



Family Carers in Palliative Care: A guide for health and social care professionals

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Support for the family is a key component of palliative care practice and philosophy, with both patient and family construed as the 'unit of care'. However, there is not always formal acknowledgement of the importance of the family carer role, or that of friends, neighbours and other non-professional, informal carers. Consequently, health and social care professionals find carer support work particularly challenging. Symptom management, personal care, and administering of medications are just some of the tasks taken on by this group of non-professionals, and the impact of this role can have negative emotional, physical, financial and social implications on the care-giver. Furthermore, family carers consistently report unmet needs, and there has been a lack of intervention studies aimed at improving carer support.

This book therefore provides an evidence-based, practical guide to enable health and social care professionals to assess and respond to family carer needs. It also explores the wider sociological, policy, and research issues related to family carers and palliative care.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Peter Hudson is an Associate Professor and the Director of the Centre for Palliative Care Education and Research, an academic unit located within St Vincent's Hospital, affiliated with The University of Melbourne (Victoria, Australia). Peter is a member of the Department of Human Services Palliative Care Implementation Advisory Committee (Victoria), Board member of the International Association of Hospice and Palliative Care and co-founder of the International Palliative Care Family Caregiver Research Collaboration. Peter has a significant background in palliative care education and research, and has extensive experience as a palliative care nurse. He leads several competitively funded multi site research studies and has published widely in international journals.

Professor Sheila Payne is an applied social scientist with a background in nursing. Over the last twenty years she has been involved in leading and contributing to research and teaching about research methods in palliative care. She has a special interest in end-of-life care for older people, family caregivers and bereavement support. She holds the Help the Hospices Chair in Hospice Studies based at the International Observatory on End of Life Care at Lancaster University, UK. She also co-directs a large five year programme of collaborative research and development called the Cancer Experiences Collaborative. She has published widely in academic and professional journals, and is also Co-director of the Cancer Experiences Collaborative, and Vice President European Association of Palliative Care.

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