



Sandwell End of Life Care work update

Brief report for Sandwell Health & Wellbeing Board March 15/03/2023

Background

End of life care is an approach that improves the quality of life of adults, babies, children and their parents, families, and carers when they are facing problems associated with life-limiting conditions. It works best through early identification, assessment, and treatment of pain and other physical, psychological, social or spiritual problems. It is important that this work involves families and communities, working with health and social care professionals and other relevant groups or organisations. It is also important to start conversations around death and dying early and encourage open and inclusive communication.

Current Position

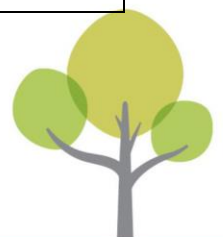
Since the launch of the Sandwell Better Endings End of Life Care Strategy in 2021, the Sandwell End of Life Care Strategic group has been working alongside the Black Country ICB on taking forward palliative and end of life care support in Sandwell. This has been achieved by aligning to the Black Country ICB Palliative and End of Life Care strategy and reporting to the Black Country ICB Palliative and End of Life Care oversight group. As part of this process it has been divided into two workstreams one focusing on clinical and quality improvement and one on engagement and compassionate communities. Each workstream has developed their aims & objectives and separate terms of reference. Both workstreams feed into the Black Country Palliative and End of Life Care Board (PEoLC) for oversight and governance. At the first PEoLC Board meeting, it was agreed that members would support the Black Country ICB Sandwell Place End of Life Care Improvement Plan. The key themes of the Improvement Plan will focus on:

- Primary Care
- Education and Training
- Policy & Strategy
- Communications (comms and engagement with communities)
- Compassionate Communities & Bereavement (incl. Voluntary sector work)
- Children and Young People
- Digital

The PEoLC has a project management approach to service improvement/change management and will be accountable to the Black Country System Palliative and End of Life Care Oversight Group as well as the Sandwell Health and Care Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Boards. The key aims and objectives for each theme are outlined in the table below;



Improvement Plan: Keys Aims & Objectives for each thematic area		
1	Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of General Practice to support better early identification of individuals in the last year of life and Advance Care Planning Number of patients on GP palliative care registers
2	Policy and Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and agreement of Sandwell Place EoLC Policy Ensuring delivery of safe, high-quality end of life care with a well-trained, developed and engaged workforce Ensuring links to the Black Country system Education & Training Group and training compliance
3	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Sandwell EoLC communications plan ensuring all communications are appropriate and accessible in meeting the needs of diverse communities
4	Compassionate Communities & Bereavement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address health inequalities that exist in death and dying across Sandwell. To ensure that community partnerships between different faith groups and cultural communities, as well as the diverse organisations that support people living with different life shortening illnesses, and those managing the difficulties of older age are developed across Sandwell. To develop a compassionate community approach across Sandwell to ensure end of life care services meet the diverse needs of the population and to ensure that the community has the resources to do their part, supported in a complementary way by services
5	Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that community partnerships for the diverse organisations that support children and young adults are developed across Sandwell. To ensure services are appropriate and accessible to meet the needs of children and young people
6	Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Sandwell EoLC communications plan ensuring all communications are appropriate and accessible to meet the diverse needs of the population. Robust data and IT systems to support EoL quality improvement work across both acute and community services





Next steps / Way forward

Each thematic area will be governed by a separate task and finish group who will work towards completing their aims & objectives within specified timelines from both the PEoLC Board and oversight groups. This will be grounded in a population health approach and will need support from different sources. One example is completing a needs assessment with support from the local Public Health Intelligence team. The aim is to meet the commitments set out in the Black Country ICB Palliative & End of Life Care Strategy. One of these is to support the development of local plans to enhance and improve current service provision to create equity across the Black Country, including early identification and the public perception of death and dying. By creating clear objectives and identifying key themes, the Black Country PEoLC Board is aiming to;

- provide seamless, integrated care for patients approaching end of life
- deliver care in a timely and caring way, in a setting of the patient's choice, retaining their choice and dignity.
- develop advance care plans with patients and their families and supporting families and carers pre and after death.
- adopt a compassionate communities approach to supporting the diverse communities of Sandwell
- have a transparent communications approach that is timely, appropriate and accessible (including digital inclusion)

This programme provides the opportunity to have a profound impact on individuals, their families, friends and carers, to encourage open conversations on death and dying and to highlight that working in partnership for a compassionate community approach can leave a lasting legacy.

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