

# A spotlight on: Ambulance services and end of life care

## Session links

Tuesday 6 February 13:30-14:30



Calls to emergency services are increasing for people at the end of life, likely in part because services in the community are under pressure. Yet until recently there has been little research in this area. Join this session to learn more about the experiences of paramedics providing end of life care and some of the complex issues they face. This session will reflect on how paramedics could be better supported in their role.

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### Introduction and welcome

Jackie Bell

### Paramedic practices and experiences of providing end of life care: An England-wide survey

Dr Natasha Campling (University of Southampton)

### Impact of Paramedics carrying 'just in case' end of life medication

Edward O'Brian (Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust)

### A Review of End of Life Medication Administration by Ambulance Clinicians (selected abstract)

Keri Fickling (Scottish Ambulance Trust)



## Marie Curie Links

Read our blog on how Marie Curie is supporting ambulance crews:

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/blog/how-marie-curie-supports-overstretched-ambulance-crews-in-london/287015>

Marie Curie's Scottish Ambulance Service and Palliative Care ECHO Network:

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/project-echo/scottish-ambulance-service>

Marie Curie report on 'Improving evening and weekend care for dying people':

[https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/globalassets/media/documents/research/publications/h429\\_out-of-hours-palliative-care.pdf](https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/globalassets/media/documents/research/publications/h429_out-of-hours-palliative-care.pdf)


## Paramedic practices and experiences of providing end of life care: An England-wide survey

Dr Natasha Campling (University of Southampton)

Read a summary and watch a short video about the project:

<https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/research/funded-projects/our-latest-research-projects#campling>

### KEY TAKE HOME MESSAGES



- > **Frequent attendance:** well over half of all paramedics estimate attending EoL cases at least once every 7 shifts
- > **Lack of systems identification:** rarely know they are attending an EoL case prior to arrival
  - Value of ACP discussions elsewhere in the health service (outside of crisis situations), documentation and sharing of documents with ambulance service
- > **Complexities of medicines administration:** usually limited to patients own JIC supplies + existence of MAAR chart
  - Potential value of ambulance fleet carrying supplies and administration authorised via PGD
- > **Lack of availability of HCPs / teams for advice or immediate referral:** particularly specialist palliative care input, and out-of-hours
  - Need for access to 24/7 specialist palliative care advice lines
- > **Some fears apparent, shortfalls in confidence + difficulties challenging conveyance recommendations**
  - Need for post-registration paramedic specific PEoLC training

## Impact of Paramedics carrying 'just in case' end of life medication

Edward O'Brian (Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust)

### Conclusions

- High number of EoLC patients access 999 in last 48 hours of life, highlighting the **crucial role paramedics play in community EoLC**
- For many EoLC patients in the community requiring symptom management, JIC medicines will not have been pre-emptively prescribed. **Symptom control needs to be anticipated and planned for**
- **Cost releasing** – the low outlay of JIC medicines sees savings on the wider NHS.
- **Improved patient experience** – Paramedic use of JIC medications to manage symptoms in the last days of life **prevents avoidable hospital admissions**

## A Review of End of Life Medication Administration by Ambulance Clinicians (selected abstract)

Keri Fickling (Scottish Ambulance Trust)

Read the conference abstract:

[https://spcare.bmj.com/content/14/Suppl\\_1/A17.2](https://spcare.bmj.com/content/14/Suppl_1/A17.2)

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the speakers for sharing their work at the Marie Curie Research Conference 2024.

**If you have any questions, please contact the Research Team at Marie Curie:**

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