

## Marie Curie Cancer Care Research Programme - Project Grant

### Project details

**Professor George Kernohan**, University of Ulster

Costs and effectiveness of UK palliative care day services: a three-centre mixed methods study of impact upon patients and family carers

Duration of project: 36 months

Start date: 01/08/2014

Budget: £280,849

### Abstract

Costs and effectiveness of UK palliative care day services: a three-centre mixed methods study of impact upon patients and family carers

In response to the changing demographics and the increasing number of people with cancer and other chronic illnesses, there is an increased demand for palliative care. Limitations of inpatient care have led to a reliance on day services in an outpatient model of hospice care. There is a very wide variety of interventions provided within Palliative Care Day Services provided to people with cancer and other life limiting illnesses in the UK. Despite clear need and rapid expansion of services, there is little evidence to guide practice. Qualitative data suggests that Day Services are highly valued as having a positive influence across the four domains of palliative care. There is some evidence that attending day services results in fewer referrals to more expensive health care services.

We aim to provide evidence of the cost-effectiveness of palliative care day services in improving quality of life.

This study will be guided by the Medical Research Council's Framework for evaluating complex interventions, within which the Donabedian Model will be used as a conceptual framework to examine day hospice services in three categories: structure, process and outcomes, across the palliative care domains. Evidence will be drawn from various sources to obtain cost-effectiveness as follows: (1) a systematic review of published evidence; (2) collection and analysis of secondary data, retrospective review of 100 records and nine focus groups; (3) a three-site prospective cohort study (N=120) of naturally-occurring variation with benchmarking of service outputs.

By understanding the structure, processes and outcomes of three palliative care day services, service models can be influenced to achieve better outcomes for people in need of palliative day services, their carers and family members.