Information Resources:

World Health Organisation (WHO) Definition of Palliative Care

http://www.who.int/cancer/palliative/definition/en/

Palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing the problem associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychosocial and spiritual. Palliative care:

- provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;
- intends neither to hasten or postpone death;
- integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;
- offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;
- offers a support system to help the family cope during the patients illness and in their own bereavement;
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;
- will enhance quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness;
- is applicable early in the course of illness, in conjunction with other therapies that are intended to prolong life, such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy, and includes those investigations needed to better understand and manage distressing clinical complications.

WHO Definition of Palliative Care for Children

Palliative care for children represents a special, albeit closely related field to adult palliative care. WHO's definition of palliative care appropriate for children and their families is as follows; the principles apply to other paediatric chronic disorders (WHO; 1998a):

- Palliative care for children is the active total care of the child's body, mind and spirit, and also involves giving support to the family.
- It begins when illness is diagnosed, and continues regardless of whether or not a child receives treatment directed at the disease.
- Health providers must evaluate and alleviate a child's physical, psychological, and social distress.
- Effective palliative care requires a broad multidisciplinary approach that includes the family and makes use of available community resources; it can be successfully implemented even if resources are limited.
- It can be provided in tertiary care facilities, in community health centres and even in children's homes.
Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association (CHPCA)

http://www.chpca.net/

The CHPCA is the national voice for hospice palliative care in Canada. Advancing and advocating for quality end-of-life/hospice palliative care in Canada, its work includes public policy, public education and awareness. Established in 1991, its volunteer board of directors is composed of hospice palliative care workers and volunteers from Canadian provinces and territories as well as members-at-large.

The vision of the CHPCA is “That all Canadians have access to quality end-of-life care.”

CHPCA’s “Fact Sheet on Palliative Care” notes that “Only 16% to 30% of Canadians who die currently have access to or receive hospice palliative and end-of-life care services – depending on where they live in Canada. Even fewer receive grief and bereavement services.” Also, “residential hospice palliative care programs are still at least 50% funded by charitable donations, and families must bear part of the cost of dying at home, in long-term care–almost anywhere outside a hospital.” The complete 15 page document gives information on access, demand, funding, an integrated palliative approach to care, raising awareness and many other topics. It may be downloaded at:

http://www.chpca.net/media/330558/Fact_Sheet_HPC_in_Canada%20Spring%202014%20Final.pdf

Information on National Hospice and Palliative Care Week may be found at http://www.chpca.net/week.

The CHPCA marketplace offers a wide variety of brochures, books and other media that deal with all aspects of palliative care. http://market-marche.chpca.net/english-products

Catholic Organization for Life and Family

http://www.colf.ca

The Catholic Organization for Life and Family (COLF) was co-founded by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus. COLF’s mission is to build a culture of life and a civilization of love by promoting respect for human life and dignity and the essential role of the family.

Canadian Virtual Hospice (CVH)


“The Canadian Virtual Hospice provides support and personalized information about palliative and end-of-life care to patients, family members, health care providers, researchers and educators. In 2001, a group of palliative care leaders gathered to consider whether a web-based platform could address some of the gaps in palliative care in Canada. They recognized that Canadians need a reputable source for finding information and support, whenever they need it, wherever they live.

“The Canadian Virtual Hospice went online in February 2004, with evidence-based information and an e-health pioneering feature called Ask a Professional. For the first time, Canadians had direct access to health specialists online. Since then, Canadians have found a safe place to sort through issues related to death and dying at the Virtual Hospice. The information and support they find here helps make sense in times of confusion, offers compassion in times of isolation, and reassurance in times of anxiety.”

CVH has gathered links to palliative care associations in each province or territory.

BC Hospice Palliative Care Association
Alberta Hospice Palliative Care Association
Saskatchewan Hospice Palliative Care Association
Hospice and Palliative Care Manitoba
Hospice Association of Ontario
Réseau de soins palliatifs du Québec
Nova Scotia Hospice Palliative Care Association
codo@nbnet.nb.ca to contact the New Brunswick Hospice Palliative Care Association
Hospice Palliative Care Association of PEI
Newfoundland and Labrador Palliative Care Association
Hospice Yukon Society

See also: Palliative Care Programs and Services for an interactive map.