

Referral guidance for GPs and health care professionals for: Pilgrims Hospices Living for Today programmes for palliative care patients.

What is Living for Today?

It is a new series of programmes that palliative care patients and carers may benefit from.

They include;

- a carers programme called 'Caring with Confidence' for carers;
- an art and craft programme for patients;
- a stress reduction programme for patients;
- a breathlessness programme for patients and their carers and
- a gentle exercise programme called 'Healthy Living' for patients.

Who is it for?

Patients on the palliative care register and / or in the last year of life.

Also for carers who care for someone in the last year of life or on the palliative care register.

We accept referrals for those with either a cancer or a non-cancer diagnosis.

Who is it not for?

It is not for complex symptomatic palliative care patients. They should be referred to the hospice via the usual route using a specialist palliative care referral form. Patients will not have their symptoms managed (other than in the breathlessness group) when attending these programmes.

It is not for patients who do not have a palliative care diagnosis.

Why are we running these?

We have introduced these programmes to respond to a wider group of patients' needs. These patients may not have complex needs or need a full multidisciplinary team assessment or input but may still benefit from some of these programmes. It is also a good introduction to the hospice if they are to require our input in the future.

When are we running these?

The five Living for Today programmes run at various times during the week. All programmes are time limited and are for approximately 3-6 weeks in duration.

Patients can attend more than one programme.

Where is it held?

Each Pilgrims Hospices site is running the same programmes so patients can access their most local hospice.

How to identify and refer a patient for Living for Today at the hospice?

Those patients on the end of life register or who are in their last year of life. **Please ensure** the patient/carer is aware of their palliative diagnosis. Discuss with the patient/carer if they wish to attend one or more of the programmes and ensure they are aware that the hospice will contact them. Complete a Living for Today referral form (enclosed) and send it to your nearest hospice.

What happens with the patients' medical care whilst on the Living for Today programme?

Clinical responsibility and care remains with the GP and they will be referred back to the GP if symptomatic.

Only the breathlessness programme will look at the patients symptoms and medication. The other programmes will not be symptom management programmes. Unless you inform us to the contrary, all patients will be considered suitable for CPR in the event of collapse. If this action is not appropriate please ensure you inform us if this.

What happens after the patient/carer has completed the Living for Today programme?

We will discharge the patient from the hospice services unless we or another health care professional identify further concerns for which the hospice could assist. If this is the case we will ring the referrer and/or GP to discuss further.