nursing services.

It is a good idea to visit your family practitioner often so that he or she is up to date about your health.

Common questions:

1. I have a poor appetite. How can I get more calories?

If you have any concerns about your appetite, weight loss, or any new treatments, you may wish to talk to your health care providers including the palliative care team. If you are receiving chemotherapy, or have diabetes or other health conditions, it is a good idea to check with your doctor before making a change in your diet to make sure it will not cause any problems.

Please note it is very likely you'll have less appetite at some point in your illness. If this is the case, pushing yourself to eat or drink more would not be helpful.

For more information, try these websites:

- Canadian Cancer Society
 - › www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/diagnosis-and-treatment/managing-side-effects/loss-of-appetite
- Livestrong
 - › www.livestrong.com/article/298356-how-to-restore-the-appetite-of-cancerpatients/#ixzz1xCGeDP7T

2. Where can I get help with the cost of my medicines?

You may be eligible for a provincial program that covers the cost for many of the medicines you may be taking. Your palliative care nurse or doctor will determine if you meet the provincial criteria to be eligible. If you meet the criteria they will send in the necessary forms for you. If you have insurance that covers most of the cost, but have a co-pay that is difficult to afford, you may still be able to qualify.

3. I want to get out more but I have trouble walking very far. Can you suggest anything?

Getting something such as a transport chair (type of lightweight wheelchair) can be very helpful. See question #8.

You may qualify for a disability permit so you can park in an Accessible Parking Zone. This form can be filled out by any doctor involved in your care. This web site will take you to the Access Nova Scotia site where you can print the form that your doctor can fill out:



- › www.novascotia.ca/sns/rmv/registration/mobility.asp

4. How can I get the help of a nurse or health care worker at home?

Any of your care providers can refer you to the Continuing Care Department which is the Provincial Home Care Program. You can get free services and a Continuing Care Coordinator will come to your home to find out exactly what you need. We work as a team with the Coordinator and the nursing services that come to your home (such as the VON) to make sure your needs are met. If you wish, you may call them directly at 1-800-225-7225.

5. Where can I get more details about palliative care?

Please visit these websites:

- Capital Health Palliative Care
 - › www.cdha.nshealth.ca/palliative-care
- Nova Scotia Hospice and Palliative Care Association
 - › www.nshpca.ca
- Virtual Hospice
 - › www.virtualhospice.ca

6. Is there help for a family member who has taken time away from work to care for me at home?

There is a national program called Compassionate Care Leave through Employment Insurance. Please visit the website below for more details. Ask your doctor to fill in the forms if you would like to apply.

- › www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/types/compassionate_care.shtml#information

7. Are there any hospice programs and patient services offered in the community?

The Hospice Society of Greater Halifax offers a variety of programs and services for you and your family. Call 902-446-0929, or view the programs and services offered at this website:

- › www.hospicehalifax.org

You may also get help from a volunteer at home by calling 902-446-0929 or filling in a referral form from this website:

- › www.hospicehalifax.org/in_home_support.html

8. Where can I get the special equipment I need?

Your Continuing Care Coordinator or your palliative care nurse can talk with you about your needs and help to arrange equipment and/or a therapist to see you in your home. Some equipment, such as a wheelchair, can be loaned to you by the following places:

- Canadian Red Cross: Call the Health Equipment Loan Program (HELP) at 902-424-1420 or visit this website:

- › www.redcross.ca/where-we-work/in-canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-specific-programs/nova-scotia-health-equipment-loans



- Continuing Care Program (Provincial Home Program). See question #4 above for details.

Ask your Continuing Care Coordinator or palliative care nurse to help you fill in the needed forms and fax them for you.

Your situation is unique and we recognize and understand that. This booklet was developed to provide information and resources to help you with just a few of the common questions you or your family members may have.

Feel free to talk to your palliative care nurse or doctor about any concerns or questions that you might have.

Notes:

Looking for more health information?

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

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If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.