



Brain Tumour Australia Information

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Kid's Corner

Palliative Care for Children and Teenagers

In modern society, we expect children to outlive their parents. Nothing could prepare a family for the total devastation they experience when told that it is possible or even probable, that their child could die before reaching adulthood. Family life as they knew it and expected will never be the same again.

For children living with life-threatening or terminal conditions, medical professionals are obligated to ensure that medical technology is used only when the benefits for the child outweigh the burden. An infant or child will benefit from palliative care when no treatment has been shown to alter substantially the expected progression toward death.

Palliative care includes the control of pain and other symptoms and addresses the psychological, social, or spiritual problems of children (and their families) living with life-threatening or terminal conditions

Palliative treatments focus on the relief of symptoms (eg, pain, dyspnea) and conditions (eg, loneliness) that cause distress and detract from the child's enjoyment of life.

The goal of palliative care is the achievement of the best quality of life for patients and their families, consistent with their values, regardless of the location of the patient

Palliative care seeks to enhance quality of life in the face of an ultimately terminal condition.

It also seeks to ensure that bereaved families are able to remain functional and intact.

As well as the sick child, every other member of the family will, from that moment, have a range of special needs, which they may or may not recognise for themselves.

Ideally, professionals involved with the family from the point of diagnosis will be experienced and will understand that the family cannot be expected suddenly to possess the resources simply to go home and 'cope'.

www.pallcare.org.au/Default.aspx?tabid=314
for children & teenagers

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