

Support sheet 6



Dignity in end of life care

While dignity should be accorded to everyone using care services, nowhere is it more important than in the care and support of dying people and their families.

The Department of Health's Dignity in Care Campaign published ten principles which should underpin the provision of care to ensure people are always treated with dignity.

The ten principles of dignity in care:

- Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse.
- Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
- Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service. This can be achieved through providing services and support based on a holistic needs assessment (HNA).
- Enable people to maintain independence, choice and control. An HNA is the bedrock of delivering this principle – as part of discussions about the individual's wishes for their future care.
- Listen to and help people express their needs and wants. Be prepared to initiate discussion about dying and people's wishes for their future care. This can take the form of advance care planning (ACP). ACP usually takes place when a deterioration in condition is anticipated and the person's wishes are written down and shared with relevant professionals.
- Respect people's right to privacy. The environment for both breaking bad news and for people in the last hours and days of their life should be as private as possible.
- Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
- Engage with family members and carers as care partners when assessing an individual's needs and planning their future care.
- Assist people to maintain confidence and a positive self-esteem.
- Alleviate people's loneliness and isolation. This should be part of an HNA.

Further information

NHS Improving Quality www.nhsiq.nhs.uk

Dignity in Care Network <http://www.dignityincare.org.uk/>

Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) Guide 15: Dignity in Care

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide15/index.asp>